

Corporate Parenting Panel

26 January 2024

Children Looked After Strategic Partnership (CLASP) Update



Report of Sharon Davey, Strategic Manager Children in our Care, Children's Social Care, Durham County Council

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To advised the Corporate Parenting Panel that a slide set will be presented at the meeting to provide a summary of the activity of the Children Looked After Strategic Partnership (CLASP), since the last report which was presented in October 2023.

Executive summary

- 2 The Children Looked After Strategic Partnership was developed to improve the partnership working between services at a strategic level to meet the needs of children in care and care leavers.
- 3 The group meets bi monthly and consists of representatives from Children's Social Care, partner health authorities, youth offending, police, education, housing, children services specialist county wide services and the project manager for Investing in Children.
- 4 To increase the influence of the group and to improve the connectivity of work with children in care and care leavers it has been agreed that the CLASP will provide update reports into the Corporate Parenting Panel on a six-monthly basis.
- 5 The chair and/or vice chair of the CLASP meet with the Children in Care Council twice yearly to ensure that strategic priorities are developed with children and young people and their feedback is taken directly back to the partnership meeting.

Recommendation

- 6 Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to:
 - (a) Note the content of this report, receive the presentation at the meeting and provide comment as necessary.

Background

- 7 The CLASP will have high aspirations for all children in our care and care leavers in Durham and will work to support them to achieve excellent outcomes in their childhood and as they move into adulthood through the delivery of the highest quality services across the partnership.
- 8 The CLASP will work to ensure that there is a shared understanding across the Local Authority and its partners about the needs of its Children In our Care and Care Leavers to provide the strategic direction for the development and improvement of services in line with the views and feedback from children and young people.
- 9 To achieve this vision the CLASP has 8 Priority Actions as follows:

Priority 1) Ensure good multi-agency partnership work and integrated governance to meet the needs of our Children Looked After and Care Leavers.

Priority 2) We will develop services which are focused on providing high quality support to enable children and young people to remain at home with their families, or return to their families, where it is safe to do so.

Priority 3) Sufficiency of Placements and Placement Stability is important for our children and young people. We want to ensure there are enough high-quality placements to meet their diverse needs and to ensure that young people have a choice where this is appropriate.

Priority 4) Promoting Early Permanence is a key priority for us, we want to ensure that children are moved into their permanent placement or adoptive placement as quickly as possible once this has been agreed as the appropriate plan.

Priority 5) Durham County Council and its partners will develop a 'local offer' for our care leavers and provide them with advice and support from a personal advisor until they are 25 years old.

Priority 6) We will work to ensure the right services are in place to meet the health and wellbeing needs of our children and young people.

Priority 7) We will continue to work with our children and young people to ensure they have opportunities to access good education, employment and training to achieve their full potential.

Priority 8) The engagement and influence of children and young people is a key priority across Durham County Council.

Conclusion

- 10 The work of the CLASP continues forge good working relationships and promote services work together to identify and meet the needs of children in care and care leavers.
- 11 The CLASP operates as the link into understanding practice between the frontline practitioners, subgroups and systems allow for a direct line of sight for Corporate Parenting Panel.
- 12 The CLASP is hoped to be the golden thread of the partnership and report back as a corporate parent.

Author

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None.

Finance

There are no financial implications linked to this report.

Consultation

The work of the Children Looked After Strategic Partnership (CLASP) is co-produced with children and young people although no additional consultation has taken place in the preparation of this report.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None.

Climate Change

None.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

The risk of failing to develop productive working relationships and practices to meet the needs of children in care and care leavers would pose a risk of failure to meet statutory responsibilities to these groups.

Procurement

None.