



Cherished

a collection of poems from care experienced children, young people and care leavers



Foreword

We are very excited to share this collection of poetry which will be available in all schools and libraries across County Durham. This book features a beautiful array of poems written by care experienced children and young people.

A huge thank you to all the children and young people involved in creating this book, the poet Katharine Goda, Durham County Council, Children Social Care, Durham's Virtual School and all staff involved in this project.

Enjoy!

Bright ^{*} ^{*} ^{*} _{*} _{*}

You gift ideas and words, doodle straight lines into dreams,
make snow trails full of stories, find gold in autumn leaves.

You move through life with allies beside you, with fireworks,
song and storm, that new book smell, top football team,
seeking stars at every unknown door.

You bring fairy tales and sisters, dance and fishing
rods and pets, share comfy trainers, hot chocolate, birds,
fixing every bike or engine.

You outline brilliant futures, shine with determined light
but look - you are already the gold, the sun, the fire.

Inspired by our children and young people
- written by Katharine Goda (December 2023)

I DREAM



When I was a little girl I dreamt of many things
I dreamt I was going to be a princess
I dreamt I was going to be an actor
Now



I dream I would be like the other girls my age
I dream of seeing my sisters
I dream of being part of my nephews and nieces lives once again
I dream of being a perfect daughter
Sometimes the dream I dream turn into nightmares
I wonder if I'm good enough
I wonder if I'm worth people's time
I dream of wanting to help other people like you and I
I dream of making my birth family proud of me
I dream of the future ahead of me
I dream of these friendships forever
I dream of the memories I have gained
I dream of my childhood
I dream of my school life
And far I have come since I first started school
All those many years ago
I dream of when my time comes,
And I finally leave foster care



by LG

My Younger Self



It's ok to cry
You have been through so much
You're not a bad person because you were angry
This was a way I showed my feelings
I have people that love me and care about me
I am Caitlyn, I can make a life for myself

I am brave

I am strong



Care experienced people are superheroes

Your life in a bin bag

Talking to strangers

Moving around the country

You are amazing

You have got this

You are an inspiration to others

Your younger self will be proud of the person you are

We leave a mark when we leave

We are never forgotten

We are care kids

Nobody knows what our future holds



by LG



A letter to Directors

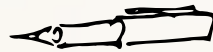
Dear sir, madam or whom it may concern,
Through anguish and through sorrow and through strife,
Our generation has proved it's our turn,
All wanting one same thing a change of life,

No longer will we be seen and not heard,
We may be young but we aren't stupid,
And as we're ignored our vision becomes blurred,
Til you hear us we won't remain muted,

People come in and out of our lives fast
So who are we to put our trust into,
The first social worker we meet or the last,
Same faces are the key and will help us through,

Hope to hear from you soon yours sincerely,
From a somebody you need not know dearly

by B



It's the small things

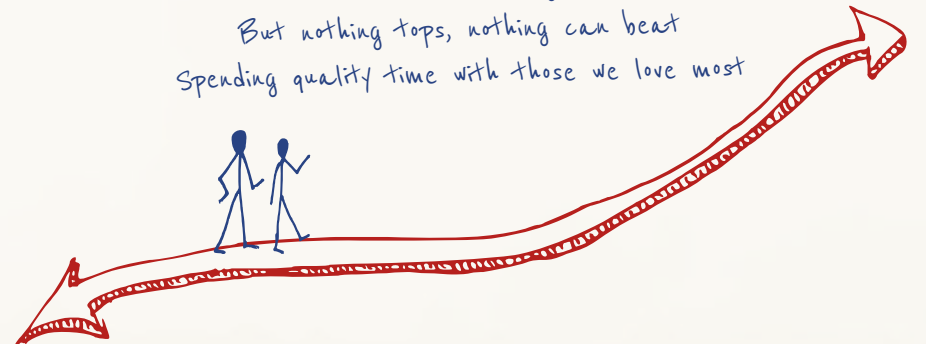


It's the smell bacon on a Sunday morning,
When the flowers first bloom in the spring,
or when the first leaves fall in the autumn,
When the season turns

and we can finally make fresh footprints in the snow,
New fluffy socks and pyjamas
and dressing gowns and slippers,
Sound of rain hitting a window
A candle lit, hot bubble baths
that new book smell



Or cuddling up to our beloved pets
With hot chocolates with whipped cream and marshmallows, the lot
Or the feeling of coming home after a long road trip
Fresh air and long walks,
The sound of crashing waves
But nothing tops, nothing can beat
Spending quality time with those we love most



Untitled



Did you know that I was sunshine
 I am sunshine mixed with thunderstorms
 But when there is thunder I calm down
 My life is like clouds which are like a happy day
 The weather is like up and down all the time
 The sun is very happy as if characters
 The azure sky like sadness
 The thunderstorm like despair



by G

i love cool



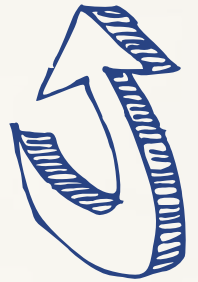
Football's my name
 I love keepers. The goals that I save
 Smashin and Bashin
 Football's my fave
 Go Newcastle go!



by CR



Jumping High

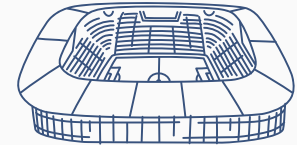


Jumping high
 Brushing the horses
 Spending time looking after them
 Getting the horses ready to ride
 Horses are just great
 Having fun today

By anonymous



Feeling



The time of feeling when you're sat
 in the stadium on a Saturday night
 Hearing the crowd chant when your team is winning
 It's special



By D

I COME FROM



I come from a broken home

I come from a bloom of flowers

I come from a garden full of flowers

I come from a garden full of flowers and roses

I come from holding the love of my family together

I come from faith

I come from the spark and the flash of a storm

I come from mood swings all of the time

By A



A Silent Symphony;

Ode to Young People

In a world of noise, we feel unseen,
Our words lost among the chaos, like a silent scream,
Decisions made without our say,

Leave us lost, can you help us find a way?

In a world filled with possibilities that burn so bright,

Together let's build a future that shines with light,

And when your words fall short, let actions take the stage,

Paint a picture, your words simply cannot engage,

For in the doing, true intentions are unfurled,

As the saying goes actions speak louder than any spoken word,

Let's work together,

And we shall conquer any endeavour,

But not for me and not for you,

For the masses of young people desperate for a breakthrough,

Let's lead a better way,

From here and now today,

Act! Don't just say you will,

And finally, we'll no longer be at a standstill,

The silence of your deeds unspoken,

Reveals a promise unbroken.

By A

MANCHESTER,

Never change

Manchester Utd is my team

The treble winning team

The **Reds**

The Champions League

Manchester Utd have signed the top talents

Cantona

Old Trafford

The famous shirt

Never change throughout the years

By anonymous



The Complicated Past

It's 12pm and everyone is dead.

All twelve people are dead and slaughtered.

Luckily, I wasn't one of them. But my group was next.

My name's Vinny and I'm number twelve.

Fast forward twelve years. I've never been that scared in my life.

That past was the worst one. I have the power to see all my past lives, and my last one was like living hell.

I'm now sixteen and taking care of my younger brother and sister because my parents died first.

They were group number one. Twelve weeks later, I was seventeen and died at 12pm.

By C



UNKNOWN

The world around us ever so high,
Ever so often we'll touch the sky,
When you're feeling down, just look around,
In the distance, the fresh awakening breeze,
To make all our worries just go away and freeze.



The way the wind dances and prances around you,
Like a pen on paper, it just relaxes you.
Your imagination creating clouds is a perfect view
A silhouette of your happiness shining through
Creating what is a happy day, just to enjoy what we've made.
In the field with leaves all over, shows an image of autumn air.



By C

Moving Placement

The social worker had some news
I didn't want to hear
It came as quite a big surprise,
It filled me full of fear.
Mind blowing news!
I'm moving on
And in less than a week
I will be gone.

The foster home I've
come to know is over now
And I must go,
The reasons I don't understand,
but I have to accept
as it's all been planned.
Soon arrives the moving day,
Time to say goodbye,
to all the friends
I treasured and made,
Makes me breakdown and cry
As the time to leave drew near,
My heart and mind
were exploding with fear.

Fear of the unknown,
and what is in store?
How will I feel when
I walk through the door?
My Social worker says it will be alright.
But I didn't sleep a wink last night!
All through the journey all the way there,
I could hear my heart beating,
felt quite ill to be fair,
Then, as our destination got near
I actually began to tremble with fear
The walk from the
car to the new front door,
made my heart race
faster than ever before.



A little dog came
to greet me, and he seemed very pleased,
He helped me relax,
and my anxiety eased.
I soon realised that all was okay
But I will never forget the day!
Changes like this
can be something to fear,
A fear that you may not forget,
But if you work on
it and trust those around you
it may prove to be
the best change yet.



By GW and D

DEAR PEOPLE READING THIS POEM

Some tips about coming into care,
When you're scared never cry just
tell your carer

When your worried and don't want
to talk just write it down and give
it to an adult they can help you.

Don't worry sweetheart

I LOVE
YOU!

By AM

unknown

I like the feeling when I'm *mbz:gs qomr*

I twirl and swirl all over town

★ When I look at the stars they look like gems in the sky

★ The sky makes me so happy I could cry
My friends laugh with me and I laugh with them

We play LOLs on my LOL

stage and I sing a song from my song page

My trainers are so comfy to wear

They feel like sofas on my feet

When I walk through the woods with them

I can hear the birds tweet. 🐦

By Anonymous

D.A.N.C.E

Dancing and twirling my worries away,

A burning passion

Nerves wash away,

Courage and confidence builds

Enchanted by the music I am able to be me

By I

NOBODY

There was a time, I was alone
Nobody to talk to and help me
I was on my own, far away
In a new place trying to make it my own
Losing all hope at the things

I wanted to do
Nobody believed in me
Nobody loved me
Then one day I was told
Caitlyn,

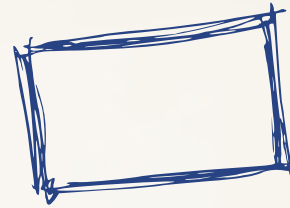
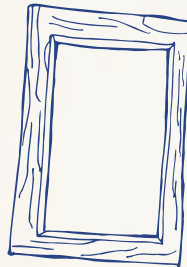
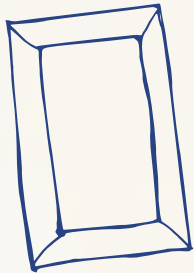
I am leaving now
I have a new job

Goodbye, thanks for letting me be on your journey
I have found someone new for you to meet
Unsure of what to expect
Sad, goodbye Aimee

Then one June morning
I was eating a McDonald's breakfast
My new worker came along
She called herself Becky

She promised that I would never be lonely

And ever since that day
She stayed and had been there when I needed her
Welcoming me back to the North East
Taking me to stay somewhere in the summer
Pushing each other in the sea
Eating ice cream and food
Is what we do best



Always causing mischief behind Tracy back
I was a lost girl from the North East
Becky rings me once a week
Okay Caitlyn, whatever Becky
Helping me through so much

Becky sprinkles you in pixie dust, and tells you to believe
Believe in her and you will go far
Unless it comes to trains and coaches
Then it's sparkle dust you will need
You will be forever a huge part of my life
To internal destiny

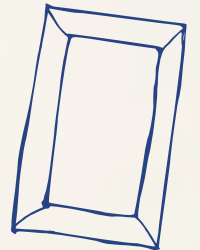
Becky your alreest I suppose
I am now not a lost girl from the North East

I have Becky beside me
Rubbish at accents, she maybe
Winding each other up, why not
Caitlyn throwing her phone
Becky pretending to be annoyed

Whenever where together
Where away from reality

You came into my life at one of the most difficult times
It was meant to be
I was a lost girl from the North East

By C



HOW I FEEL WHEN I FISH



Goin' fishin'
My passion, my obsession
The rod, the reel, the fishing line
The salt of the sea
The horizon beyond,
Clogged with ships
Casting my line, I dream of the ultimate catch
From the murky depths
Suddenly a bite
A fish tugging a hello
All quite and still,
I can hear my breathing
Then the fish starts squealing
Bring the fish home

My hobby, my dream
Testing my limits against nature
The fresh air
Happiness lies there

By K

In the Moment

I am here right now
Making poems with wonderful words,
Me writing right now
Fidgeting, squirming and turning with siblings,
Very super dupa fun
Lovely jubilee
Family time we came
Making memories everyone

By A



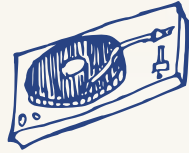
Horrible Moments

A pen
A necessary tool in life
Thin nibs, Medium nibs
Blue, Black, Red and Green
Wonderful, sets me free
Then a horrible moment
A big blue blotch
A leaky pen
How un-necessary

By anonymous



UP THE GERS



I like royal blue
DJ Bad Boy on the loo
I love drinking Iron Bru

I love Glasgow Rangers
How do you make friends without talking to strangers?
I love football and basketball
Hitting any ball off a wall



I love adrenaline
And fixing mechanical things
Bikes and engines
A V8 modified just sounds so beautiful
A rumble of the broken exhaust
Revvng it, is the most beautiful sound



"If they stand behind you, protect them
If they stand beside you respect them
If they stand against you, no mercy!"
I love quotes!

“ ”

I love going with the flow
I've learned how to make a paper mouse
I'm not scouse
You're more than likely to buy a house



By J

I AM



I'm a Mazda RX7 FD V8 rotary engine
I'm a Nissan Skylight, R34 GTR V Spec Mark 2
I'm a power bank, knowing my energy
I make people hyper, I make people laugh
I'm just like a modified car like the sound of a V12
I'm a budgie - I'm loud and can fly anywhere I want
Then land, n just chill for 5 minutes, have a moment



If Rangers win, I'm happy and sunny
If Rangers lose, I feel like fighting
Like thunder and lightning
I'm not furniture- that just stands still
I'm rather a Maryland Cookie
With a V10 4 and a half litre engine
Like people cheering at Ibrox
Like Ibrox, Amsterdam and Turkey
I'm smon the Gers



Like 55 titles
I'm the spirit of Bill Struth will carry on

By J

I AM A CARE KID



I am an actor

Putting on a front so that everyone likes me

I'm always trying to better myself change, adapt to, what I think people want

I don't think I have really understood why

Than looking back I remembered

That I'm care kid

And I learned from a young age that I need to follow these rules of a stranger to fit into a family.

I have to be the one that makes an effort to fit into a family that's welcomed me into the home



I've become a people pleaser an actor from this

Something like a scary is people pleasing as a form of manipulation. Not that bad but it's still is because you are changing you are doing with that person wants to get them to like you.

But it's so second nature is so normal. How can I not think about what my friend wants how can I not think about what Bob is thinking?

There's no way to stop it, because it's all I've known is all we've ever known

Care kid

I am a care kid



That does not define me I've struggled, but here I am

I will not be a statistic.

Care is nothing like Tracy Beaker. None of us care kids are bad we've just struggled

We have become actors to fit into families.



We are care kids that said we are children we are young people that had to grow up fast become wise beyond our years, but now has to struggle with the fact that we're in a stranger's home fit into the rules, their families

We are kids

We want to be Home, we wanna find a home



Be patient with us

We're not with our family, the people we've known so of course, it's gonna be hard but your letting us into a home so take time. Let us know that you're gonna be there for us and that you're gonna fight for us that's all we want

We are care, kids

Do we wanna be kids first?

We wanna have fun and have a childhood

We are kids

Not a statistic

By J

On days when I feel sad

On the days when I feel sad
I cuddle my dog she doesn't make me mad
Going to the park to see my friends
Pushing me on the swing
The fun never ends
After my dinner I love to share some sweets
They are my favourite kind of treaties
In the car I love to sing along to my favourite music
Sometimes I really lose it!
On the weekend we sometimes visit the soft play
I could happily stay there all day
At night time I love to read my books
Fairy tales of all different kinds, but
Not the books that give me the spooks



By MD



Sending love to my family



My dad. You know my dad is super cool
If you ever feel sad think about the things that make you happy
Don't be upset like a wet nappy

By M

I LIKE



I like to tell stories
I like to colour in
I like school when it's my birthday
I like pizza cold like pepperoni
I like lemon and lime to drink, ice cold like snow



I like the sea
I like the waves
I like vanilla ice cream
With sprinkles and strawberry sauce



By MD

AUTUMN DAYS

What is Autumn?

Well, it's a season to celebrate pumpkins
And the plot of treason
On Halloween we hear everyone's screams
and dress up as witches and ghouls schools!
We Trick or Treat all over town
and get so many sweets that no-one can frown
On bonfire night when I've ate my last sweet,
I watch the fireworks go fizz, whizz, pop & bang
That is the reason I love this season

By N

Care KIDS

Care Kids, so young and sweet
A spark of life in their eyes
A future of hope and dreams
A chance to reach for the skies



A world of opportunity, just waiting to be explored
A chance to find their true selves, to find what they adored
to make their own way
A journey of discovery, a path they will lay

A world of compassion, a place to feel safe
A place to find their courage and their strength

Care Kids, so brave and strong
A chance

Care Kids, so kind and wise
A heart of gold, a soul of fire
A chance to make a difference, to bring joy and inspire

A world of love and understanding, a place to learn and grow
A chance to reach their potential, a chance to really show

Care Kids, so beautiful and free
A future of promise and joy
A chance to make their mark, to make their dreams come true

A world of hope and possibility,
A chance to become who they were meant to be.

By J

I AM WAR



The bloodied yet brave soldiers life is struck
The gurgling sounds of the crying souls of war,
You can hear the sounds of death coming nearer and nearer
With the bitter air comes the smell of mustard gas
This new reaper strikes their neck
The literal signs of death
I am war,
I am peace,
The bells are ringing across the streets, ruthless galore
Mothers, fathers and children hugging and kissing
The people loving peace and empathy
The poppies on the battlefield shows death's consequence
I am peace

By A

ALL LIFE'S FAULT

My life is a misery
I feel I am a prisoner of my life
Is a mystery
A puzzle if you like
I need answers to the life
That I have
Its all life's fault
Its not fair
Why do I have a life like this
Its all life's fault
I need to finish all of the puzzle
To stop my life from becoming a muddle
It's all Life's fault!

By AP



BEING A REBEL

There are people in this place whom I rob from
Yes, you. Ordinary people in this old Victorian world

Pickpocketing is my style
I feel free; til I get arrested (bro)
Beheadings you see (gross)
Being the rebel that I can
I aint no hero; I'm not Spiderman (boo!)
I'm a rebel, I'm coming for you
Being a rebel is me (very bad)
Get ready for my scam
Fighting the rules
Because being good really drools

By A



CREEPERS

Microsoft, Minecraft may be a blocky word
The destiny of squares about to be unfurled
Zombies are green, Creepers explode
Will I survive? Nobody knows
Building shelters safe for the night
Cos' skeletons with bows give me the fright
Exploring the world, far and wide
With the tools and armoury by my side
Picking up loot from the petrifying horrors
Saying goodbye to all of my sorrows
You can find husks in the stranded desert
Minecraft's the game to load up with your presents

By C

