

**TO: Children and Young People Board**

**ON: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**Report by:**

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**Corporate Parenting – Part 9, Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014 and received Royal assent on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Part 9 of the Act enshrines the concept on 'corporate parenting' in sections 56-65.
- 1.2 The Act places new duties on identified public bodies to act in support of looked after young people. The public bodies are called 'corporate parents' and the duties are 'corporate parent responsibilities'. The Act incorporates how the public bodies have to plan and report on how they are working together to be corporate parents.
- 1.3 The Centre for Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland (CELCS) at the University of Strathclyde has developed national guidance on corporate parenting.
- 1.4 Part 9, the Act provides for a clear definition of Corporate Parenting, and defines the bodies to which it will apply.
- 1.5 The Act puts the concept and policy of corporate parenting onto a statutory basis in Scotland. It established a framework of duties and responsibilities for relevant public bodies requiring them to be systematic and proactive in their efforts to meet the needs of looked after children and young people and care leavers. This also introduces new reporting and accountability structures, with national reporting to Scottish parliament every 3 years.
- 1.6 Commencement of corporate parenting responsibilities in the Act was 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.
- 1.7 This report provides an update on the work in Renfrewshire in relation to Corporate Parenting.

## **2 Recommendation**

2.1 The Children and Young People Board is asked to note:

- [a] the Duties under part 9 of the Act;
- [b] the work that has been undertaken to meet the responsibilities in Renfrewshire; and
- [c] that the Corporate Parenting Plan will be brought to a future meeting for approval.

## **3 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014: Corporate Parenting Duties: Part 9**

- 3.1 Under Parts 9-14 of the Act, there are a number of significant changes have been made to the range of duties and powers that affect those in care and care-leavers. In relation to Corporate Parenting, Part 9, the Act provides a clear definition of Corporate Parenting, and defines the bodies to which it will apply.
- 3.2 Part 9 puts the concept and policy of corporate parenting onto a statutory basis in Scotland. It established a framework of duties and responsibilities for relevant public bodies requiring them to be systematic and proactive in their efforts to meet the needs of looked after children and young people and care leavers. This also introduces new reporting and accountability structures, with national reporting to Scottish parliament every 3 years. Commencement of corporate parenting responsibilities is from April 2015.
- 3.3 Development of corporate parenting guidance by CELCIS in collaboration with the Scottish Government has been issued under s63 of the Act and provides corporate parents with information and advice about how they should fulfil the duties set out in Part 9.
- 3.4 The definition of a 'corporate parent' is provided by Section 56 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. An organisation or individual is a corporate parent if they are listed, or within a description listed, in schedule 4 of the Act. (See appendix 1).
- 3.5 Elected officials within a local authority area, staff members or a professional working in any of the public services listed in schedule 4 now have a corporate parenting duty in relation to looked after children and care leavers up to 26 years of age in their area.

## **4 Corporate parenting responsibilities**

- 4.1 The 'corporate parenting responsibilities' represent the core element of Part 9. The six duties provide a working definition of corporate parenting, and it is through a corporate parent's efforts to fulfil these duties that they will safeguard and promote the wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers under section 58.

4.2 The corporate parenting responsibilities are set out in the Act as follows:

- (1) It is the duty of every corporate parent, in so far as consistent with the proper exercise of its other functions —*
- (a) to be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of children and young people to whom this Part applies,*
  - (b) to assess the needs of those children and young people for services and support it provides,*
  - (c) to promote the interests of those children and young people,*
  - (d) to seek to provide those children and young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing,*
  - (e) to take such action as it considers appropriate to help those children and young people—*
  - (i) to access opportunities it provides in pursuance of paragraph (d),*
  - (ii) to make use of services, and access support, which it provides, and*
  - (f) to take such other action as it considers appropriate for the purposes of improving the way in which it exercises its functions in relation to those children and young people.*

4.3 The responsibilities extend to all looked after children from birth to when they cease to be looked after. This includes children in foster care, residential care, secure care, looked after at home and those in formal kinship care. It includes disabled children who are 'looked after' during short break provision. Responsibilities can also apply to care leavers who are looked after on their 16<sup>th</sup> Birthday (or subsequently) up to and including the age of 25 years.

4.4 A corporate parent can fulfil these duties individually or in collaboration, but corporate parenting plans and reports should be explicit about how (individual and groups of) corporate parents will meet each obligation.

## **5 Corporate Parenting Plan**

5.1 Under section 59 of the Act, a corporate parent must prepare, keep under review, and publish a Corporate Parenting Plan. The Act does not prescribe a timescale for reviewing this. This plan must set out how the corporate parent proposes to fulfil its corporate parenting responsibilities.

5.2 The format of a corporate parenting plan is not prescribed in the Act or the guidance. However the content of the plan must include information on how the corporate parent will undertake the corporate parenting responsibilities as outlined above in 4.2.

5.3 The corporate parenting duties apply equally to all looked after children and care leavers. In preparing a corporate parenting plan it is recommended that details are given, about how the corporate parent will fulfil their responsibilities in respect to:

- *the different ages (and stages of development) of looked after children;*
- *the different genders;*
- *the different placement types in which looked after children and care leavers live;*
- *looked after children and care leavers with disabilities;*
- *the different cultural and religious backgrounds of looked after children and care leavers.*

## 6 Reporting

- 6.1 Under section 61, a corporate parent must report on how it has exercised its corporate parenting responsibilities (section 58), its planning and collaborating functions under sections 59 and 60, and its other functions under Part 9.
- 6.2 Corporate parenting reports may include information about standards of performance, and the outcomes achieved for looked after children and young people. Reports should be published in such manner as the corporate parent consider appropriate; this could mean publishing the report alongside other reports or documents (such as the corporate parenting plan) or as part of other reports or documents (such as an Annual Report).
- 6.3 A corporate parenting report should be published at least once every three years, starting from April 2015. The report should be linked to the objectives and activities detailed in the plan, providing an analysis of progress and identifying any actions which could improve the way in which the corporate parent exercises its functions. As with the plan, the corporate parenting report should be easily accessible to both young people and the general public.
- 6.4 At a minimum, every corporate parenting report must include information on:
- *How the corporate parent (or group of corporate parents) have exercised the duties set out in section 58 (the 'corporate parenting responsibilities')*
  - *How the corporate parent (or group of corporate parents) have fulfilled their functions in respect to planning, collaborative working with other corporate parents, preparing reports and,*
  - *where relevant, providing information to Scottish Ministers and following directions issued by Scottish Ministers.*
- 6.5 Corporate parenting reports should detail the performance of corporate parents, including outcomes achieved. It will not be sufficient for corporate parenting reports to be narrative descriptions of activity. Corporate parenting reports must be based on data and analysis. It is recommended that corporate parents set clear objectives, on which their performance can be measured and reported upon.

## 7 Complaints and Disputes

- 7.1 Every corporate parent should have a procedure through which looked after children and care leavers can raise a concern or make a complaint. These concerns or complaints may relate to the quality, or absence, of an opportunity, service or support, or other aspects of how a corporate parent has fulfilled their duties under Part 9.
- 7.2 Wherever practical and appropriate corporate parents should try to resolve a child or young person's complaint or concern through informal processes. This will rely on children and young people (with the support of their carers or other advocates) to engage in a dialogue with representatives from the corporate parent.

- 7.3 Where dialogue has not been successful, formal complaint procedure may be necessary. The Act does not prescribe a specific form of complaint procedure for corporate parents; where appropriate, corporate parents should use procedures already in place.
- 7.4 Corporate parents should also ensure that all looked after children and care leavers are aware of the available complaint procedure, and that the procedures are accessible. For some children and young people (including younger children and those with communication difficulties) corporate parents should make provision for their views to be represented by carers, trusted adults and independent advocates.

## **8 Enforcement of part 9**

- 8.1 Corporate parent's compliance with the legislation will be monitored through the review of corporate parenting reports, independent inspection mechanisms (such as those provided by the Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland and Healthcare Improvement Scotland) and corporate parent's existing governance arrangements

## **9 Current Position in Renfrewshire**

- 9.1 We have ensured that corporate parenting is a key priority and we have a robust strategy that underpins our work that supports achieving the very best outcomes for our looked after children and young people. Our Community Plan and Integrated Children Services Plan outline our vision and aims as corporate parents.
- 9.2 The CPP Board leads on the implementation of corporate parenting planning and improvement and ensures robust oversight and scrutiny of the developments and outcomes for our looked after young people. The commitment and focus on corporate parenting has ensured a drive toward improving the quality of services and outcomes for our most vulnerable young people. The leadership has driven forward our philosophy of engagement with and participation of our looked after young people in shaping our strategy and practice.
- 9.3 Oversight of the Corporate Parenting Plan sits with the Corporate Parenting Strategy Group and the Improving Educational Outcomes for Looked after Children Strategy group chaired by John Trainer, Head of early Years and Inclusion. The specific work on the Champions Board and Communities that Care Project are overseen by the Champions Board Steering Group, chaired by Dorothy Hawthorn, Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice.

## **10 Champions Board**

- 10.1 Renfrewshire's Champions Board was established in 2013. The Champions Board is a forum for care experienced young people which enable them to meet with and express their views to their Corporate Parents and influence policy and practice for other looked after young people.

- 10.2 As a partnership, we have strongly value the views of looked after children and young people and have ensured that we create meaningful opportunities for engagement. The Champions Board has ensured direct and meaningful dialogue between looked after young people and their corporate parents. The Board membership includes young people looked after at home as well as accommodated young people in foster care, kinship care and our children's houses, elected members, directors and senior managers of services across the partnership.
- 10.3 The young people have contributed to policy development, consultations and practice development as well as delivering training to a multi agency staff groups. Their contribution has directly impacted on the corporate parenting plan and improvements in services.
- 10.4 The young people meet fortnightly as a group to identify and explore issues affecting themselves and care experienced young people collectively. They meet twice annually with their Corporate Parents to discuss and take forward issues.
- 10.5 Since its establishment, approximately 40 care experienced young people have been involved in the Board. There is currently a core group of 10 care experienced young people involved in the group.
- 10.6 A range of methods are utilised at meetings to facilitate discussion, including creative activities such as drama and art.
- 10.7 Over the past three years, the Board has been funded by contributions from across the Community Planning Partnership.
- 10.8 Funding of £223,778 has been awarded by the Life Changes Trust over the next 3 years to build upon the existing activities of the Champions Board. This funding is contingent upon match funding of the existing £18,700 per annum contributed by all partners involved.
- 10.9 The funding will support the development of the Board to reflect the needs of a wider group of young people by developing additional focus groups to reflect the priorities identified by the young people including:
- employability,
  - children's hearings,
  - health / mental health, and
  - listening to young people.
- 10.10 The participation of a wider group of young people will be supported by increasing the capacity offered by Who Cares? Scotland.
- 10.11 The additional funding has allowed the development of a supported employment opportunity for a care experienced young person who is employed as a Participation Assistant with a specific remit to support and develop the Champions Board in collaboration with the young people. This post is based within Who Cares? Scotland.

- 10.12 The funding is contingent on the development of two additional programmes – a mentoring and a small grants. The mentoring programme will be developed to build on the work experience opportunities currently being offered by Corporate Parents (such as Scottish Fire & Rescue Service) and will provide both a supportive adult relationship and a positive employability role model based on a ‘family firm’ approach.
- 10.13 The small grants programme will provide additionality to existing discretionary budgets and young people would be involved in developing and administering this. In addition, funding will be utilised to support the personal development of the young people involved in the Board and to help them further develop their leadership skills.
- 10.14 The evaluation of the progress and impact of the Board will be undertaken by the University of Huddersfield.
- 10.15 As a requirement of the funding and to ensure sustainability, a training element will be incorporated into the work of the Board with multi-agency training being offered across the partnership and also to carers.
- 10.16 The funding also requires the Board to explore awareness raising amongst the local community to ensure that they understand and support care experienced young people.

## **11 STV /Who Cares? Scotland Project/ Communities that Care**

- 11.1 Who Cares? Scotland have established a Project in Renfrewshire funded by STV with the following aspiration;

*“We have the belief that over 5 years the outcomes from this project will transform care in Renfrewshire as more people actively understand and engage with children and the care system. The project will highlight a route that proves how a whole country can understand and actively care. It will challenge wider political, economic and social structures to reform so that the motivation we instill can be transformed into a phenomenal care system, that loves and is proud of care experienced children and young people, setting them up to be the best that they can be.”*

- 11.2 The proposed outcomes are:

### **Short-term year 1-3**

- Care experienced young people are better understood, respected and included in their school and neighbourhood community.
- Care experienced young people will have their voice amplified and listened to by corporate parents, schools and neighbourhood communities.
- Communities are better educated, have more caring and inclusive schools and neighbourhoods

### **Medium term – Year 4-5**

- Progress towards improving outcomes for care experienced young people on key wellbeing indicators of mental health, educational attainment and employment.

- We will facilitate a caring culture within communities which can grow to dominate Scotland.
- Learning from this work is extrapolated out across other areas as we maximise our strong public sector and political relationships at national and local levels.

11.3 Who Cares? Scotland decided to locate the Project in Renfrewshire due to the positive partnership, leadership and relationships in place due to their existing advocacy, influencing and Champions Board work.

## **12 Awareness Raising/ training**

12.1 We have undertaken awareness raising on corporate parenting responsibilities for our senior managers and elected members. The evaluation indicates that awareness of stigma, inequality and discrimination has been increased significantly and partners have reviewed their services identified areas improvements.

12.2 Who Cares? Scotland has delivered training workshops as a part of a comprehensive training plan. They have delivered a half day workshop, along with young people to all education heads and managers across all sectors. Following this, training has been delivered across sector clusters as part of an ongoing rolling programme. Some of these events have been attended by other services such as third sector services, Skills Development Scotland and Fire and Rescue. Who Cares? Scotland have indicated that our approach to corporate parenting training is sector leading, which is noted in the Joint Inspection of Children's Services report (2015).

12.3 A training plan has been developed that will focus on specific training for education staff which will build on the cluster programme. The content is being developed with STV/ Communities that care staff along with education staff with specific responsibilities for Looked after young people ( Including LAC Teachers). This training will target all Pupil Support Coordinators/Designated Managers in both Primary and Secondary.

12.4 Who Cares? Scotland are working in partnership with Skills development Scotland which includes raising awareness Corporate Parenting responsibilities with SDS staff and reciprocal training on employment pathways.

12.5 In addition, a training plan for Elected Members is being developed for delivery after local elections in May 2017.

## **13 Raising attainment**

13.1 Partners in Renfrewshire are committed to closing the attainment gap between our most able and most vulnerable students. We aim to improve attainment for all students however are focuses on achieving better outcomes for looked after children as their attainment is often poorer than the general population.



- 13.2 All schools are presently assessing the support they provide for looked after children. This work includes the use of “Insight data” on performance in the SQA examinations. Each school reviews the examination data in detail and has a particular focus on the achievements of looked after children.
- 13.3 A working group on “Improving Education Outcomes for Looked After Children” is in place and chaired by the Head of Early Years and Inclusion. The focus of this group is on identifying best practice and sharing this across establishments in Renfrewshire.
- 13.4 The working group has representatives from establishments in Renfrewshire, children’s social work, development and housing, West College Scotland, the University of the West of Scotland and the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland.

## **14 Care Leavers Covenant**

- 14.1 The Thematic Board committed to the Care Leavers Covenant at its meeting on 4 February 2016. This Board passed a recommendation to the Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership Board that it adopt the Covenant. The Community Planning Partnership Board agree to sign up to the Covenant at its meeting on 24 February 2016.
- 14.2 A formal signing of the Covenant by the Council Leader, the Convener Children’s Services, the Chief Executive, the Director of Children’s Services and other partners on behalf of the Community Planning Partnership Board on 8 March 2016. The event was attended by a number of the young people who are members of the Champion’s Board. Renfrewshire were the first community planning partnership to sign the Covenant.
- 14.3 Appendix 2 contains information on the progress of the partners in delivering the commitments contained in the Covenant and the areas where further progress is required.
- 14.4 The delivery against the Covenant commitments are monitored on a regular basis and further reports on progress and areas for development will be brought to this Thematic Board.

## **15 Next steps**

- 15.1 In order to ensure compliance with the duties in the Act, we will:
- Develop a multi agency Corporate Parenting plan to align this with the guidance on the corporate parenting plans and reports led by the Corporate Parenting Strategy Group (and incorporate this in the Integrated Children’s Services Plan)
  - Consider local engagement of ‘new’ corporate parents not currently represented on the Strategy Group
  - Work with Corporate Parents and care experiences young people to deliver on the priorities and Pledges for the Champions Board.

- Develop a communications plan which will support key messages for corporate parents on their role and responsibilities.
- Review complaints process to ensure arrangements are in place and communicated effectively to young people
- Further develop the training plan and awareness raising across services.

15.2 Progress reports will be brought back to this Board on an annual basis.

## Appendix 1

### Public bodies to which Corporate Parenting responsibilities apply (Schedule 4)

- 1 The Scottish Ministers
- 2 A local authority
- 3 The National Convener of Children's Hearings Scotland
- 4 Children's Hearings Scotland
- 5 The Principal Reporter
- 6 The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
- 7 A health board
- 8 A board constituted under section 2(1)(b) of the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978
- 9 Healthcare Improvement Scotland
- 10 The Scottish Qualifications Authority
- 11 Skills Development Scotland Co. Ltd (registered number SC 202659)
- 12 Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland
- 13 The Scottish Social Services Council
- 14 The Scottish Sports Council
- 15 The chief constable of the Police Service of Scotland
- 16 The Scottish Police Authority
- 17 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- 19 The Scottish Legal Aid Board
- 20 The Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland
- 21 The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland
- 22 The Scottish Housing Regulator
- 23 Bòrd na Gàidhlig
- 24 Creative Scotland
- 25 A body which is a —post-16 education body for the purposes of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005

## Scottish Care Leaver's Covenant: Agenda for Change Framework

### Status Report – Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership

<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	
<b>Key Action Area 1 - Corporate parents will ensure robust and consistent support for care leavers in accessing universal, preventative and early intervention services relating to their health and wellbeing.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Corporate parents and third sector providers will collaborate to ensure that care leavers are able to access counselling, mentoring and other community-based services aimed at promoting improved emotional wellbeing.	
Corporate parents will work together to remove barriers and increase supported access to cultural, artistic and other recreational opportunities for care leavers, building on strengths and interests.	
Social care and health providers will develop accessible supports that assist in building capacity and resilience and reduce the numbers of care leavers needing to access specialist hospital-based services and/or moving into crisis.	
All staff involved in providing services to children and young people will undertake learning on child development and the impact of attachment and trauma, and this training will be refreshed every three years.	
<b>Key Action Area 2 - Corporate parents will ensure that care leavers are given priority access to specialist services and improved access to adult mental health services.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Priority access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for assessment and access to services for care leavers, avoiding the use of waiting lists and lengthy referral processes.	
Clear access to advice and consultation with adult mental health professionals for those involved in supporting care leavers with complex and/or challenging mental health, emotional and behavioural needs.	
Joint working arrangements between CAMHS and adult services to be developed, for example for CAMHS to continue to provide a service where there is an existing relationship in place until the young person is ready to move to adult services.	
Adult services models of intervention take account of care leavers' levels of development and functioning and ensure that access to services and interventions are appropriately pitched.	
Thresholds for support and access to services must be flexible and reflect the individual circumstances of care leavers based on need rather than age.	
Specialist services will be responsive towards care leavers' individual and collective issues and needs, based on developmental needs with particular priority access given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist support, assessment and advice around self-harm and suicide risks</li> <li>• Substance misuse services appropriate to the individual circumstances and level of functioning of care leavers</li> <li>• Sexual health clinics, including emergency appointments</li> <li>• Specialist support for care leavers who become young parents.</li> </ul>	

<b>Key Action Area 3 - Take action to reduce social exclusion and isolation, which impact on mental and physical health and emotional wellbeing by providing free or discounted access to:</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Leisure facilities for all care leavers up to age 21 and, where required, up to age 26.	
Public transport for all care leavers up to age 21 and, where required, up to age 26.	
<b>Key Action Area 4 - Each local authority and health board has a named contact with specific responsibility for care leavers' health and for promoting and co-ordinating actions to reduce health inequalities, these being made explicit within Corporate Parenting Plans.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Dedicated throughcare and aftercare nurse provision is in place for all care leavers.	
Consistent application of national mental health indicators for children and young people to care leaver cohort.	
Consistent and efficient systems to gather information about care leavers and monitor their access to, and the effectiveness of, interventions intended to support improved physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing.	
Establish clear, consistent working arrangements across and between local authorities and health board boundaries for those young people who are placed out with their home authority, or who return to their home authority on leaving care.	
<b>Housing &amp; Accommodation</b>	
<b>Key Action Area 1 - The full and meaningful implementation of Staying Put and continuing care for all looked after young people and care leavers should be a primary focus for all corporate parents.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Encourage, enable and empower looked after young people and care leavers to remain in a positive care placement until they are ready to move on.	
Local actions to develop and support this should be explicit within Corporate Parenting Plans.	
Actively promote and facilitate extended and graduated transitions giving young people the opportunity and support to prepare for greater levels of independence while remaining in their care setting. This enables care leavers to move on from their placement in a gradual and phased way over a period of time and with opportunities to test their abilities to live more independently with on-going support.	
Actively support and facilitate care leavers to maintain positive supportive relationships and keep in touch with their carers when they leave and, if possible and necessary, to return to their placement.	
<b>Key Action Area 2 - Fully implement the Housing Options Protocols for Care Leavers Guidance to comprehensively address the housing and accommodation needs of all care leavers.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Local authorities collaborate with registered social landlords to provide a range of appropriate, suitable, good-quality accommodation for care leavers.	
Develop and maintain a range of accommodation options which meet the needs and wishes of care leavers including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported Carers: converting foster care placement to supported carers placements becomes established practice where appropriate and supported</li> </ul>	

<p>carer placements are made available to those young people who are not yet ready to transition to greater independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-quality residential supported accommodation settings</li> <li>• Individual community based supported flats with 'living nearby' support</li> <li>• Access to good-quality mainstream tenancies with appropriate levels of person-centred support</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Action Area 3 - Corporate parents must take action to ensure that care leavers do not have to make a 'homeless application' in order to access suitable accommodation/ housing.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
End the use of the homeless route to access accommodation for care leavers. This is not appropriate and fails to allow for a proper planning process or to provide adequate support.	
Where care leavers are at risk of homelessness after a period of being out with care/support of the local authority, they must be recognised as a vulnerable group and be supported as such	
Care leavers up to the age of 26 are recognised by corporate parents as potentially vulnerable and have access to support even after a prolonged gap in contact/support with care services	
<b>Key Action Area 4 - End the use of 'bed and breakfast' and 'adult hostels' as accommodation options for vulnerable care leavers.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
The stress of unstable, unsuitable accommodation (such as B&Bs and homeless hostels) can impact on physical and mental health, creating, exacerbating and compounding pre-existing vulnerability and disadvantage.	
In allocating accommodation to homeless households, local authorities in Scotland must already give proper consideration to the suitability of B&B and hostel accommodation to certain vulnerable groups, including families with children.	
Care leavers should be given the same status as other vulnerable groups when considering these particular accommodation options.	
<b>Key Action Area 5 - Multi-agency transitions forum: local authorities must develop and operate a multi-agency planning and support forum around housing and accommodation support needs for care leavers, involving the active participation of all relevant corporate parents.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Multi-agency forums are effective in allocating appropriate housing and support, implementing creative packages of support, overcoming problems and issues and tracking progress of care leavers in moving on.	
Joint planning and multi-agency and partnership working is at the heart of all planning with the 'one child - one plan - one care journey' principle being continued into adulthood.	
Pathways and support plans will reflect the key roles and responsibilities of agencies and partners in meeting the young person's needs through a phased transition into adulthood.	
The process reflects the dynamic and changing nature of young people's needs and circumstances as they progress on their journey to adulthood and interdependence	
To achieve this, recognition that relationship-based practice for young people leaving care is crucial in maintaining previous supportive relationships and ensuring there is continuity and co-ordination in providing housing support.	

<b>Education and Training</b>	
<b>Key Action Area 1 - Improved and strengthened links between schools, Skills Development Scotland, social work and tertiary education providers.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Access to early and effective careers advice for looked after young people provided by schools and Skills Development Scotland starting before the end of Third Year and continuing for as long as is necessary.	
Information sharing between schools, social work, Skills Development Scotland, Department for Work and Pensions and further education providers to ensure continuity of support and joint working post school, fully utilising the 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub	
<b>Key Action Area 2 - Consistent and extensive use of ASL legislation to ensure that looked after young people have Co-ordinated Support Plans in place where required.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Educational outcomes to feature prominently in all integrated plans for looked after young people and care leavers in senior school phase and college.	
Extension of all Additional Support for Learning Services to all care leavers.	
Real-term increases in spending on Additional Support for Learning Services	
<b>Key Action Area 3 - Further and Higher Education (FE and HE) providers develop and offer effective, consistent and equitable care leavers' support across all areas of Scotland.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
A dedicated student support professional is identified for all care leavers accessing further and higher education.	
Range of financial, accommodation, mentoring and emotional support to be consistent across all providers.	
Corporate parents, FE and HE providers and supporting agencies act to raise awareness of the range of supports available to support care leavers and collaborate in encouraging looked young people and care leavers to declare their status and access this support.	
FE and HE providers use protected characteristics provision creatively to widen access and provide support for care leavers.	
<b>Key Action Area 4 - Throughcare and aftercare services and FE and HE providers establish proactive and effective communication links.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Collaborate over financial and accommodation support, including non-term time accommodation and help with transport costs.	
Identify and share information - with care leaver's consent - regarding potential problems and offer proactive support to prevent care leavers dropping out of college or university.	
<b>Employment</b>	
<b>Key Action Area 1 - Develop an integrated national vocational training and progression pathway for care leavers.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Develop a new employment brokering facility to match job-ready care leavers with entry-level career opportunities and Modern Apprenticeships.	
Aligned to and building on the work of the Open Doors Consortium, develop a new flexible (holistic) support fund to help overcome barriers experienced by care leavers seeking to enter employment for the first time.	
Targeted financial support to help care leavers to secure and sustain employment. This can encompass work related needs, on-the-job training,	

support with travel and support with housing costs in the early weeks of employment. This will have a clear focus on helping the young person sustain employment	
Ensure effective alignment of funds to support care leavers at each stage of the Employability in Scotland strategic skills pipeline.	
<b>Key Action Area 2 - Reduce any real or perceived barriers to accessing Modern Apprenticeships to ensure opportunities are aligned to care leavers' needs.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Subject to spending review, ensure that care leavers can access Modern Apprenticeships up to the age of 30, at the highest level of public funding available.	
Scope out and harness the potential for using Foundation Apprenticeships as a way into employment with training for care leavers.	
<b>Key Action Area 3 - Implement a full systemic approach to information sharing and joint working across education services, social work and throughcare teams, Skills Development Scotland, Department for Work and Pensions and specialist providers</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Agencies communicate and collaborate to ensure that care leavers are supported throughout the difficult transition period from education to employment.	
Informed consent should be obtained when using personal information	
<b>Key Action Area 4 - Maximise the positive use of the 'care leaver's marker' by Jobcentre Plus staff.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Ensure that self-declaration of care leaver status is matched by tangible benefits including additional support as vulnerable claimants.	
Department of Work and Pensions allow and actively promote advocacy and support for care leavers in attending key interviews and interactions with the agency.	
<b>Key Action Area 5- Develop and enhance supportive environments for the most vulnerable care leavers as a first step into the world of work.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Build on existing good practice eg Community Jobs Scotland, brokering, securing and supporting jobs in the third sector for young people.	
Corporate parents have a dedicated 'Family Firm' policy with ring-fenced opportunities and person-centred support for care leavers.	
Private sector employers who receive public funds or are commissioned by corporate parents to deliver services should be encouraged and supported to offer employment opportunities for care leavers	
Programmes that provide flexible and sustained support, including pre-employment, employment and post-employment support	
Partner agencies able to signpost and/or provide non-work related support to care leavers.	



<b>Youth and Criminal Justice</b>	
<b>Key Action Area 1 - Identification of care leavers at the outset of their involvement with each youth and criminal justice agency to enable more appropriate re:</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
All individuals aged under 26 are asked a standardised, understandable question to determine whether they are a care leaver, and the response is recorded.	
With the young person's consent contact should be made with other involved agencies and this should be done in accordance with information sharing protocols.	
<b>Key Action Area 2 - On identification, corporate parents and youth and criminal justice agencies will ensure that care leavers receive:</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Contact from relevant agencies who can meet their immediate and longer-term needs and/or who may have corporate parenting duties.	
A holistic assessment of their needs for services and support and an individualised plan will be created by the local authority in partnership.	
Advocacy support.	
Assurance that any existing plans must take account of the care leaver's entitlements.	
An assertive outreach approach to offering support.	
<b>Key Action Area 3 - Criminal justice interventions take into account the individual needs and circumstances of care leavers and offer:</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
A whole system approach including: timely and joined up interventions; maximising the use of diversion from statutory measures; court support; and transition / reintegration support.	
A long-term relationship-based approach to supporting engagement and consideration of which services are most appropriate to support care leavers.	
Additional support to comply with interventions and during transitions / reintegration.	
Creative use of interventions, including individual and group work supports.	
<b>Key Action Area 4 - Learning and development opportunities are available to the criminal justice workforce, including decision makers, focusing on:</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
The experiences of care leavers and the impact of such experiences.	
Corporate parenting responsibilities and actions.	
Legislation, definitions and entitlements of care leavers, agencies' responsibilities, and available services and how these can be accessed.	
The youth and criminal justice systems and adapting to the risks and needs around care leavers.	
<b>Key Action Area 5 - Relevant criminal justice services should have clear corporate parenting statements of intent, which should:</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Detail how they intend to fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities.	
Be included as part of corporate parenting plans.	
<b>Key Action Area 6 - Measures taken through the Children Hearing's System (CHS) can impact on care leavers' futures. Priorities should:</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Continuing to support 16-17 year olds on Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs).	
Dealing with cases in the CHS rather than court where appropriate.	

Ensuring young people subject to CSO's can access appropriate adult service.	
Planning transitions from the CHS and ensuring support plans are in place.	
Limit the carry-over of criminal records from CHS and informing when this is the case.	
<b>Rights and Participation</b>	
<b>Key Action Area 1 - All corporate parents have participation processes in place specifically aimed at care leavers</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Arrangements provided for meaningful and regular engagement with care leavers using existing forums or, where necessary, developing new ones eg Champions Boards.	
Care leavers are given specific opportunities to influence and shape services and policies at local and national level, including receiving feedback on their ideas and contribution.	
<b>Key Action Area 2 - Clear accessible information on the choices and options open to looked after young people preparing for or leaving care to be available and accessible in written and web-based formats:</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Information is available well in advance of preparations to move, from the age of 14 and onwards as appropriate.	
Information on care leavers rights and entitlements is readily available, particularly around the issue of staying put and extended aftercare support.	
Information is available to those care leavers who don't currently access support, informing them that they can request further support, up to the age of 26.	
Services keep in touch with care leavers, throughout their leaving care journey into adulthood, not just responding at times of crisis	
<b>Key Action Area 3 - A rights-based approach to support and services for care leavers is adopted to take full advantage of enabling legislation and policy.</b>	
<b>Specific Actions</b>	<b>Status</b>
Rights of care leavers are proactively implemented and protected throughout their entire care leaving journey, not just when they first leave care or at times of crisis.	
Harder to reach groups of care leavers are given access to independent advocacy and more consistent use of an existing supporting person in planning and implementing supports and upholding care leavers' rights.	