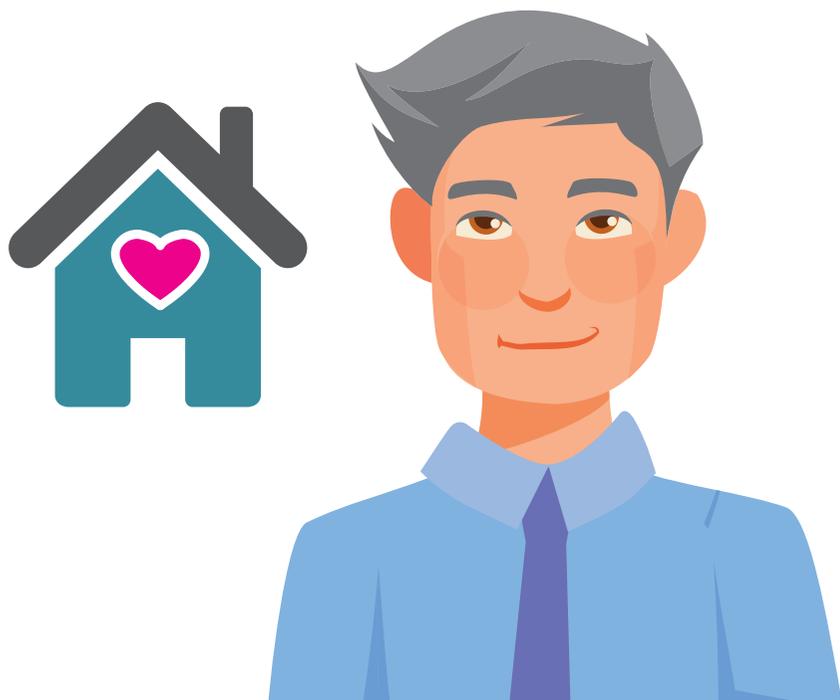


## 4. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

We have identified 4 Corporate Parenting priorities:

- Achieving Permanence
- Improving sufficiency to provide the right home at the right place
- Improving social, physical, emotional and mental health support and outcomes
- Improving education, employment and training opportunities and outcomes

We have listened to children and young people and produced eight key objectives that will improve the support we provide to them under our 4 Corporate Parenting priorities in the future



## OBJECTIVE 1

Children and young people have a voice in the way we deliver our services.

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*'To ensure that children and young people are consulted and actively participate in the decisions we make about how we deliver our services'.*

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*'Nothing about me without me'.*

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We enable children and young people in our care and care leavers to engage and collaborate with us on everything that is important to them. We ensure assessments and plans are co-produced with their involvement and they have a say in the decisions we make.

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/powar-participation-group](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/powar-participation-group)

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/linx-children-in-care-council](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/linx-children-in-care-council)

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/care-leaver-forum](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/care-leaver-forum)

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/corporate-parenting-board](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/corporate-parenting-board)

## OBJECTIVE 2

**Children and young people will have a sense of belonging, security, continuity, support and stability.**

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*‘Working with our partners to build strong communities for our children and young people in our care and care leavers to live in’.*

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*‘Achieving permanence is at the heart of every decision made by us and our partners’*

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We work with our partners to achieve and maintain all types of permanence for children and young people in our care and Care Leavers to ensure they achieve their potential – as if they were our child.

We have embedded a trauma informed and strength-based approach in our practice and encourage our partners to do the same and ensure children and young people in our care and care leavers are involved in the development of multi-agency strategies to achieve permanence and improve permanence practice.

We have revised our Life Story Policy and are working with our partners to embed a more holistic and continued approach to Life Story.

Children and young people in our care are supported to maintain connections to those important to them not just through family time and care leavers are supported to build strong and effective personal support networks. It is important that wherever children and young people live they are encouraged and supported to experience positive social and leisure activities to feel included in their local communities.

Care Leavers are provided with a Local Offer that is regularly reviewed and we will be working with the Care Leaver Covenant to improve the offer from our partners to care leavers across the region.

We stand by our Corporate Parents Promise and continue to build a stronger corporate family for the benefit of the children and young people in our care and care leavers

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/care-leavers-local-offer](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/care-leavers-local-offer)

## OBJECTIVE 3

**Children and young people are well prepared and supported when leaving care.**

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*'to ensure that all care leavers feel supported and can access a range of services to promote their continued wellbeing into adulthood'.*

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*'to enable care leavers to set up and maintain their own home'.*

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Young people in our care will be provided with a Personal Advisor when they are 16 years old and be supported by their Social Worker from the Children in Our Care Teams, Personal Advisor from the Leaving Care Teams, carers and the professionals around them to develop the relevant knowledge and skills needed to leave care as a young adult.

Independence preparation includes general and practical preparation as well as social/emotional support and financial education. We provide a framework that helps young people to develop these life skills and provide financial assistance including paying their council tax until their 25th birthday.

During the pandemic, we provided additional financial assistance to care leavers by paying a Leaving Care Top Up in line with the increased Universal Credit rate and ensured young people have the technology to stay connected with those important to them

## OBJECTIVE 4

**Children and young people will have a suitable, safe and lasting home to live and be cared for.**

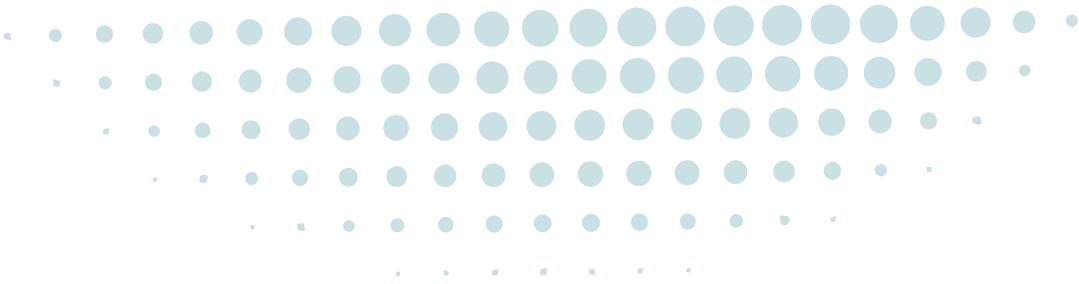
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*'To ensure that the children and young people we care for have a range of suitable and appropriate accommodation to meet their immediate and long-term needs'.*

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All children and young people in care and care leavers are provided with exceptional love, care and kindness where they live and from the professionals around them.

We work with our partners to ensure the children and young people in our care and leaving care are provided with the right home, at the right place and at the right time. We have improved our permanence process to provide the children and young people in our care with a lasting home.



For children and young people who can return to live with their families safely are well supported to achieve this.

Young people are provided with the right housing provision to support their pathway into independence, and we work with District Housing Authorities and accommodation and housing providers to achieve this.

Care Leavers have continued support to manage and maintain their home permanently in adulthood and feel safe where they live. We support young people in foster care to continue with their carers under Staying Put and have improved our Staying Put offer.

We have a Joint Housing Protocol between Lancashire County Council and the 12 District Councils to support Care Leavers securing a safe, suitable and permanent home. We have two Housing Advisors to support the Leaving Care Teams and we are also working with the Ministry for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to prevent homelessness.



**The health and wellbeing of our children and young people in care and care leavers will be a priority for everyone.**

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*‘To improve the health and wellbeing of the children and young people we care for’.*

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Health partners have a significant role in identifying, delivering and improving the health of children and young people who are looked after. An initial health assessment is undertaken when a child/ young person is new to care to identify any health needs, and dependant on their age a further review assessment is carried out 6 monthly or annually. Children looked after, can have complex health needs, both physical and psychological. The Looked After Children Nurses liaise with the wider health economy, such as paediatric therapy; dental services; GPs; specialist services e.g. CAMHS, as well as other agencies and non-statutory organisations to ensure health needs are met in the best way for the individual child or young person.

At the final health assessment, the young person leaving care will receive a summary of health needs letter, containing a summary of recent health issues, immunisation status, details of key health contacts, e.g. GP, LAC Nurse, sexual health services.

From listening to young people’s feedback, we are currently working with Adult Services to ensure that any continuing support that is needed for our young people is planned before they become adults.

## OBJECTIVE 6

### **Children and young people are protected from harm and risk of exploitation.**

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*'To ensure that children are protected from harm and exploitation and ensure that they are provided with support to overcome any pull factors that would lead them to being exploited'.*

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L Partner agencies work together to ensure a coordinated response to children and young people most at risk of criminal or sexual exploitation, missing from home and trafficking.

All children and young people in our care that are subsequently identified as being at risk of missing, are offered a comprehensive package of support that reflects their individual needs and missing from home return interviews are undertaken. Monthly Missing from Home Panels are held, where the young people most at risk are discussed in a multi-agency forum to inform the care plan.

Social Workers from the Child Exploitation Teams work with children and young people in care and professionals involved to address pull and push factors and Multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation (MACSE) meetings are held monthly and interlinked with the Missing from Home Panels and Missing Education Panels.

Children's Services, the Youth Offending Team, Lancashire Constabulary and the Crown Prosecution Service have joint working arrangements to divert and prevent children looked after

from offending behaviour and entering or escalating through the justice system.

Children and young people in care and Care Leavers can be vulnerable to a variety of different types of exploitation like emotional exploitation or financial exploitation and are developing a comprehensive safeguarding protocol for Care Leavers to provide the same level of safeguarding support as for children and young people in our care



## OBJECTIVE 7

### **Children and young people will be supported to achieve their own goals and be ambitious in education, employment and training.**

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*'To close the achievement gap between those children and young people that the local authority cares for and those that are cared for by their own families'.*

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Young peoples' likelihood of success in life is much better if they are supported into education, employment, and training. We recognise that children and young people in our care and care leavers will often need additional access to these opportunities and we are committed to ensuring that this support is available.

We are aware that many children and young people have gaps in their education, and we are keen to ensure the children in our care are confident to access a range of educational settings, achieving success in whatever they choose to do. We want all our children to be their best.

The educational attainment of our children at Key Stage 1 and 2 is improving and generally in line with the national data. The attainment of our Key Stage 4 Year 11 leavers had been below the national average for several years. However, in 2019 and 2020 our average Attainment 8 and Progress 8 score has improved and is much closer to the national average and is closing the gap between ourselves and other similar Local Authorities. The percentage of our young people attaining Grade 4+ in English and Maths improved at a greater rate than the national average or regional LA's. However, we know there is still much to do to enable our young people to reach their potential.

The Lancashire Virtual School for children in our care and care leavers aims to provide support and challenge to schools, education providers, social work teams, and other key partners. The Virtual School monitors and tracks attendance, progress and outcomes for our children and the quality of Personal Education Plans. This is supported through a new Personal Education Plan document.

Advice, guidance, and training sessions are provided to carers and parents to help them support children in our care with learning. The Employment and Support Team (part of the Virtual School) support children in our care and care leavers aged 14-25 years with the next steps into employment, apprenticeships, training, volunteering

and work experience. We work in partnership with the Children in Our Care and Leaving Care Teams to embed Children's Services EET Strategy as it is our aim to increase opportunities for the children in our care and care leavers across Lancashire.



## OBJECTIVE 8

**Having big dreams and goals, support our children and young people to achieve their dreams and goals, and celebrate their achievements**

*'To ensure that the children we look after and have looked after, are recognised for their achievements and successes'.*

Children in our care and care leavers have a variety of opportunities to celebrate their achievements. PROUD is the biggest event of the year with young people nominated by a wide range of key workers and agencies. They are an opportunity for Corporate Parents to come together with our children and young people to celebrate their achievements. Approximately 60 young people and their guests attend PROUD each year. It serves as a timely reminder of our children and young people's resilience, many talents and successes despite the adversity and challenges many have overcome.

Due to Covid, we have not been able to host the PROUD Awards in 2020 and 2021 but planning for the next PROUD Awards have resumed. This annual event will continue to celebrate our young people and show them how proud we are.

We also celebrate our care leavers as part of National Care

Leaver's Week with every year where we bring together young people, councillors and professionals for a themed event co-produced with our young people.

