



Corporate Parenting Strategy 2026-30

***Our promises and commitments to care experienced
children and young people***

A Message from our young people

As care experienced children and young people, we know how important it is to have people who believe in you, support you and encourage you to achieve your goals. Every child and young person deserves the love, stability, guidance and opportunities that a good parent would provide. This means the council, its partners and elected members have a responsibility to support us, champion us and help us reach our full potential. Good corporate parenting is important because some children and young people in care may not have family members or trusted adults they can rely on. Corporate parents should be positive role models who listen to us, advocate for us and help us overcome barriers. They should create opportunities that allow us to develop new skills, build confidence, experience new things and fulfil our dreams.

We recognise that many care experienced children and young people have had different life experiences and challenges. That is why providing the right support at the right time is so important. With the right encouragement and opportunities, every young person can succeed.

What Skittlz Has Achieved

Over the last year, Skittlz, Barking and Dagenham’s Children in Care and Care Leavers Council, has worked hard to ensure the voices of care experienced young people are heard and acted upon. Skittlz has worked with the council and partners to make a positive difference for care experienced children and young people by:

- Influencing policies and decision-making through the Members Corporate Parenting Group.
- Reviewing how the Leaving Care Grant can be used more effectively.

- Co-producing the Enhanced Local Offer and requesting age-specific versions for young people aged 21 and 25.
- Raising awareness of barriers to employment and meeting with senior council leaders to create more opportunities.
- Working with the Virtual School to increase young people's engagement.
- Partnering with NELFT to improve health services.
- Co-producing eight videos to help children in care and care leavers understand their rights, support that is available and key life experiences.

Priorities for the Next 1–3 Years

We want this strategy to focus on:

- An action plan with clear targets so progress can be measured.
- Reducing barriers to high-quality healthcare for care experienced children and young people.
- Increasing participation, ensuring more young people have opportunities to influence the services that affect their lives.

Our Commitment

We want care experienced children and young people to remain at the heart of decision-making. By working together, we can create more opportunities, improve outcomes and ensure every young person feels valued, supported and empowered to succeed.

Skittlz members Anton, Evie and Andrea

Foreword and introduction



As Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Education and Schools, and Co-Chair of the Members’ Corporate Parenting Group, I am proud to introduce Barking and Dagenham’s Corporate Parenting Strategy 2026-2030.

Being a Corporate Parent is one of the most important responsibilities we hold. It means having the same hopes, ambitions and unconditional commitment for children in our care and care leavers that any good parent would have for their own child. It means championing their voices, celebrating their achievements, standing alongside them through challenges, and ensuring they have every opportunity to thrive.

This strategy sets out our promises to care experienced children and young people. These promises have been shaped by what children and young people have told us matters most to them: being safe, feeling loved, having strong and lasting relationships, achieving in education, enjoying good health and wellbeing, and receiving the support they need to achieve their goals and thrive into their adult lives. They are:

- 1. To make sure you get the best care and support
- 2. To help you build lasting relationships and stay connected to the people who matter to you
- 3. To support your health, wellbeing and mental health
- 4. To help you get the best possible education
- 5. To help you achieve your goals, prepare for adult life and have a safe place to call home

Each of these promises has a more detailed set of commitments, describing what each child and young person can expect from the Council and the wider partnership. Each promise then has a set of priorities that the Corporate Parenting Board will focus on over the next three years, which will be accompanied each year by a detailed action plan.

We know that delivering on these commitments is not the responsibility of one service alone. Effective corporate parenting requires all of us, councillors, council staff, schools, health partners, police, housing services, voluntary organisations and our wider community, to work together and put children and young people at the heart of everything we do.

I am proud of the progress we have made, but I am equally conscious that we must continue to listen, learn and improve. Through this strategy, we renew our commitment to ensuring that every child in our care and every care leaver is supported to feel valued, connected, ambitious and confident about their future.

Together, we will continue to be the Corporate Parents our children and young people deserve.

In Barking and Dagenham, we care. We want the same things for the children and young people in our care and care leavers as any good parent would want for their child with no expiry date.

Overview of children in care and care leavers

402 children were in our care as of April 2026. The number and rate of children in care have steadily declined from a peak of 68 per 10,000 in 2023-24 to 60 as of April 2026. Fewer children are coming into care – 193 entered over 2025-6 compared with 215 the year before, a 10% decrease - reflecting effective work to help children remain safely at home and with families where it is safe to do so.

Children of a White British and children of mixed heritage backgrounds are overrepresented in care, whilst children of Black or Asian ethnic backgrounds are underrepresented. However, there are indications this is changing over time, with the profile of children entering care moving towards more proportionate representation for children of a White British and Black ethnic background.

The age of children in care is shifting slowly upwards - 41% were aged 10–15 years over 2025-6, and 32% are aged 16–17 – and is older still than national averages. This partly reflects timely, effective work with younger children, preventing unnecessary entry into care. These trends are being used to shape sufficiency planning, inclusive practice and early help priorities.

We have created a culture where young people want to keep in touch. The number of care leavers is currently the highest it has ever been, with 344 care leavers supported as of April 2026, as more young people choose to remain connected to services into adulthood. A fifth of our care leavers are former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. The rate at which young people are leaving care is relatively steady: An average of 16 young people left care each month over April to February 2026, compared with 18 in 2024-25.

There is a slight overrepresentation of males and children of a White British, White Other or mixed heritage ethnic background for care leavers.

Corporate Parenting Principles

Local authorities must have regard to the seven corporate parenting principles identified in the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

1. to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well being, of those children and young people
2. to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
3. to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
4. 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
5. to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
6. for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
7. to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The 2026 Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Act introduces new corporate parenting responsibilities across public bodies to help ensure a more joined-up approach to supporting children in care and care leavers.

Promise 1: To make sure you get the best care and support

Research and insights highlight that children and young people want stable adults, stable homes, clear information, relationships that last, and a sense that decisions are made with them rather than for them. Children and young people’s experiences are shaped by the quality of relationships around them and the system working well together. This includes feeling listened to, respected, informed and understood.

Good practice locally can be seen in the relationships that children and young people have, and in the mechanisms to check and enable this. Social workers know their children well and continue to be significant, consistent people in their lives. Over 2025-6, 87% of children and care had an up to date six-weekly visit. Over the last three years, the workforce in social care has become more stable: Staff turnover in the Corporate Parenting team has reduced from 30% in 2022-23 to just 7% over 2025-6.

Across the partnership we have worked with care experienced children and young people to improve information and communication – including co-producing new videos to explain different parts of the care journey, a new Enhanced Local Offer for Care Leavers and improved health reports.

We have progressed meaningful participation with children and young people, working closely with our children in care council – Skittlz – to co-produce service improvements. We take a ‘you said, we did’ approach to demonstrate the impact of feedback directly.

We have strengthened the support provided to carers. Recruitment and support for foster carers continues to get excellent feedback, and our investment in Mockingbird Hubs is leading the way in providing stable, nurturing networks that strengthen relationships. Hubs

provide children with enriching opportunities, a chance to be part of ‘an extended family’, and foster carers feel well-supported

We will continue to focus on preventing avoidable entry into care, working purposefully across the partnership with families, including via Family Group Conferences and restorative interventions. Family Support Workers in the Specialist Intervention Service will continue to play a critical role, offering intensive support for as long as a family needs. We will continue the improvements we have made in reducing the number of children who enter care via Police Protection.

We want more children living in long-term stable homes and have more to do in this area. 62% of children in care were living in long-term stable homes over 2025-26, below the England benchmark of 69%. 14% of children in care had three or more placements over 2025-26 - slightly above the England benchmark of 10%. Our analysis indicates that challenging behaviour, complex needs or foster placement breakdowns are themes impacting this; but positive reasons are also in play, including moves to be reunified with brothers and sisters or stepping down from residential to foster placement.

In the context of a sector-wide shortage in the supply of residential care for children with high and complex needs, we need to make sure there that the right support and provision is in place to meet the needs of children in care. Through our Sufficiency Strategy, we will maintain our focus across the partnership on keeping children in family settings wherever possible, and our ongoing commitment to recruit and support foster carers. The strategy includes ambitious plans to develop our own children’s homes which will increase the availability of local, quality, affordable provision.

We will continue our focus on permanency, so that children and young people have safety, security and stability. 137 children (33%) of all children currently in care had achieved permanency as of June 2026 and all but one child in care had a permanence plan. We will continue to strengthen the systems and processes that drive permanence for children in care.

Promise 1: To make sure you get the best care and support

Our commitments

We will:

- ✓ Support you with consistent workers and carers who care, are kind and have empathy.
- ✓ No decision about you will be made without you.
- ✓ Provide you with clear, transparent, consistent communication.
- ✓ Make sure you understand your rights and entitlements
- ✓ Provide care and support that is inclusive, recognising your identity, culture and background
- ✓ Make sure you have support to speak out through Children’s Rights Officer and advocacy
- ✓ Make sure you have regular, meaningful social worker visits and reviews from Independent Reviewing Officers.
- ✓ Provide help to reduce the risk of harm or actual harm
- ✓ Make sure you are protected, feel safe and are helped to keep yourself safe
- ✓ Make sure you are in a placement that is right for you
- ✓ Support you to live in a stable, loving home
- ✓ Provide support to carers in their role in providing the best care to you.
- ✓ Be clear on any mutual expectations.

Our priorities over the next three years:

- **Workers:** Across the partnership, we will do more to recruit and retain workers who reflect what care experienced children and young people say is important to them.
- **Nothing about you, without you:** We will continue to co-produce service improvements with children in care and care leavers.
- **Foster carers:** We will put an ongoing focus on the recruitment and retention of foster carers, meeting diverse and changing needs of children and young people.
- **Mockingbird Hub:** We will continue to expand and embed the Mockingbird Hub model. Hubs provide children and young people with enriching opportunities, a chance to be part of ‘an extended family’, and foster carers feel well-supported.
- **Sufficiency:** We will deliver the Sufficiency Strategy to ensure there is enough suitable accommodation, care and support available for children and young people, including the development of children’s homes.
- **Stability:** We will work to address the root causes of placement instability, so that long-term placement stability improves for children in care.
- **Permanence:** We will focus on permanence so that children and young people have stable, secure and lasting homes, ensuring that actions and decisions are consistently timely.
- **Exploitation:** We will continue to strengthen the partnership approach to exploitation and risk outside the home, recognising that care experienced young people can be at a higher risk of exploitation.

Promise 2: To help you build lasting relationships and stay connected to the people who matter to you

As Corporate Parents, we know that the most important thing we can provide is not simply a service, a placement or a plan, but the trusted relationships that help children and young people feel loved, safe, valued and connected.

Care experienced people have been clear that good quality relationships are central to a sense of identity and wellbeing. Positive outcomes are built on stable, enduring relationships with family, siblings, friends, carers and other trusted adults.

The Families First reforms likewise place an emphasis on strengthening family networks, promoting belonging and ensuring children remain connected to the people who matter to them whenever it is safe to do so.

Most children in care are raised in family settings. 70% of children in care were in foster and kinship care over 2025-6, higher than the England average of 67%. 19 children were placed at home with parents and 13 had a special guardianship order granted. Wraparound support is provided to support carers in their caring role, to help build lasting relationships with the children and young people they care for. We continue to keep siblings together as much as possible.

Children are supported to have safe, meaningful contact with their families. The Family Time Contact team, for example, enable an average of 290 hours of family time per week, and families have provided positive feedback that they feel supported and respected. The therapy team in the Specialist Intervention service provides well-regarded, direct therapeutic work with children of all ages, including family, sibling and group interventions.

Our Lifelong Links service was launched in 2025. The service aim is to find and bring together important positive people in the young person's life who they have identified as people they would like to reconnect with, to provide them with ongoing support. As of May 2026, we have supported 51 young people aged 11 to 21 years old. Some have reconnected and have overnight stays with family and friends, attended family events such as birthday parties, have plans to go on holiday with the people they reconnected with, and stayed in contact with important professionals such as teachers, previous foster carers and social workers when they have had to move on. We have also supported young people to explore whether they can reconnect with brothers or sisters who have been adopted or live with someone else.

Most children in care continue to live close to home. 84% of children lived within 20 miles of their home over 2025-6 enabling continuity of school, friendships and family relationships – compared with 78% for England.

We also ensure that a wide range of activities and opportunities are in place for care experienced children and young people to participate in, building connections and promoting wellbeing.

Looking ahead, we want to utilise the opportunities provided through the Families First Partnership programme to improve help to families, and strengthening safe connections between children, young people and wider family networks.

We want to continue to build on the success of the Lifelong Links service, supporting more young people to find and bring together positive people in their life who they want to reconnect with.

We will continue our focus on the stability of the workforce across the partnership, and the stability of carers and caring arrangements.

Promise 2: To help you build lasting relationships and stay connected to the people who matter to you

Our commitments

We will:

- ✓ Help you to develop and nurture loving and enduring relationships during your time in care.
- ✓ Make sure you are raised by families, family networks, in family environments wherever possible.
- ✓ Support you to have appropriate, safe and ongoing relationships with family, friends and wider networks who are important to you.
- ✓ Help you to safely re-establish a relationship with family and positive people in their lives if you want to do this.
- ✓ Keep brothers and sisters together wherever possible, with help to maintain sibling relationships.
- ✓ Support you to be reunified with your family if it is safe to do this.
- ✓ Support you to have strong social networks and feel part of your community.
- ✓ Workers will develop and maintain positive, trusting and stable relationships with you.
- ✓ Maintain a culture where care leavers want to stay in touch.
- ✓ Support you to maintain the positive relationships established in care into adulthood.

Our priorities over the next three years:

- **Lifelong Links:** We will continue to strengthen the Lifelong Links service. This service supports children in care and care experienced young people to find and bring together positive people in their life who they want to reconnect with.
- **Families First Programme:** We will utilise the Families First Partnership programme to strengthen the engagement of families and family networks. The reforms being introduced include improved support to parents and carers (family help) and an emphasis on enabling children to remain safely connected to the people who are important to them wherever possible.
- **Stability of workers and carers:** We will put a continued focus on the retention of the partnership workforce and carers, through ongoing support and development, with a view to reducing turnover so that relationships are consistent and stable.

Promise 3: To support your health, wellbeing and mental health

We want every child and young person to be healthy and able to thrive. By promoting good health, emotional wellbeing and positive mental health, we will help children and young people build on their strengths, overcome challenges and achieve the things that are important to them.

Research and insights highlight the importance joined-up support that addresses health and wellbeing in its broadest sense, including mental and emotional wellbeing. Children can come into care having experienced trauma, loss or adversity, underlining the need to take a trauma-informed approach across the partnership.

People with care experience are at a higher risk of experiencing mental health issues, and children and young people have highlighted transitions in their lives as critical points– including when living arrangements change quickly or in the transition to adulthood.

People with care experience can also experience physical health inequalities, with an increased risk of poor oral and physical health outcomes. Insights indicate that what matters to children and young people is whether adults take notice of any issues, listen properly, and take their concerns seriously; as well as the importance of accessible and person-centred support.

The Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) play a key role in supporting children and young people’s mental health. A dedicated CAMHS looked after children senior practitioner role facilitates earlier access to mental health support, supporting individual children as well as wider work with foster carers and others.

In addition, the local authority has a dedicated Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Worker to support who supports young people and supports staff with best practice in this area; alongside the therapeutic interventions from the therapy team.

We are committed to ensuring children understand their history and identity. Therapeutic life story work is part of this commitment, supporting children to make sense of their past and how it impacts on their present. Life story work is complemented by the work of the therapeutic team, the Lifelong Links service and the Caring Life app – helping children understand their family story and their journey through care.

The impact of this work can be seen in the results of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. The score for children in care in Barking and Dagenham is consistently below benchmarks and is reducing, indicating better emotional wellbeing. The score for 2025-6 was 10.1, compared with 14.7 for England. We want to maintain this focus on mental health and emotional wellbeing, recognising the importance of early help and partnership working, particularly for children with high and complex needs.

Young people have highlighted the importance of easy-to-access initiatives that help them to lead healthy lives, including free gym membership that is easy to maintain.

The vast majority of children have had an up-to-date health assessment (92% over 2025-6), but the timeliness of initial health assessments are an area to improve. We will continue to work on this going forward. Young people have highlighted the need for clear communication in relation to health appointments, including the importance of young people being contacted directly – rather than through carers – when they are old enough.

Improvements are also needed to increase the number of children in care who get dental and eye checks. 56% of children had an up-to-date dental check in 2025-26, and 61% had an up-to-date eye check. A new dental training clinic is opening in Barking in autumn 2026 and seeing care experienced children is one of their commitments.

Promise 3: To support your health, wellbeing and mental health

Our commitments

We will:

- ✓ Support you to understand history and experiences, with workers who understand the potential impact of trauma and adverse life experiences.
- ✓ Make sure that workers have a good understanding of your physical and mental health needs.
- ✓ Provide you with good quality and timely physical and mental health services.
- ✓ Provide you with timely access to health support – including mental health and support with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- ✓ Support you to live a healthy life, with clear information on the support available.
- ✓ Provide support that promotes your emotional wellbeing.
- ✓ Make sure that care leavers have access to and understand their full health history.

Our priorities over the next three years:

- **Mental health and emotional wellbeing:** We will improve the support for the emotional and mental health needs of children in care and care leavers, including in relation neurodiversity and SEND. We will act on findings from the need assessment on children and young people’s mental health that is being completed later in 2026. We will support children and young people at transitional points in their lives, including when moving into independent living. We will monitor and work to improve the timeliness of mental health support.

- **Preparing for adulthood:** We will strengthen the support to young people when they move from children’s health and mental health support services to adult services.
- **Joint work:** We will strengthen multi-agency working to meet complex needs, including around mental health.
- **Initial Health Assessments:** We will work to improve the timeliness of initial health assessments when children and young people first enter care, so that physical, mental and emotions needs are identified and addressed.
- **Dental and eye checks:** We will improve the take-up of dental checks and eye checks for children in care. This includes working with a new dental training clinic, opening in Barking in autumn 2026 and who have seeing care experienced children is one of their commitments.
- **Health appointments and meetings:** We will focus on timely meetings and give enough notice for these. We will contact young people directly rather than through carers when they are old enough. We will work with children and young people to understand and address why some children and young people are choosing not to attend appointments or engage with health practitioners.
- **Healthy lifestyles:** We will strengthen support with healthy lifestyles and continue to provide free gym access and wider support.
- **Health inequalities:** We will continue to work across the partnership to tackle the inequalities and barriers that children in care and care leavers can face, which can put children and young people at a greater risk of mental ill-health and poorer physical health outcomes.

Promise 4: To help you get the best possible education

Every person has unique talents, strengths and ambitions, and our role as Corporate Parents is to help each child and young person recognise and fulfil their potential. Education helps young people build confidence, discover their interests, develop lifelong skills and create opportunities for the future. Children and young people have highlighted the importance of stable education, supportive adults, inclusive learning environments and early help to think about education options.

Care experienced children and young people can experience lower attainment, higher absence rates and greater disruption to their learning – underlining the need for continued, wraparound support.

Children start in good or outstanding-rated schools wherever possible. Personal Education Plans support children and young people to get the right support with education. We have maintained generally good performance with Personal Education Plans, with 93% of children in care having an up-to-date plan over 2025-26.

The Aspire Virtual School supports children and young people with school attendance, attainment and progress. Consultation, advice and training is provided to teachers, workers and carers. Through joint working, oversight and targeted interventions, the Virtual School helps ensure that education remains a priority for children and young people throughout their care journey. This work has been further enhanced through the work of Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools and through our dedicated Employment, Education and Training coordinator working in children’s care and support.

The Aspire Virtual School, coordinator, DSLs and wider partnership provides robust, wraparound support to children in care and care leavers. This includes tutoring, careers mentoring, therapeutic mentoring, support for further and higher education applications,

work experience opportunities, employability coaching and targeted support for young people who are not in education, employment or training.

The impact of this work can be seen in strong educational outcomes, with children in care achieving above national averages at Key Stages 2 and 4, and care leavers achieving better education, employment and training outcomes than national benchmarks.

Through initiatives such as Future Frontiers mentoring, university visits, apprenticeship support and annual achievement awards, the Virtual School helps children and young people build confidence, develop their talents and prepare successfully for adulthood.

Going forwards, we want to continue to build on existing work to continue to support children and young people. We will further develop how information is shared and acted on across children’s care and support and education, including in relation to children who are home-educated or missing education.

We will put a focus on educational stability in tandem with work on placement stability, so that children and young people experience fewer disruptions to education.

We will develop the response to children in care and care leavers who have special educational needs and disabilities, including through the planned SEND reforms.

Young people have told us about the importance of consistent careers advice, and support to think about higher education options and the financial implications of this at an early stage.

Above all, our high ambitions for care experienced children and young people should remain at the heart of our approach.

Promise 4: To help you get the best possible education

Our commitments

We will:

- ✓ Make sure you attend a good nursery, school, college or training provider that will help you to do your best.
- ✓ If you learn somewhere different from school, we will make sure you receive good-quality education and support to achieve your goals
- ✓ Make sure you have the support you need to attend regularly and succeed in education.
- ✓ Support you to make good educational progress, including through effective Personal Education Plans that focus on your strengths, goals and aspirations.
- ✓ Help you get any extra support you need with learning, SEND, emotional wellbeing or other barriers to education.
- ✓ Support you to explore your education, training and career options and make informed choices about your future.
- ✓ Support you with any education moves or transitions, ensuring disruption is minimised.
- ✓ Support you to continue education, or return at a time that is right for you
- ✓ Make sure that workers are ambitious for you and support you to be ambitious.
- ✓ Encourage and support you to develop your talents, interests, hobbies and extracurricular activities.
- ✓ Celebrate your achievements

Our priorities over the next three years:

- **Personal Education Plans:** We will work with children and young people to engage with their plans and feel motivated to be part of it.
- **Stable education:** We will continue to put a focus on educational stability, minimising the need to change schools.
- **Education support:** We will ensure children and young people receiving timely special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) support and other relevant educational support
- **18+ options:** We will do more to support young people to understand their options after the age of 18, the financial implications of higher education and the support available.

Promise 5: To help you achieve your goals, prepare for adult life and have a safe place to call home

Every young person deserves to move into adulthood with confidence and stability. Young people have highlighted that goals and success are different for each person and can change over time, underlying the need for person-centred, flexible support.

Care experienced young people can face a more complex journey into adulthood than their peers if they have experienced trauma and disrupted relationships. Young people have highlighted the importance of trusted relationships, clear information and ongoing support as they move towards independence. Consistent practical support to achieve aspirations, secure stable housing, access opportunities around education, employment and training, and support to build the skills needed for adult life is also key.

We are pleased to have created a culture where young people want to keep in touch. The number of care leavers is currently the highest it has ever been, with 344 care leavers supported as of April 2026, as more young people choose to remain connected to services into adulthood.

Leaving Care Advisors and others work closely with young people, and pathway plans are used to support preparation for adulthood: 90% of children aged 16-17 years had an up-to-date pathway plan over 2025-6, rising to 92% for young people aged 18 years or over.

We have strengthened co-production with care experienced young people, including joint work with Skittlz. Over the last year, we have worked together to improve information and advice to care leavers, the Leaving Care Grant and the Enhanced Local Offer. “You said, we did” reporting demonstrates how feedback directly influences policy, offer and practice.

Support from across the partnership has resulted in more work experience and apprenticeship opportunities, university placements and permanent job offers. Education, employment and training outcomes show the positive impact of support for care leavers. 60% of care leavers were in education, employment or training over 2025-26, above the England average of 54%.

The pathway for care leavers into stable, safe, local homes is now well-established. 90% of care leavers lived in suitable accommodation over 2025-26, above the England average of 89%.

Looking ahead, we want to continue to support each young person to thrive and achieve the goals that are important to them. We will continue to strengthen support to prepare for adulthood, including an ongoing focus on safety, housing, wellbeing, employment and financial literacy.

We will continue to co-produce service improvements with care experienced young people as part of our commitment to ‘nothing about you, without you’. This includes delivering this strategy together, as well as setting annual priorities that shape the work of the Corporate Parenting Board.

Promise 5: To help you achieve your goals, prepare for adult life and have a safe place to call home

Our commitments

We will:

- ✓ Make sure workers support you to fulfil your potential and achieve the things you care about.
- ✓ Support to develop skills and confidence to be independent, including money management, financial literacy, household maintenance, cleaning and cooking.
- ✓ Support you to move towards independence at a time and pace that is right for you through effective and early pathway planning
- ✓ Make sure you understand your rights and entitlements as someone leaving care
- ✓ Make sure you understand the support available to care leavers, through the co-produced enhanced local offer
- ✓ Support you to have a stable, suitable homes
- ✓ Support to be safe and feel safe, in and outside your home
- ✓ Provide good careers advice and support to get ready of the world of work.
- ✓ Support you to access to a range of employment and training opportunities.
- ✓ Make sure you can access your records quickly.
- ✓ Provide you with key documents that support you to have control over your life.

Our priorities over the next three years:

- **Housing:** We will maintain a focus on housing pathways, so young people leaving care have access to good quality, safe options.
- **Moving home:** We will put a continued focus on support for children and young people to be comfortable in new environments, in and outside the home when moves take place.
- **Employment and training:** We will continue to strengthen the employment and training opportunities available to care experienced young people
- **Financial literacy:** We will strengthen support with money management and financial security so that young people are more financially secure.
- **Nothing about you, without you:** We will continue to co-produce service improvements with care-experienced young people.
- **Adapting support:** We will make sure that support to young people with living independently is adapted for each young person's needs, and include online options for young people who need or prefer this.

Measures that matter

Promise	Measure
To make sure you get the best care and support	- Feedback from children and young people - Delivery of the Sufficiency Strategy and ending use of unregistered provision - Recruitment and retention of foster carers - Protected characteristics of children entering care, in care, and leaving care - Proportion of children and young people visited within agreed timescales by their practitioner - Long-term placement stability for children in care, and the proportion of children with 3+ placements in a year - Proportion of children you have achieved permanence - Safeguarding activity and outcomes
To help you build lasting relationships and stay connected to the people who matter to you	- Feedback from children and young people - Staff retention rates - Proportion of children supported in family settings - Number of children supported by Lifelong Links service - Proportion of children in care placed within 20 miles of their home - Proportion of care leavers keeping in touch with services
To support your health, wellbeing and mental health	- Feedback from children and young people - Number of CAMHS referrals, average wait time, number in treatment, outcomes - Number of referrals for neurodiverse diagnosis, average wait time, outcomes - Average Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire - Proportion of children and young people with an up-to-date medical - Proportion of children and young people with an up-to-date dental check and eye check - Proportion of children with an Initial Health Assessment completed on time
To help you get the best possible education	- Feedback from children and young people - Proportion of children with an up-to-date Personal Education Plan - School attendance levels - Rate of suspensions and permanent exclusions - Proportion of children learning in an alternative setting - Proportion of children with an up-to-date EHCP plan - Education results and outcomes
To help you achieve your goals, prepare for adult life and have a safe place to call home	- Feedback from children and young people - Practitioner visits to care leavers within timescales - Proportion of young people with an up-to-date pathway plan - Proportion of care leavers living in suitable accommodation - Proportion of care leavers in education, employment or training - Activity levels in relation to support for independent living

Delivering the strategy

This Corporate Parenting Strategy will be delivered in partnership with care experienced children and young people, via the Corporate Parenting Board.

The strategy will be accompanied by an annual action plan, with clear targets so progress can be measured. The 'measures that matter' will inform this.

Each year, we will produce an annual report to explain the progress we have made to deliver this strategy.