

CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2021-23



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I am pleased to present our Corporate Parenting Plan. It is essential that we involve children and young people who experience care in the planning and delivery of care services. It is also important that they help shape how we meet our responsibilities as corporate parents.

Our young inspection volunteers have contributed to this plan. It states how corporate parenting is central to the work of our whole organisation.

This plan reflects [‘The Promise’](#) and we will continue to align with it. We recognise that our care experienced young people need to be at the heart of our commitment as corporate parents. They will continue to inform this plan and hold us to account for the delivery of it.

We have produced a summary version to make it accessible for young people.

The corporate parenting plan has six high level commitments with four areas of focus and a set of detailed actions. It aims to provide assurance to the Scottish Government and the wider public, and clarity on how we will meet our responsibilities as corporate parents. This will remain a dynamic working document, subject to ongoing monitoring and review.

Who Cares? Scotland have published [The Seven Elements of a Good Corporate Parenting Plan](#). Our corporate parenting plan reflects these principles, and we hope you agree, clearly outlines our aspirations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our young inspection volunteers, many of whom are care experienced. They have contributed heavily to this plan and to our corporate parenting report. They continue to bring important contributions and perspectives to our work.

Throughout this report we refer to care experienced young people as ‘our children and young people’ to reflect our values, responsibilities and commitments as corporate parents.



Peter Macleod
Chief Executive

WHY BEING A CORPORATE PARENT IS IMPORTANT

Our Corporate Parenting Report sets out who our children and young people are and why they are important. As at 31 July 2019, 14,015 of our children and young people in Scotland were looked after; 84 of whom were in secure care.

Many of our children and young people have complex needs. These reflect backgrounds of trauma, loss and instability. They are at risk of experiencing some of the poorest personal outcomes such as low educational attainment or high levels of poverty, homelessness and poor mental health. This is why they may need extra help and why we must do better for them as corporate parents.

Corporate parents are public bodies with legal duties and responsibilities. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act, 2014 mentions 24 public bodies. Our organisation is one of them.

We have signed up to support the [Scottish Care Leavers Covenant](#). The covenant is a bold and committed promise to young people who have experience of the care system.

As a corporate parent we are expected to carry out many of the roles a parent would. Section 60 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act, 2014 sets out our duty to collaborate with other corporate parents to best meet our collective responsibilities and to promote the wellbeing of our children and young people. This may include jointly funding activities, sharing responsibilities for any actions to support our children and young people, providing opportunities for education and employment and providing advice and assistance. It is important that, in fulfilling our roles as corporate parents, we enable our children and young people to have as much of a say as possible.

[Part 9 of the Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act, 2014](#) relates to corporate parenting. This applies to every child who is looked after by a local authority and every young person under the age of 26, who was looked after on their 16th birthday.

Our work complements and supports the actions of parents, families, and carers to deliver positive change for our children and young people.

To help us do this and to meet our statutory duties we are:

- **alert** to all matters that affect the wellbeing of our children and young people
- **strong** when challenging the disadvantages that our children and young people face
- **leaders** by driving improvements and working with other corporate parents to raise society's expectations for our children and young people
- **responsive** in how we assess the needs of our children and young people or any service or support provided
- **active** in providing our children and young people with real opportunities within our organisation, so that they grow and develop skills for the future.

"Care experienced young people often don't have a reliable family. So we need the professionals in our lives to act as parents. They should be there for you when your parents should be. To help you with your own circumstances when it comes to education and health among other things. They should provide for us and make sure we have the opportunities that every young person should have."

One of our children and young people, aged 15 years



HOW WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE A GOOD CORPORATE PARENT

As corporate parents, we have a responsibility to review if we are doing a good job in supporting our children and young people. We have to acknowledge, that like all other parents, we do not always get that right. However, we commit to being the best corporate parents we can be.

Our **Corporate Parenting Report** accounts for some of our contacts with and for our children and young people during the last three years. This includes over 10,000 inspections of children and young people services, the investigation of nearly 3,600 complaints about services provided for children and young people and over 3,000 recorded formal contacts with children and young people to learn about their experiences of care. There have been many more contacts not recorded in a reportable format. These are all illustrations of our commitment to the care, welfare and safety of our children and young people; a commitment which we will continue to build upon through the life of this plan.

During the lifetime of this plan, we will work to achieve six high level commitments. They are our pledge that we will listen to our children and young people. We will take action and do our best to improve their life chances. We frame our action plan around these commitments and show how we will meet them.



OUR SIX NEW COMMITMENTS

1

We will strive to meet the needs of our children and young people and promote their rights.

2

We will listen to our children and young people. We will learn how their experiences of the 'care system' can best shape our approach to our work.

3

We will continue to inspect different services and partnerships. We will report on how well they are meeting the needs of children and young people and how well they work together. We will help services share what works well and learn from what needs to improve to help make sure that our children and young people get the right support at the right time.

4

When one of our children and young people makes a complaint about the care they receive, we will take that complaint seriously. We will respond in a timely, thorough and proportionate way. We will always provide feedback to the person who made the complaint in a way that they will understand.

5

We will improve opportunities for our children and young people to develop skills, experience, and confidence to achieve their personal, employment and career ambitions.

6

We will work with other corporate parents to make sure that together we do our best for our children and young people.

To help us deliver on our six high-level areas of commitment, we will focus on the following areas.

- Improve how we **communicate** and engage with children and young people across the whole of Scotland. This is to help us better understand the aspirations, needs, and challenges they face and their experiences of care.
- Ensure that everyone in our organisation **understands** what corporate parenting means. Support them to become the best corporate parents they can be.
- We will **involve** our children and young people in reviewing the young inspection volunteer programme to understand where it has been successful and where we can improve.
- We will seek to expand **opportunities** for our children and young people to receive training, development and employment with us.

OUR YOUNG INSPECTION VOLUNTEERS

We currently work with 15 young inspection volunteers. They visit children and young people's services with us when we inspect. They also support a range of our strategic scrutiny activities. They are between 18-26 years old.

Our young inspection volunteers talk with children and young people who use services. They meet managers to find out how well they involve children and young people in developing services and how well partnerships are fulfilling their responsibilities and duties as corporate parents.

Our young inspection volunteers have contributed to the development of this plan. They will help keep us accountable for the actions within it.



LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE OF OUR PLAN

The Executive Director of Strategy and Improvement (Deputy Chief Executive) is our executive sponsor for corporate parenting. This supports the strategic leadership of the plan. They are our designated senior leader and they champion corporate parenting as a whole organisation responsibility.

Our executive team and board hold governance responsibility for this plan. The corporate parenting group have responsibility for its implementation, monitoring and review.

The corporate parenting group will raise awareness of the plan across our organisation. The group will meet at an agreed level of frequency. They will seek progress updates and exception reports on a timetabled basis. The corporate parenting group will provide updates on progress to the board on an annual basis as a minimum. The final statutory report to the Scottish Government will be in December 2023.

"We aspire to be the best corporate parent we can be - really listening to and learning from children and young people, involving them in all we do and focusing our quality improvement work on what matters most to them."



Edith Macintosh
Executive Director of Strategy and Improvement and
Deputy Chief Executive

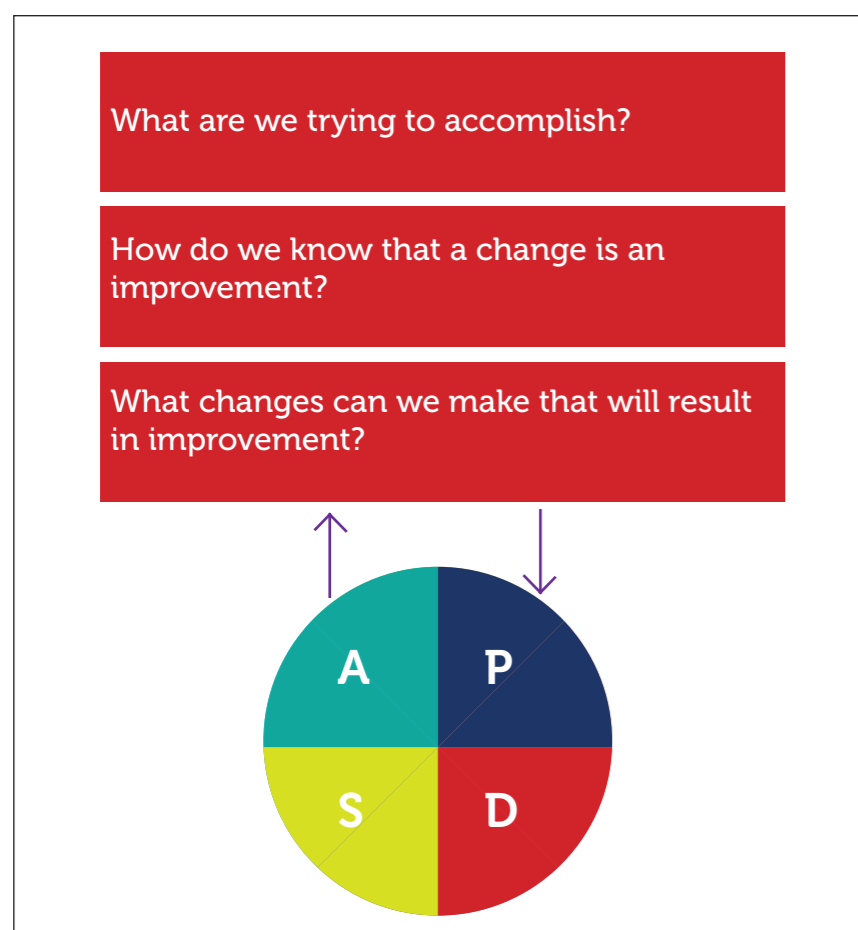
OUR ACTION PLAN

Our corporate parenting group, including young inspection volunteers, have developed this action plan. It sets out our commitments over the next three years to being the best corporate parents we can be.

Our plan complements [Involving You!](#), our 2018-2021 involvement strategy. It also takes into account our [UNCRC report \(2020\)](#), research, and our learning from inspections and our previous corporate parenting plan.

We have applied the Model for Improvement (Figure 1), to help us deliver on our commitments. This consists of three fundamental improvement questions, promoting efficient, effective and sustainable change. The model also directs learning, supporting organisations to build further improvement interventions.

Figure 1: Model for Improvement





© Institute for Healthcare Improvement, Boston

Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2021 – 2023



Commitment 1: We will strive to meet the needs of our children and young people and promote their rights.

What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
Our children and young people are aware of their rights and know what they can expect from us to help promote and uphold them.	In line with our ongoing commitments to the UNCRC, we will involve our children and young people to develop and promote communication on children's rights via media channels that work for them.	Every one of our children and young people will receive information about their rights and what they can do if their rights are not met.	Senior equalities adviser	Corporate communications support to help identify and develop accessible means of communication. ICT support to advise on appropriate technology and media channels	31 March 2022	●
	We will set a baseline measure of our children and young people's awareness of their rights and expectations from us.	At least 80% of our children and young people are able to articulate their rights when spoken to during inspection. More of our children and young people will tell us that they feel confident to complain when their rights are not being met. (Of the 3,359 complaints made to us between 2017 and 2020, only 36 were directly from children and young people).	Involvement and equalities team manager		31 March 2023	●




Commitment 1: We will strive to meet the needs of our children and young people and promote their rights.

What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
	Our young inspection volunteers contribute to the development of our new involvement strategy (2021-2023).	We will increase the influence of our children and young people in the development of the involvement strategy.	Involvement and equalities team manager	Involvement adviser – children and young people support. Young inspection volunteer capacity.	31 December 2021	
We celebrate the achievements and successes of our children and young people and they know that we are proud of them as corporate parents.	We will develop, implement and review a corporate parenting communications plan with our children and young people to improve how we visibly celebrate our children and young people's successes and achievements. This will be on our website and in our newsletters. Our young inspection volunteers will celebrate and showcase the support and opportunities we provide.	Our website, and My News are updated quarterly to reflect our commitment as proud corporate parents and provide illustrations of our children and young people's achievements. At least six-monthly, our chief executive newsletters reflect some of the achievements and success of our children and young people.	Communications lead Chair, corporate parenting group	Corporate communications support. Involvement adviser – children and young people support. Inspectors to help encourage our children and young people to share their success stories.	31 December 2023	



Commitment 2: We will listen to our children and young people and we will learn how their experiences of the "care system" can best shape our approach to scrutiny, engagement and improvement to help improve the lives of others.

What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
To involve our children and young people in helping us to be the best corporate parents we can be.	We provide the opportunity for at least one young inspection volunteer to sit as a member of the corporate parenting group. They will take responsibility for contributing to the work of the group as an equal stakeholder.	Along with the agenda and records of meetings of the corporate parenting group and this plan, we can see where our young inspection volunteer(s) has helped shape our work and accountability for it.	Chair, corporate parenting group	Young inspection volunteer time. Inclusion in the young inspection volunteer programme of work.	31 December 2021	
	To enable an exchange of skills, knowledge and understanding, one of our children and young people will mentor a member of our senior leadership team.	The member of our senior leadership team will articulate a good understanding of their duties and responsibilities as a corporate parent. They will champion corporate parenting within the senior leadership team and beyond.	Executive director of strategy and improvement (Deputy chief executive)	Senior leader resource. Young inspection volunteer time. Inclusion in the young inspection volunteer programme of work.	30 June 2021	


Commitment 2: We will listen to our children and young people and we will learn how their experiences of the “care system” can best shape our approach to scrutiny, engagement and improvement to help improve the lives of others.

What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
To involve our children and young people in helping us to be the best corporate parents we can be.	To support our staff to better understand their role as corporate parents, we will deliver a minimum of three training sessions and a minimum of two briefings per year.	The staff who participate will achieve clear learning outcomes. They will be asked to complete a short pre- and post-course questionnaire to gauge the level of understanding of their roles and responsibilities as corporate parents. This will include a question to gauge how training may influence their work in future.	Involvement adviser – children and young people	Young inspection volunteer time. Inclusion in the young inspection volunteer programme of work.	31 December 2023	
	Review our young inspection volunteer programme to ensure that it is inclusive, effective and impactful.	Our young inspection volunteers have a clear annual programme of work, which contributes to our vision and strategic outcomes. We will explore how we can involve more younger people under 18 as part of our volunteer programme.	Involvement and equalities team manager service manager, strategic scrutiny service manager, regulation and inspection children and young people	OWD officer time. Young inspection volunteer time.	31 March 2022.	
Include our children and young people in the development of our approaches to scrutiny, engagement and improvement.	Involve our young inspection volunteers in the development and revision of our quality improvement frameworks, guidance and inspection methodologies.	Align our commitment to ‘The Promise’, so we can clearly demonstrate how our children and young people influence our approach to inspection, scrutiny and improvement support.	Service manager, strategic scrutiny Service manager, regulation and inspection children and young people Service manager, methodology.	Young inspection volunteer time. Inclusion in the young inspection volunteer programme of work.	31 December 2023.	




Commitment 3: We will continue to inspect different services and partnerships and report on how well they work together. We will help services share what works well and learn from what needs to improve, to help make sure that our children and young people get the right support at the right time.

What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
We can demonstrate that we support care services to help our children and young people get the support they need when they need it.	We will access intelligence on how local authorities or health and social care partnerships are fulfilling their corporate parenting responsibilities through activities including scrutiny, link inspector and relationship managers contacts.	We will use this intelligence to shape improvement conversations with individual services, local authorities and health and social care partnerships. Use intelligence to inform future scrutiny activity.	Service manager, regulation and inspection children and young people Service manager, strategic scrutiny, children and young people		31 December 2022	
	We will review how we can form and sustain contributory relationships with local champion’s boards.	We will make contact with every champion’s board across the country to hear how they involve children and young people. We will use their voices to change or influence our activities beyond inspection.	Chair, corporate parenting group Coordination support. Young inspection volunteer time. Inclusion in the young inspection volunteer programme of work. Corporate parenting group officer time.		31 March 2023	




Commitment 3: We will continue to inspect different services and partnerships and report on how well they work together. We will help services share what works well and learn from what needs to improve, to help make sure that our children and young people get the right support at the right time.

What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
	Reflect our commitment to 'The Promise', in our approach to scrutiny and improvement.	<p>We promote and assess meaningful sibling contact when placing our children and young people apart.</p> <p>We evaluate recognition of the importance and promotion of loving relationships for children and young people.</p> <p>Our corporate parenting plan and work of the corporate parenting group reflects young inspection volunteers' involvement.</p> <p>We fully engage young inspection volunteers in our implementation of 'The Promise' and that their voices are heard. We will continue to reflect 'The Promise' in the publication of inspection reports and thematic overview reports.</p>	Team manager, children services		31 March 2022	



Commitment 4: When one of our children and young people makes a complaint about the care they receive, we will take that complaint seriously. We will respond in a timely, thorough and proportionate way. We will always provide feedback to the person who made the complaint in a way that they will understand.

What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
Deal with complaints made by our children and young people efficiently and effectively.	We will undertake awareness raising activities on the 'text to complain' service.	We can evidence that, at least 75% of our children and young people in care settings are aware of the service and how to access it.	Complaint inspector		31 March 2022	
	We will report on the number of complaints from children and young people, the nature of complaint, resolution reached and satisfaction rates in our annual complaints report.	80% of our children and young people who rate report satisfaction with complaint handling, even if they do not agree on the outcome.	Complaint inspector		31 March 2022	
	We will use the intelligence from complaints to support our approach to the scrutiny and improvement of care services.	Our complaints team follow up on all requirements made following complaint investigations. This will inform our intelligence-led scrutiny and improvement.	Service manager, strategic scrutiny Service manager, regulation and inspection children and young people	Intelligence support Improvement support	31 December 2023	



Commitment 5: We will improve opportunities for our children and young people to develop skills, experience, and confidence to achieve their employment and career ambitions.

What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
Improve opportunities and life chances for our children and young people who volunteer or work with us in any capacity as a direct result of our support.	We will develop the 'family firm' concept. This will support our children and young people to access more employment and volunteering opportunities with us, which can extend beyond their 26th birthday.	We are clear in encouraging applications from our children and young people, for appropriate employment opportunities and we provide support to sustain employment. We increase the current number of 15 young inspection volunteers to a pool of 20 (as not all young inspection volunteers can be available due to other commitments).	Strategic leadership team		31 December 2023	
	We will support our young inspection volunteers who transition from their current roles to access other opportunities and make use of services and supports available to them. This may include volunteering, education or employment.	Our children and young people who volunteer or work with us will have greater access to relevant support and assistance when they need it and more help to move into other positive destinations of further employment or education.	Involvement adviser – children and young people Senior human resources adviser		31 December 2023	
	We will ensure that our children and young people who work with us in any capacity can access available learning and development opportunities, which meets their areas of personal and professional development.	Our young inspection volunteers will access at least 75% of the development opportunities available within the organisation and requested by them.	Organisational workforce development manager	Access to our workforce development resources Access to IT equipment	31 December 2023	

Commitment 6: We will work with other corporate parents to make sure that together we can do our best for our children and young people.

What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
Contribute to the national dialogue about the term 'corporate parent', and involve our children and young people and other corporate parents. This is because some of our children and young people tell us that the term "corporate parent" is vague and not meaningful.	Along with our young inspection volunteers, we will raise this at the Corporate Parent Collaborative.	We will be able to evidence that we have generated further national discussion and have reviewed terminology like corporate parenting.	Involvement adviser – children and young people		31 March 2023	
To work purposefully with other corporate parents to improve the life chances and experiences of our children and young people.	We will attend and contribute to the Scottish Corporate Parents Collaborative.	We attend their meetings, contribute to the agenda, meaningfully participate in meetings and collaborate with other corporate parents.	Chair, corporate parenting group Involvement adviser – children and young people	Young inspection volunteer time. Inclusion in the young inspection volunteer programme of work.	31 December 2023 (quarterly review)	
	We will continue to work with the care sector through our regulation, inspection, scrutiny and improvement activity. This is to explore ways to reduce the criminalisation of our children and young people. This is in line with 'The Promise' and follows the work led by Police Scotland and Who Cares? Scotland	We will be able to inform our support and interventions with research (such as WhoCares?, 2018). We and others will be alert to factors which help reduce the criminalisation of our children and young people (building relationships, improving understanding, supporting cultural change and upholding young people's rights).		Team manager, children services		31 March 2023

Commitment 6: We will work with other corporate parents to make sure that together, we can do our best for our children and young people.

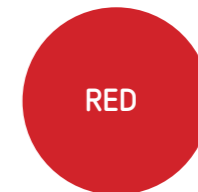
What are we trying to accomplish	What change can we make that will result in improvement	How will we know that a change is an improvement	Lead	Resource required	Timescale	RAG state
To work purposefully with other corporate parents to improve the life chances and experiences of our children and young people.	We will work with Disclosure Scotland to help our children and young people, other corporate parents and organisations understand that criminal convictions do not limit preferred employment and education opportunities.	We will have improved education and awareness of recent legislative changes which introduced amendments to the age a child can have a criminal record.	Chair, corporate parenting group		31 March 2023	
	We will work with the Scottish Social Services Council to ensure that relevant aspects of our corporate parenting plans align. We will maximise benefit from our shared human resources team to meet commitment 5.	There is relevant alignment between the SSSC and our corporate parenting plans. Continue to deploy shared resources as part of our corporate parenting duties and responsibilities	Chair, corporate parenting group		31 December 2023 (quarterly review)	

RAG status definition

Please note that for the purposes of this exercise, the following definitions should be applied:



means that the action has been fully completed



means that it is not considered feasible to meet the completion date



means there is a possibility of some slippage, but the issues are being dealt with



means that the action is on track and should be completed by the target date

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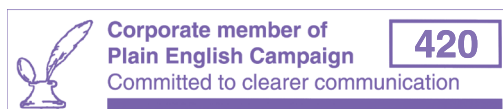
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