

ROTHERHAM CORPORATE PARENTING PARTNERSHIP BOARD

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Our Vision for Children in Our Care and Leaving Our Care

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and partners are ambitious for our children, and we aim to be a Child Centred Borough, ensuring the best for all children and young people in our Borough. Our vision for children in our care, leaving our care and children being adopted is simple, we are committed to ensuring that we provide the best care that we can, as good parents do. We want our children and young people to be happy and healthy, to be safe and feel safe, be resilient, be protected from harm and exploitation, and to be supported each step of the way as they transition into adult life. This includes ensuring that they have opportunity to do well in education and support to gain employment and access to good jobs and higher education, that they live in good housing and are financially secure and have support networks to help them along their way.

The Purpose and Responsibility of the Board

- It is important that the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board members ensure that the Council provides good care, education, and opportunities that the Board would expect any good parent to provide to their own children. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduces corporate parenting principles, applying corporate parenting principles to children in care and care leavers; February 2018:
- [Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) and which comprise seven needs that local authorities in England must have regard to whenever they exercise a function in relation to children in care and care leavers.
- The Board will raise awareness of the Council's Corporate Parenting responsibilities and develop expertise and knowledge among elected Members and officers. To support this, we will have Children's Champions in our elected members cohort. The champions will have a specific area of focus that they will develop a level of expertise in and work with key stake holders to scrutinise, challenge and identify good practice.
- The Board will act as a forum for elected members to oversee the progress of all children in our care and leaving our care, through the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024 -2024.

- The Board will ensure that children and young people in our care have a positive experience and that the strategy enhances their outcomes.
- The Board will provide strategic direction and oversight for outcomes for children in care and leaving our care. To support this, they will review performance data and quality assurance activity, identify areas of focus and areas for development and challenge us to deliver improvements where needed.
- They will promote working together arrangements and overview outcomes for children and young people across partner agencies as good corporate parents. Members of the Board will champion the needs of children and young people and promote their wellbeing and futures.
- The Board will strive to listen to the voice of the child and young person and provide challenge where we think we are not actively listening to children in our care and leaving our care.
- The Board will encourage all partners, whether they work for social care or health services or the voluntary sector, to work in an integrated manner in the best interests of all children in our care and leaving our care.
- They will maintain a strategic overview of new developments, initiatives, plans, policies, and strategies that impact on services for children in care and care leavers and to ensure as Corporate Parents that their best available life chances are secured.
- The Board will lead cultural and behavioural change to promote better and best outcomes for all children and care leavers.
- The Board will hold all partners to account for their role in the delivery of services to children in care and leaving our care.
- To have links with the Virtual School for children in care and care leavers.
- Promote and support Rotherham becoming a nationally recognised Child Centred Borough.

Specific responsibilities include:

To ensure that the Council acts as a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers, including:

- Children in foster care
- Children in connected care (kinship) arrangements
- Children placed in a residential home setting (internal and external placements)
- Children placed at home under Placement with Parents Regulations
- Care leavers in Staying Put arrangements
- Care leavers who are living in supported lodgings
- Children in care and care leavers in secure services
- Children in care and care leavers in custody
- Children placed for adoption

Reports to the Board

Regulatory areas subject to inspection or guidance will provide reports either quarterly, annually, or post inspection:

- Adoption Annual Report
- Fostering Annual Report
- Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report
- Residential Children's Home Post Inspection Report (is this annual)
- Virtual Head Teacher's Annual Report
- Quarterly performance on a page
- Other reports in relation to children in care, care leavers and adoption as requested.
- At least annually to hear from the Chief Executive of the Council on the Council's role of Corporate Parent

Children in Care Council

Representatives from the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers' Forum will contribute to the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board through methods agreed with them.

Membership of the Board and Frequency of meetings

There will be standing membership of the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board to provide continuity and consistency.

Key membership will include:

- Elected member and portfolio holder for Children to act as Chair.
- The Council Assistant Director for Social Care to act as vice chair for the Board.
- Elected members with a role in relation to Children in Care
- Virtual Head Teacher
- Head of Service for Safeguarding / independent Reviewing Officer
- Skills and Employment lead from Regeneration and Environment
- Strategic Head of Housing
- Designated Health lead for Children in Care
- Representatives from the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum.

Democratic Services will provide the administrative arrangements and constitutional guidance to the Board.

The Board will meet six times a year. Should a member not be able to attend, they must send a representative, ideally the same deputy on each occasion.

Governance and Reporting Mechanisms

The Corporate Parenting Partnership Board will report to:

- Cabinet with an annual report that will be referred to Council
- Improving Lives Select Commission with an annual report
- There will also be a link to the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Health and Well Being Board and the Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

Where there are specific issues or concern, or good practice these will be raised with the Strategic Director for Children, and Chief Executive as necessary.