

Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference

Purpose

This Terms of Reference sets out Corporate Parenting Panel's responsibilities in relation to the five functional areas detailed in the Council's Constitution.

Function One

Ensure that the Council acts as a good corporate parent to children and young people in care and care leavers including:

- Children and young people in residential care
- Children and young people in foster care
- Children and young people placed for adoption
- Children and young people placed at home under Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations
- Young people who are living in supported lodgings
- Young people in secure services
- Young People in custody.

Responsibilities

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Take an overview of the Council and partner agencies responsibilities toward CYP in our care and care leavers.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Monitor performance of services for children for whom we are corporate parents, including care leavers, receipt of information on regulation 44 visit and inspections, referring any systemic issues to Cabinet and or Scrutiny as required.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Maintain a strategic overview of all developments, plans, policies and strategies for children whom the Council is a corporate parent and make appropriate recommendations for action.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ensure all members of the Council are regularly updated on issues affecting children for whom they are the corporate parent including care leavers through an annual report to Council, Cabinet and scrutiny and inform training.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Receive an overview of Regulation 44 visits and inspections of private children's homes within the County Durham area.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Receive an update on independent residential homes within County Durham and their Ofsted inspection reports outcomes.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Agree an annual work programme based on corporate parenting strategy and priorities.</i>

Function Two

To engage and listen to the views of children, young people and their carers for whom the Council is the parent.

Responsibilities

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Provide a forum for children and young people in our care and care leavers to participate and influence policy and have an opportunity to talk about their experiences of the services they have received.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ensure that positive experiences are maintained, that lessons are learnt and changes are made in areas that require improvement.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Meet with children for whom the council is corporate parent and their carers on a regular basis and celebrate their achievements.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Participate in Regulation 44 visits quarterly, this will allow the Panel to improve planning and understanding of care in residential homes.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ensure that leisure, cultural, further education and employment opportunities are offered and taken up by children in our care and care leavers</i>

Function Three

To work in partnership with other statutory agencies to drive forward improvements in care.

Responsibilities

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Examine ways that the Council as a whole, and partner agencies can improve life chances of children in our care and care leavers.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ensure there is good joined up working with partner agencies.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Develop links with the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership including a picture of Serious Case Reviews of Children who are in our care</i>

Function Four

To act as the governing body for the Virtual School for children and young people in our care.

Responsibilities

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Maintain an overview and provide challenge of governance arrangements for the virtual school</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>To monitor and bring challenge to ensure the children in our care's educational attainment and performance is optimised.</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>To encourage and support each child in our care to achieve optimum educational outcomes at each stage of their schooling</i> |

Function Five

To act as the governing body for Aycliffe Secure Services, monitoring and ensuring the quality of secure accommodation.

Responsibilities

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Maintain an overview and provide challenge of governance arrangements for Aycliffe Secure Services</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Support and bring challenge to achieve the best outcomes for the children in our care who are in secure services</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Agree the themes and performance, on an annual basis that enhance corporate parenting of our children who are in secure services.</i> |

Membership

1. The Corporate Parenting Panel is formed of 21 Members of the Council including the member of the Executive or Executive Support for Children and Young People's Services, and the Chair or Vice Chair of Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
2. The Corporate Parenting Panel membership will include a maximum of 10 non-voting co-opted members, consisting of school representatives and representatives from other agencies.
3. The Chair of Corporate Parenting Panel (or vice Chair) will be a member of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Accountability /Governance

1. Prepare and provide an annual written report to Cabinet, Scrutiny and Council setting out the Corporate Parenting Panel's achievements, challenges within the year and priorities for the year ahead.

2. Where appropriate the Corporate Parenting Panel refer matters to Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny for further investigation and similarly the Children and Young People's OSC refer matters to the Corporate Parenting Panel where appropriate.
3. Regular meetings held between the Chair of Corporate Parenting Panel, another panel member, an officer from Children's Services and representatives from Service Direct to discuss the fabric of our children's homes and any repairs that are planned or may be needed.
4. Prepare and publish the Corporate Parenting Panel's terms of reference and work programme on the Council's website on an annual basis.

Administration

1. The Chair of Corporate Parenting and the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services or person designated as lead officer agree the agenda for each panel meeting as part of an ongoing work plan for the municipal year.
2. Legal and Democratic Services will provide administrative arrangements (including arrangement of meetings, publication and despatch of agendas and minute taking responsibilities) and constitutional guidance to the panel.
3. Corporate Affairs will support the Corporate Parenting Panel, and will manage the work programme and produce the annual report.
4. The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, the Chair of Corporate Parenting Panel and the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services will review the terms of reference of the Corporate Parenting Panel on an annual basis.

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