

## **Corporate Parenting Statement of Intent.**

The most recent Rotherham Corporate Parenting Strategy covered the years 2017-2020. This has not been reviewed and updated since this time and therefore is significantly overdue. The intention is to refresh the strategy in 2023 to cover 2024-2027. To do this justice it is critical to ensure that we engage with all key stakeholders. We will ensure that we have a co-produced strategy which outlines how Rotherham MBC will meet the needs of their cared for and care experienced young people. We are committed to ensuring we have a fully co-produced and updated Corporate Parenting strategy by the end of January, this will be fully timetabled at the next Corporate Parenting Board in September 2023.

The draft Strategy will be presented at the corporate parenting board of December, with an intention for this to be presented to cabinet early in 2024. This document outlines how we are going to fulfil our corporate parenting responsibility in the interim.

This document sets out Rotherham's vision and principles, underpinned by the voices of our children looked after and care experienced young people to support us in ensuring we have high aspirations for them.

Corporate parenting is a collective responsibility first laid out in the Children Act 1989. In addition to the Local Authority, the Act placed a duty on partners, including health, education, and housing services to assist children's services to fulfil their functions under the Act – providing help, support and services in order to meet corporate parenting responsibilities. Government guidance for Councillors "If this were my child" (DfES 2003), emphasised the elected member role in ensuring that all children looked after receive a good standard of care and the high-quality outcomes that every parent would want for their own child.

We will work with partner agencies and stakeholders to ensure we have the right services, delivering the right support at the right time to secure good outcomes for children and young people. What is abundantly clear is that no single service operating alone can hope to meet the needs of the children in our care or their families. We need to establish close, coordinated working relationships with partners if we are to succeed in improving outcomes for our children now and in the future. Rotherham is committed to working in partnership with wider services and with children and young people to achieve this. As a partnership, we ensure children looked after and care experienced young people have a strong voice to support us in delivering our ambitions and in meeting their needs. We want all children and young people to achieve, be healthy, be safe and resilient.

Rotherham MBC and our stakeholders are committed to reducing inequalities for our most vulnerable groups; this includes children looked after and care experienced young people.

We recognise the importance of education by promoting a child's education from early years, with the opportunity to access outstanding education which will support their

aspirations . We want our care leavers to access opportunities for further education, training, and employment.

Focussing on these important areas we will ensure that we give all our young people every opportunity to meet reach their full potential with access to employment opportunities which will enable them to achieve their aspirations.

Our sufficiency strategy alongside the foster care recruitment and retention strategy outlines our commitment to providing permanent homes for our young people with the right support to help them live independently and to remain close to those people who are important to them.

Promoting and prioritising the health of our children both physical and emotional is a corner stone of our practice We work with our health partners to ensure that our children and young have their physical and emotional health needs met and that they have access to a dental care and regular health checks to check their progress .

The updated strategy will ensure that it fully encompasses the principles of the Care Review ensuring we provide stable homes for our young people.

We recognise our Children in Care Council support us as corporate parents, in addition to our wider population of children looked after and care experienced young people, who can share their lived experiences with us and influence continuous service improvement. We will listen to and hear what is being said and take action to improve the lives of this group of children and young people. As a partnership, we are also committed to feeding back to young people to ensure they know how their input has changed the way we support them.

As corporate parents, Rotherham is committed to ensuring all children looked after and young people whom we are working with, who are capable of forming their own views, will have the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them. Their views will be given due weight according to the age and maturity of the child or young person and this will be a process, not a one-off event. We understand that by meaningful participation, this will enable children and young people to influence their own outcomes. As corporate parents, we are fully committed to meaningful participation by supporting young people to understand and express their needs, experiences and views, to influence practice, service and policy.

We already have several strategies and plans which underpin our commitment to ensuring that we are able to meet the needs of our young people these include.

- Rotherham's Young Person's Plan
- Commissioning and sufficiency strategy
- The Fostering plan
- The recruitment and retention plan
- The Care Leavers Local Offer