

## Corporate Parenting Panel

8 March 2024

### Poetry Book, Children in Care and Care Leavers



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## Report of Rachel Farnham, Head of Children's Social Care, Children and Young People's Services, Durham County Council

### Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

### Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report provides a summary of the Poetry Book project, a collection of poetry from our care experienced children, young people and care leavers. It outlines the process and the completion of the project and advises of next steps.

### Executive summary

- 2 The poetry book was a request from Corporate Parenting Panel to develop a collection of poetry from our care experienced children and young people and care leavers. We, in partnership with a local poet ran three poetry workshops for children aged seven year and over. The poems by our children were collated into a book titled 'Cherished' (Appendix 2)

### Recommendation

- 3 Corporate Parenting Panel are recommended to:
  - a) note the contents of the report.

## **Background**

- 4 The poetry book was a request from Corporate Parenting Panel following some of our children sharing their poetry with the panel.
- 5 Children's Social Care and the Virtual School agreed the funding and were able to commission a local poet to work with our children and young people with support from Children's Social Care and Education officers.

## **Summary**

- 6 The children and young people attended one session to develop their own poetry which included games and activities to assist them. Young people who were unable to attend one of the planned sessions were offered the opportunity to submit poetry to officers.
- 7 The poems were sent to DCC Design and Print service who created a wonderful book ready for us to share.

## **Conclusion**

- 8 Following on from Corporate Parenting panel on 8 March 2024, the book will be distributed to all schools within the local authority, those schools where children who live 'out of county' reside, Children's Social Care Teams, and all libraries across County Durham. The copy of the book will also be given to Beamish Museum for their 'Cottage.'
- 9 The poetry will be shared with all the children involved and we will celebrate this great achievement. Some of the children involved will join us at Corporate Parenting Panel and share some of their poems.

## **Author**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

The Children Act 1989 places a legal duty on the Local Authority to ascertain the wishes and feelings of the child. Both the Children Act 1989 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child both have general and underpinning principles of the child's welfare and best interests being the paramount concern.

### **Finance**

Durham County Council and the Virtual School were able to jointly fund this project.

### **Consultation / Engagement**

Children and Young People were consulted and created their poems for the book.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

CSC has a duty to consult with and listen to the view of children, young people and their parents and carers of all backgrounds and abilities.

### **Climate Change**

No impact.

### **Human Rights**

None.

### **Crime and Disorder**

None.

### **Staffing**

CSC and the Virtual School jointly provided 3-4 officers to support the sessions with the children.

### **Accommodation**

None.

### **Risk**

Risk Assessments were completed for each session held with children and young people.

### **Procurement**

None.