

Public Document Pack

Corporate Parenting Specialist Advisory Group

Wednesday, 20th October, 2021

6.00 pm

Library Rooms 1 & 2, Entrance via Northgate

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Apologies

To welcome those present to the meeting and to receive any apologies for absence.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on this Agenda

A form is attached for completion by Members declaring an interest in items on the agenda.

Declarations of Interest

3

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 27th July 2021

For the Group to agree the Minutes of the Corporate Parenting Specialist Advisory Group meeting held on 27th July 2021.

Minutes - 27th July 2021

4 - 10

4. Introduction from Emma Ford, Deputy Director, Children's Social Care

To receive a verbal introduction from Emma Ford, Deputy Director, Children's Social Care.

5. Participation Update

For the Group to receive an Executive Summary on the Participation & Voice Strategy 2021 – 2024, provided by Liz Clarkson and Care Leavers.

Participation Executive Summary - Participation Strategy 2021-2024

11 - 40

CYP Participation Strategy 2021-2024

CYP Voice Impact Tool - Completion Guidance

- 6. Corporate Parenting Strategy**
 For the Group to receive an Executive Summary on the Corporate Parenting Strategy provided by Jayne Ivory, Director Children's Services & Education.
- Corporate Parenting Strategy Summary 41 - 101**
Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2024 (Children & Young People)
Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2024 (Corporate Parents)
- 7. Corporate Parenting Dashboard**
 For the Group to review and consider the latest monitoring reports on Looked After Children in the Borough provided by Judith Fennell.
- Corporate Parenting Dashboard Sept 2021 102**
- 8. Cared for Children, from other Local Authorities, placed within Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council**
 Judith Fennell and Emma Ford to update the Group on the number of Cared for Children, from other Local Authorities, placed within Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.
- Children in out of borough placements 103 - 111**
- 9. Fostering Carer's Update**
 To receive a verbal update from Foster Carer's Paula Quinn and Sam Briggs.

PART 2 - THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM:

There are no Part 2 items.

Date Published: 12th October 2021
 Denise Park, Chief Executive

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

Members attending a Council, Committee, Board or other meeting with a personal interest in a matter on the Agenda must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and, if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an Other Interest under paragraph 16.1 of the Code of Conduct, should leave the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.

Members declaring an interest(s) should complete this form and hand it to the Democratic Services Officer at the commencement of the meeting and declare such an interest at the appropriate point on the agenda.

MEETING:

DATE:

AGENDA ITEM NO.:

DESCRIPTION (BRIEF):

NATURE OF INTEREST:

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/OTHER (delete as appropriate)

SIGNED :

PRINT NAME:

(Paragraphs 8 to 17 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Council refer)

Agenda Item 3

CORPORATE PARENTING SPECIALIST ADVISORY GROUP
Tuesday 27th July 2021

PRESENT – Councillors: Pat McFall (*In the Chair*), Parwaiz Akhtar, Maureen Bateson, Samim Desai, Katrina Fielding, Jackie Floyd, Julie Gunn, Zamir Khan, Sylvia Liddle, Zainab Rawat and Dave Smith.

OFFICERS –

Jayne Ivory – Director Children’s Services & Education

Judith Fennell – Head of Service Permanence and Corporate Parenting, Children’s Services

Karen Barrick – Adoption Now

Helen Kane – Service Leader Placements, Children’s Services

Lisa Dunkerley – Team Manager Fostering, Children’s Services

Janette Clark – Strategic Head of Social Care, Children’s Services

Joanne Siddle – Deputy Director, Schools & Education

Paula Quinn – FCA Committee

Sam Briggs – FCA Secretary

Elizabeth Clarkson – Participation & Inclusion Manager, Children’s Services
Care Leaver - Vice Chair

Caroline Waldron – Deputy Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children & LAC (joined virtually)

RESOLUTIONS

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair Cllr Pat McFall, welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from the following Councillors: Brian Taylor, Salim Sidat, Mark Russell, Jon Baldwin, Abdul Patel, Stephanie Brookfield, Ron Whittle, Vicky McGurk, James Shorrocks, John Slater, Jean Rigby, Kevin Connor, Jim Smith, Jacquie Slater, Yusuf Jan-Virmani, Suleman Khonat and Jim Casey.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on this Agenda

RESOLVED - There were no Declarations of Interest received.

3. Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 16th March 2021

RESOLVED – The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th March 2021 were approved as a correct record with no matters arising.

4. Adoption Update

The Chair welcomed Karen Barrick from Adoption Now to the meeting, to provide the Group with an update on adoption.

Karen informed the Group that Adoption Now was a Regional Adoption Agency providing Adoption Services on behalf of a consortium agreement with six Local Authorities; Blackburn with Darwen, Bolton, Bury, Rochdale, Oldham and Tameside.

The Agency went live in the 29th November 2017 and was only the 5th RAA nationally to go live. The Group heard that the main hub was based in Bolton but there was still some adoption services that operated from the six local authority spokes.

Karen informed the Group how the system worked and how the service was split into three teams – Adoption Support, Recruitment and Assessment and Care Planning and Family Finding. This represented a very different approach to delivering adoption services but it was felt that it was one that would provide greater efficiency in finding families for children, ensuring more adopters were approved annually and provided an adoption support service that boasted a range of skilled professionals able to deliver a variety of therapeutic services across the six local authority Boundary.

The Group heard that as with many things, covid had changed the way the Agency operated, mainly:-

- Adoption panels had gone virtual
- Support groups and training was now undertaken online
- Covid 19 fund (a significant amount of money received to commission additional support services)
- Courts had slowed down meaning that final decisions had been delayed
- Fewer children with new adoption plans (this was the picture both locally and nationally, and it was hoped things were beginning to speed up again now).

Karen informed the Group that the 2021 Annual Report had just been published, and outlined the following:-

- 87 adoptive families had been approved
- 30% considering early permanence
- 79 children placed
- 2 disruptions
- Enquiries from people with an interest in adoption had seen a steady rise
- Social media was being utilised more
- Podcasts with real stories of adopters had proved to be a real asset to the marketing strategy

The Group then looked at the data for placing children in Blackburn 2020/21. It was noted that the figures were less than what they normally would be and that this was due to covid. In summary Karen highlighted the data as follows:-

- 19 SHOOPA (Should be Placed for Adoption) decisions
- 17 children placed with adopters
- 65% children were placed with Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) adopters
- 9 children waiting on 31st March
- 21 Children adopted

Karen explained that Adoption scorecards were Government set targets for timeliness of placing children for adoption. The scorecard was produced every 6 months and measured progress against those targets. The Group heard there was a significant backlog with the A2 target being 180 days compared to the set target of 121 days and the A10 target was within the timeframe of 365 days compared to the target of 426 days.

The Group heard that additional covid money had been well received and as a result the Agency had been able to offer packages of therapeutic support and had commissioned a psychologist. In total, 443 families received support in addition to 51 children pre adoptive order who also received support.

Finally, Karen informed the group of developments going forward and highlighted the following:

- Taking on the adoption letterbox service for the 6 Local Authorities – this service allowed information to be exchanged between a child’s adoptive family and members of their birth family. The Group noted that staff would be starting in two weeks and it was hoped this service would be up and running in September
- Developing virtual activity days – virtual support groups and training had already proved successful
- National Adoption Strategy had been published and came into effect on 26th July – this was backed by a £48 million investment, and was set to improve adoption services in England by putting in place better recruitment across the Country and would remove any unnecessary delays through more training for front line staff, improve approval process and funding for targeted recruitment campaigns.
- Post covid planning – looking at what worked well and what needed to return to face to face

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

5. Participation Update

The Chair welcomed Elizabeth Clarkson who was joined by the Vice-Chair, and together they gave an update on Participation. The Group heard that over the last few months, meetings had taken place in person at Kaleidoscope Youth Centre. This had been great for both the Junior and Senior voice groups to come together in a safe and fun environment and to meet new friends. The groups had taken part in various activities like archery, drama, mindfulness and consultations such as the Corporate Parenting Strategy, the impact of covid on children and young people’s mental health and the 2021 Participation strategy.

The Vice-Chair informed the Group of a recent visit to Lytham Road, The SEEDS and the Junior and Senior voice groups where young people were spoken to about covid, their care experiences, the participation strategy and were asked if they would like the Vice Chairs to raise anything on their behalf. Feedback from the young people included looking forward to returning to normality, seeing friends again, and face to face sessions with a possibility of them being increased to twice weekly.

At the senior voice group a meeting had taken place with the dedicated children in our care nurses, who explained their roles and how the children could contact them if they needed to. There was also a meeting with Barnardos about the advocacy service that they provide. Both had been very well received.

The Vice Chairs also had the opportunity to attend the Scrutiny Committee back in March which was great to be involved with the Youth MP's from the youth forum and bring the forums together in one meeting.

Young people had been involved in the recent recruitment of the Deputy Director of Children's Services. Unfortunately the Vice Chairs were not available, but they did provide a question. The Group heard that yet again the young people's preferred candidate, was also decided by the professional panel.

The Group heard that the Vice Chair had taken part in some dedicated sessions at YPS for care leavers regarding developing skills in interviewing and CV writing, and applying for apprenticeships within the council. The Vice Chair also informed the Group that he had successfully applied for an IT apprenticeship which he was really looking forward to.

The Vice Chair informed the Group that the Junior and Senior voices had been involved in the co-design of the new improved participation strategy. The old strategy had been designed by professionals, so with the support of YPS, young people took the lead in what they wanted to be included, and how they could hold adults accountable. It had now gone to the design stage and looked great with lots of visuals and graphics and was young person friendly.

Elizabeth Clarkson informed the Group that the participation framework illustrated how the young people's forums across the Borough linked together and fed into the Youth MP's who advocated on young people's behalf. The framework allowed children and young people to participate in various decision making boards.

A draft youth voice impact tool had been developed to capture the impact of children and young people's voices and this had been shared with the participation champions across Blackburn with Darwen for feedback from quarter 1. The tool measured young people's voices, thoughts and feelings in the services that they engaged with, and would also capture key decisions that influenced services which young people accessed. Tweaks to the Youth Voice Impact Tool would be finalised following a meeting with the participation champions.

The Group heard there was an appetite from young people as part of the national takeover challenge to perhaps take over chairing a Corporate Parenting meeting. In addition Young People would like to invite members to future voice meetings and events.

Elizabeth informed the Group that the Youth Forum, with support from YPS, Jo Siddle and Cllr Julie Gunn were in the process of recruiting school representatives to form a Schools Voice Alliance, which would hopefully be implemented in September. This would provide a diverse range of young people's voices from across Blackburn with Darwen.

Young people had also been working with a web designer to update the YPS website. Young people from the voice groups were keen to have a dedicated section for Children in Our Care and would like information about placements, education, and advocacy, health and leisure activities.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

6. Corporate Parenting Dashboard

The Group was presented with an update on the latest monitoring report of Children in Our Care as of the 7th June 2021 and heard that the total number of children in care was 372. Of those, 45% were female and 55% were male.

Members noted the age profiles of children in care with 90 children aged between 15 to 17 years old. 76 children were aged between 12 to 14 years, 45 children aged between 9 to 11 years, 47 children aged between 6 to 8 years, 53 children aged between 3 to 5 years and 61 children aged between 0 to 2 years. The Group then looked at the age range of children entering care between April 2020 and March 2021. The Group heard that the age of children coming in to care was as follows:- 44% of children aged 0 to 2 years, 15% aged 3 to 6 years, 14% aged 7 to 10 years, 23% aged 11 to 15 years and 4% aged 16+.

Judith informed the Group that 79% of children in our care were of white / UK ethnicity.

Of the total number of Children in Our Care, Judith highlighted that a high proportion of children were placed in the following:- 121 were placed in in-house foster placements, 64 placed with family and friends, 61 placed with agency foster placements.

The total number of children entering care in 2021 was 21 and the number of children leaving care was 22.

The Group then looked at the destinations of Care Leavers with 25% being placed on special guardianship, 21% had reached the age of 18 and 21% had returned to parents.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

7. Fostering Service Update

The Chair invited Judith Fennell, Helen Kane and Lisa Dunkerley to present an update on Fostering Services.

Lisa informed the Group of the current picture and highlighted the following:-

- Continued commitment of highly valued foster carers
- Exceptional offers of support for children within existing foster carers
- Regular foster carer meetings
- Tipis Event which everyone was looking forward to
- 69 mainstream fostering households
- 34 friends and family fostering households

- 11 family and friends carers households under assessment
- 1 short break only household
- 1 Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) joined in June 2021

The Group were informed of the forecast for the next 6 months and heard that 14 households were currently undergoing assessment for approval. Lisa highlighted that they felt very fortunate to have this number considering the effect of the pandemic. There was also 1 potential IFA household wishing to transfer to Local Authority. Furthermore, it was hoped that assessments waiting for panel approval would be carried out in a timely manner, with an aim of approval within a 12 week timescale.

The Group heard of some of the marketing ideas, mainly community based marketing targeting at public events, marketing support across the digital market, regular information events, profiling of foster carers and media broadcasting (radio, local newspapers).

The Group heard about the development of a flexible agreement between 4 Local Authorities (Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Cumbria and Lancashire) and IFAs to improve sufficiency for children and allow for more co-ordinated and planned transitions into care. With a flexible framework it was anticipated that as corporate parents, access to care that children need would be done so in a timely and co-ordinated manner with improved collaboration with the fostering agencies. The Group heard that this would allow for children to be placed within or nearer to their own communities, close to family and friends, accessing services that they know and the continuity of social work relationships.

Discussions also took place around the re-shaping and new management of the team, along with the development of a front door worker which would support the child through their journey into care and be the single point of contact as the face of the fostering service.

Helen highlighted the next steps for the team, which included the following:-

- Action plan to progress and develop the front door worker role
- Improved opportunities for adolescents
- Targeted recruitment of foster carers
- Encourage and improve participation of children to inform the development of the service
- Refresh the referral form so that it captures the essence of the child and what they are about
- Strengthen systemic leadership
- Recruitment and marketing
- Exciting journey out of covid

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

8. Foster Carer's Update

Paula Quinn was invited by the Chair to provide an update to the Group.

The Group heard that Paula and other foster carers had been handing out Mymax cards in advance of the school holidays starting, which had been well received.

Paula informed the Group of an event being held at the Tipis at Riley Green on Sunday 5th September between 1pm – 4pm. Performers Without Borders would be present at the event, with lots of fun activities planned for children, young people and families to participate in. Tickets were still available to purchase and anyone wishing to attend should contact Paula.

The Group heard that Mental Health First Aid England had launched their online training courses and that this training would be beneficial for foster carers and social workers, given the impact of covid-19 on mental health and wellbeing, especially on children and young people.

Paula expressed her thanks to Elizabeth Clarkson for putting her in touch with organisers of the recent fun fair in Blackburn, who kindly provided free tickets. This was greatly appreciated and positive feedback was received from those who managed to go.

Paula informed the Group that the Celebration of Achievement event would be going ahead which was great news, but also expressed disappointment on behalf of the young people whose leaving proms had been cancelled this year. Jo Siddle agreed to make enquiries about the possibility of something being arranged for those Year 11 and Year 13 leavers.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed

Children & Young People's Participation Strategy

2021–2024



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT DOES PARTICIPATION MEAN TO US?




"Participation is the involvement of people in the decisions and processes that affect their lives, including sharing information, consulting, managing, making decisions and taking action".

– Quote by Tearfund


OUR ENGAGEMENT MODEL


How children and young people want us to work with them

Children and young people across the borough have told us how they would like to be engaged in participation work...


 **ADVOCACY**
To be provided with advocacy to assist children and young people in putting forward their views


 **SUPPORT**
To be provided with support so all children and young people can be fully supported in participation activities

 **VENUE**
To have a safe and fun environment to participate

 **INFORMATION & ENGAGEMENT**
To be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans

 **EXPLANATION**
To be informed of the outcome when children and young people have been consulted with

 **RESPECT**
To be treated with dignity and respect

 **UNDERSTANDING**
To understand what is happening, to be heard and understood, and to have their views and thoughts acted on

HOW WE ARE GOING TO DO BETTER...



Values and attitudes

We will:

- Treat children and young people with respect and dignity
- Use a variety of communication methods to engage children and young people with differing learning styles
- Embed relationship based practice at the heart of our delivery strategy



Knowledge, skills and processes

We will:

- Recruit experienced staff with a passion for making things better
- Develop a bespoke Young Inspectors model to add further Quality Assurance value
- Develop the Investors in Children accreditation via a network of Participation Champions



The doing of what we think and feel

We will:

- Use social media to share information about things for children and young people to do
- Make sure the venues we use are comfortable, safe, friendly and welcoming
- Introduce a Young Inspectors scheme, so that young people can inspect the services they receive in Blackburn with Darwen

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE?



Children and young people will see....

- improvements made as a result of their contributions
- an increase in children and young people taking part in participation activities
- people making healthy choices
- more young people enrolling in education or training when they leave school
- more young people with good jobs and high aspirations for their futures



Children and young people will say....

- how their thoughts and ideas have helped improve things
- they have lots of different things to do that they enjoy
- they feel confident in their abilities to make decisions and know where to go for help
- they are happy to go to school or college and learn lots when they are there
- they work in a job they wanted, or are confident they'll get the job they want when older



Children and young people will feel....

- they are listened to and their thoughts and opinions matter
- safe, welcome and included
- they get the right support
- they have lots of opportunities available to socialise, to learn, to achieve and to be healthy
- they are prepared for getting older and becoming an adult
- they are having fun
- they are learning

THE PARTICIPATION PATHWAY

We see participation as a journey that all children and young people should get to take, to help make their lives the very best they can be. The 'no entry' stops are often given as examples of participation and whilst there is always a need for good communication, communication alone is not participation. Stops 2 and 3 represent 'tick box' consultation.

Stops 4 to 7 are examples of genuine engagement moving from the bottom, 'consultation', to the very top, participation which is completely 'child and young person led'. In Blackburn with Darwen we want to deliver participation opportunities that fall between stops 4 to 7.



STOP 1: COMMUNICATION

Just sharing information with children and young people i.e. no input.



STOP 2: DIRECTION

Adult-led activities in which children and young people do as they are told without understanding the purpose of the activity.



STOP 3: TOKENISM

Adult-led activities in which children and young people may be consulted but with minimal opportunities for feedback, or feedback is not taken seriously.



STOP 4: CONSULTATION

The project is designed and run by adults, but children and young people understand the process and their opinions are gathered and treated seriously.



STOP 5: CO-PRODUCTION

Adults, children and young people working together to influence the support and services on offer during the design, delivery and review stages.



STOP 6: CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON INITIATED

Children and young people plan and select their own activities and adults participate rather than lead on them.



STOP 7: CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON LED

Children and young people lead on projects and events. Adults may observe and assist, but they do not interfere with the process or play a managerial role.

VIEW THE FULL STRATEGY ONLINE

To view the full version of the strategy, scan this QR code using a smartphone or simply visit www.blackburn.gov.uk/participation



SCAN ME



Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Children & Young People's Participation Strategy

2021-2024
Page 14



Forewords



"It has been great that the Youth Forum, Children In Care and Children with SEND have co-designed this participation strategy. It is important that children and young people have their voices heard both in important documents and at meetings. In Blackburn with Darwen we are supported to gather as many views, wishes and feelings from young people across the borough. This enables us as Youth MPs to advocate on their behalf".

Blackburn with Darwen Youth MPs, 2021/22



"I am so proud that our Participation Strategy is driven by our young people, who better to influence the decision and policy making that will affect them and their peers for future years? This strategy sets out what meaningful participation is, whose responsibility it is and how we will know that we are getting participation right.

If you need a contribution that will lead to positive action and ideas for improving outcomes then look no further than the young people of Blackburn with Darwen".

Clr Julie Gunn

Executive Member for Children, Young People & Education



"I want to thank all of the children and young people who have worked alongside us to develop BwD's Participation Strategy. Your involvement and engagement with how we ensure that we listen, act and review the work that we do day in day out is crucially important. As such, I will ensure that our Participation Strategy becomes a part of my and every member of staff's guide to how you want us to work with you".

Jayne Ivory

Strategic Director for Children's Services & Education

What does participation mean to us?

“Participation is the involvement of people in the decisions and processes that affect their lives, including sharing information, consulting, managing, making decisions and taking action”.

– Quote by Tearfund

To us at Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, participation is the process by which individuals and groups of individuals can influence decision making and bring about change.

All children and young people have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings taken into account when decisions are being taken about their life.

These decisions could be about their family, school or life in the community.

This right is protected under Article 12 in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This has been adopted into the United Kingdom legislation, such as the Children’s Act 2004, and all services and agencies have a duty to comply with this right.

“It’s important we get involved because adults don’t know how we feel or what we need, they just think they do!”

BwD Voice Forum



Greater levels of participation can result in a wide range of benefits for children and young people, service providers, and their local communities. This includes:

Children and young people

- Developing skills in decision-making, communication, confidence and resilience
- Opportunities to learn, to have fun and to achieve accreditation
- More chances to have a say in the things that matter in their lives

Service providers

- Improved, better targeted and more effective services for children, young people and their families
- Better use of financial resources
- Meets government objectives and inspection processes

Communities

- Develops more positive community relationships between children, young people and adults
- Improved sense of community and belonging
- Enhanced citizenship and political education



“Participation enables us to come together and make decisions that have a positive influence, by using our energy and experience to change the world into a better place”.

BwD Youth Forum

Our Engagement Model

Children and young people have told us how they would like to be engaged in participation work – this includes using the correct venue, language and mediums, and providing the right support.

HOW CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WANT US TO WORK WITH THEM....



INFORMATION & ENGAGEMENT

To be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans



EXPLANATION

To be informed of the outcome when children and young people have been consulted with



VENUE

To have a safe and fun environment to participate



RESPECT

To be treated with dignity and respect



ADVOCACY

To be provided with advocacy to assist children and young people in putting forward their views



SUPPORT

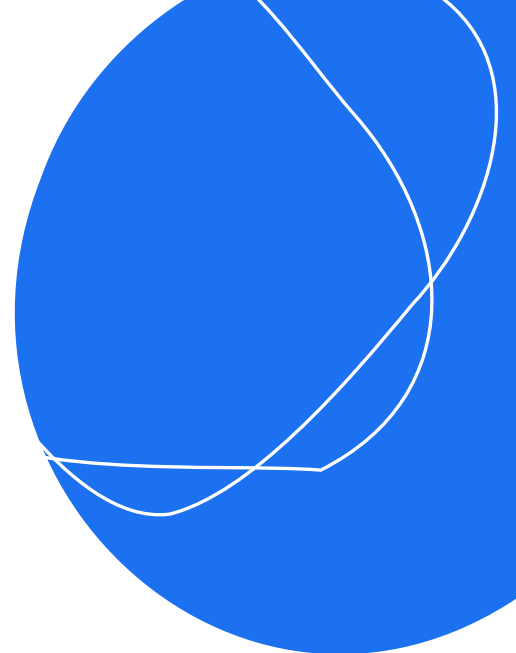
To be provided with support so all children and young people can be fully supported in participation activities



UNDERSTANDING

To understand what is happening, to be heard and understood, and to have their views and thoughts acted on

What is a participation strategy?



Any good strategy sets out shortly and simply:

- what is important and that needs to be done
- why it is important to do these things
- how it will be done
- how we will know if it is making a difference
- that everyone involved will try their best to get it done

A good strategy includes all the people it will affect, in:

- writing it in the first place
- making sure it is still relevant in the future
- checking if it is making anything better, and if it is, understanding by how much, and if not, deciding what needs to be done differently

A participation strategy shares how different groups of people (usually a business or organisation, others that they work with and, most importantly, their customers) will learn from each other and how they will use what they have learned to make and do things better.

This could include different people sharing information on:

- what is really important to them
- what helps them and what would help them
- what they like and do not like

This strategy is all about how the council will work together with children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen to improve what is available for them.

Children and young people have helped us to understand the best ways we can do this and have worked with us to write this strategy. They have told us what works well, what can work better and how they want to be worked with.

How will this strategy help children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen?



Blackburn with Darwen should be a place where all children and young people expect to live happy, healthy and fulfilled lives and where they have the chance to:



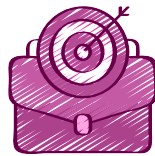
Enjoy learning and do well



Be healthy and happy



Be prepared for adult life



Have opportunities to get a rewarding job



Be and feel safe and listened to

To get there we will need to listen to children and young people to understand what really matters to them. We then need to make sure that we hear and act on their ideas for making improvements. This is sometimes called a '**doing with us, not to us**' approach.

To do this properly we need to make sure all children and young people have the chance to help us get better at what we do. Being able to take part is not always easy and this can be for lots of different reasons. As such, we need to make sure that it is easy for everyone to join in, if and when they want to.

It is important to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for children and young people to participate fully. Young people have told us they want to be engaged and participate in friendly and welcoming buildings, such as youth clubs, and have the chance to take part in positive activities and residential.



Example of listening to children and young people

Forum members told us that, when Covid-19 restrictions were relaxed, they wanted to meet up at a youth centre rather than online. We listened and the Forum and Voice groups now meet up face-to-face in Blackburn weekly.

Our priorities: what is important to us?

What is important to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council?

It is really important to the council that we have the right services and support available, in the right place, and that these services are good services, which are delivered to high standards. To do this as best as we can we need to work in co-production.

What is co-production?

There will always be times when it is good to share information (communicate) and ask people's opinions on different options (consult), but wherever possible we should be co-producing.

Co-production recognises people who live in the community, our staff and other organisations all have important contributions to make when planning, developing, delivering and reviewing services. This is due to their different knowledge, skills and experience.

Put simply, co-production is '**doing something together**'.

Where services for children and young people are being considered, children and young people are central to co-production.

Working together to get it right

To get services for children and young people right we need to really listen to their views to understand what they need, and how we can best deliver this.

We will then need to act on what we have learned.

In many cases, this will involve working with our partners. This could include working with other organisations in the health, voluntary and private business sectors as well as other local councils.

Working together with children and young people will help us to better meet their needs, aspirations and ambitions, alongside the needs of their families.

It will also help us to make the best use of our resources. This includes things like money, staff time, buildings and equipment. Working in co-production will help us to make sure that our resources are used to improve the areas of the greatest value to children and young people locally.

What is important to children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen?

"Having regular group meetings with staff who understand our needs"

"Having the support from adults in meetings and through consultations"

"We want our opinions and suggestions to be listened to and acted upon"

"We want to have a two way conversation with adults - we don't want to be talked at"

"Being able to meet and work with a diverse group of young people to create positive change in our community"

Participation Pathway

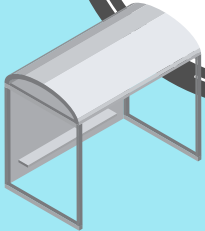
We see participation as a journey - or a pathway. It is a pathway where young people can feel comfortable contributing in all or just some aspects. It is also a journey that can have many wrong turns if not followed correctly! On the next page, we have illustrated what we mean by the participation pathway.



06

CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON INITIATED

Children and young people plan and select their own activities and adults participate rather than lead on them



04

CONSULTATION

The project is designed and run by adults, but children and young people understand the process and their opinions are gathered and treated seriously

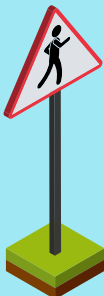


02

DIRECTION

Adult-led activities in which children and young people do as they are told without understanding the purpose of the activity

NO ENTRY



PARTICIPATION PATHWAY

07

CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON LED

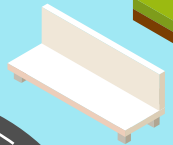
Children and young people lead on projects and events. Adults may observe and assist, but they do not interfere with the process or play a managerial role



05

CO-PRODUCTION

Adults, children and young people working together to influence the support and services on offer during the design, delivery and review stages

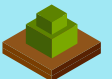


03

NO ENTRY

TOKENISM

Adult-led activities in which children and young people may be consulted but with minimal opportunities for feedback, or feedback is not taken seriously



01

NO ENTRY

COMMUNICATION

Just sharing information with children and young people i.e. no input



What are we doing well?

What we think we are doing well...

- Established voice groups for Universal and Targeted CIOC Children and Young People
- Established relationships with schools and Strategic Youth Alliance (SYA) partners - the SYA is a network of all the local youth organisations
- Children's Services have located all Adolescent services under one Senior Leader significantly improving collaborative working and extending reach to gather the voices of the many
- Developed training and support around Young People's Interview panels to ensure young people have a voice in recruitment and selection
- Youth MPs (or representatives) are supported to contribute and challenge at the Councils Key Strategic Meetings: Executive Board, Scrutiny Meetings, Children's Partnership Board
- Two care leavers have been recruited to the position of vice chair of the Corporate Parenting Executive Group
- Care Leaver vice chairs lead on developing and delivering annual corporate parent conference
- Support children and young people to co design projects by inviting organisations to young people's forums
- Monthly online leaving care forum to gather young people's thoughts, feelings and wishes. This information is then fed back to the corporate parenting boards through the leaving care vice chair
- Training and support for children and young people for recruitment in roles within Children's Services
- Children and young people have the opportunity to take part in local, regional and national consultations e.g. Make Your Mark, youth elections
- Training delivered for capturing the voice of the child
- Within our Early Years settings, we actively listen to children to enable children to plan and this promotes active participation from all children in what is important to them and their own decision making

What children and young people think we are doing well...



"We meet regularly and have new forum members joining all the time"



"We are supported in lots of meetings to have our voice heard"



"When we want to speak to key professionals in Education & Health, our workers ensure that they are invited to come and speak with us. Our workers also ensure that they feedback regarding any suggestions we make"

"We get fantastic opportunities to take part in regional meetings with other Youth Forums from across the North West"



"We take part in lots of meetings and consultations but we also get to do fun activities and go on residential"



How we are going to do better...

It is important that the council and our partners acknowledge the important and necessary role that children and young people can play in shaping the design and delivery of services.

To improve the way that we work with children and young people in future, we have developed a set of pledges and categorised them under these headings:



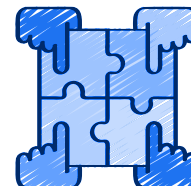
Heart

The values and attitudes we will display when we work with children and young people



Head

The knowledge, skills and processes we need to develop so we can make participation even better



Hands

Putting our values and skills into action - the key things we plan to do over the next three years

Heart



Values and attitudes

We will:

- Treat children and young people with respect and dignity
- Use a variety of communication methods to engage children and young people with differing learning styles
- Embed relationship based practice at the heart of our delivery strategy

Head



Knowledge, skills and processes

We will:

- Recruit experienced staff with a passion for making things better
- Develop a bespoke Young Inspectors model to add further Quality Assurance value
- Develop the Investors in Children accreditation via a network of Participation Champions

Hands



The doing of what we think and feel

We will:

- Use social media to share information about things for children and young people to do
This includes the chance to attend events and complete surveys. We will also use the council website to do this.
- Make sure the venues we use are comfortable, safe, friendly and welcoming
- Introduce a Young Inspectors scheme, so that young people can inspect the services they receive in Blackburn with Darwen

Participation Framework

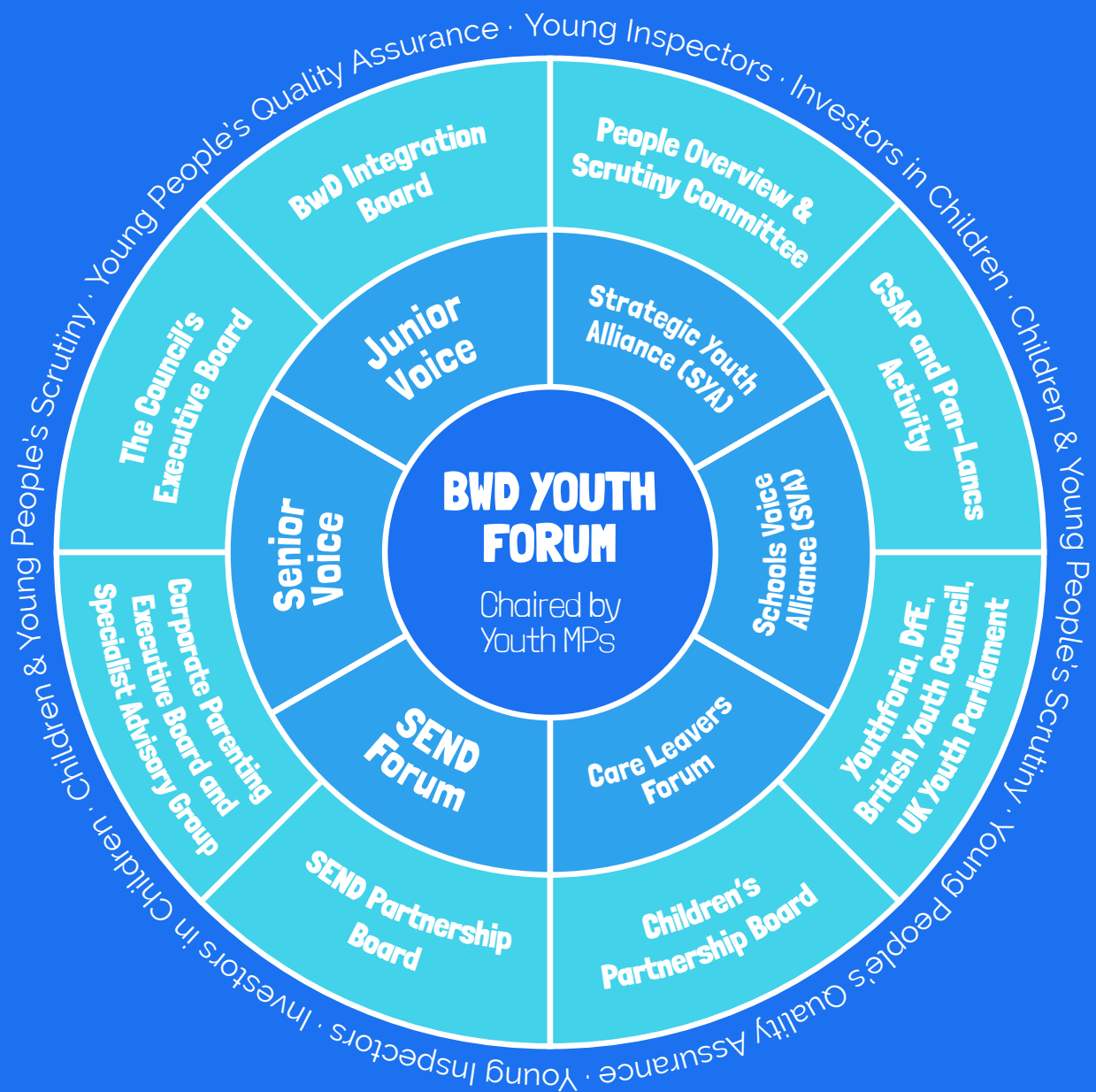
An important part of our plans for doing better is our Participation Framework.

This framework sets out the council's commitment and approach to involving children and young people in all areas of decision making, and in taking their views seriously.

Young people in the various Forums and groups will be supported in attending all important meetings, boards and committees to ensure that their voice, and the voices they represent, are taken seriously and acted upon by everyone.

Participation Framework

The framework below illustrates how each specific Forum fits into the wider framework and contributes equally to capturing, scrutinising, reporting and evaluating youth voice activity.



Blackburn with Darwen Youth Forum

Led by the elected Youth MPs, this is a universal opportunity to participate in youth voice activity. This means all children and young people can take part.

Targeted Forums

Forums for specific groups of children and young People – ranging from Children in Our Care, SEND and School Forums.

Strategic Youth Alliance

The Strategic Youth Alliance (SYA) forum includes a senior management representative of each of the local youth organisations that form the SYA.

Two young people have been nominated to attend monthly meetings from their youth organisations to discuss issues and campaigns. This forum is led by the Youth MPs who will then advocate for the SYA Forum on their behalf at important meetings.

Schools Voice Alliance

The Schools Voice Alliance (SVA) is a forum consisting of 2 young people from each school within the borough. Representatives from each school will collect views and opinions from the students and forward these to the Youth MPs at quarterly meetings across the year. This would be collected from general discussion and the wider schools thoughts on issues affecting Young People within the borough.

Executive Board and Committees

These are executive-led decision making and scrutiny boards. This is where your voice gets the ears of senior managers and leaders. We will ensure your voices are heard, understood and acted upon.

Quality Assurance

These are various internal and external accreditation, scrutiny committees and award bodies. This is where we ensure that participation activity is challenged and supported to ensure it is doing what it is meant to.

We will use the framework to ensure your voice is heard, captured, listened to and acted upon.

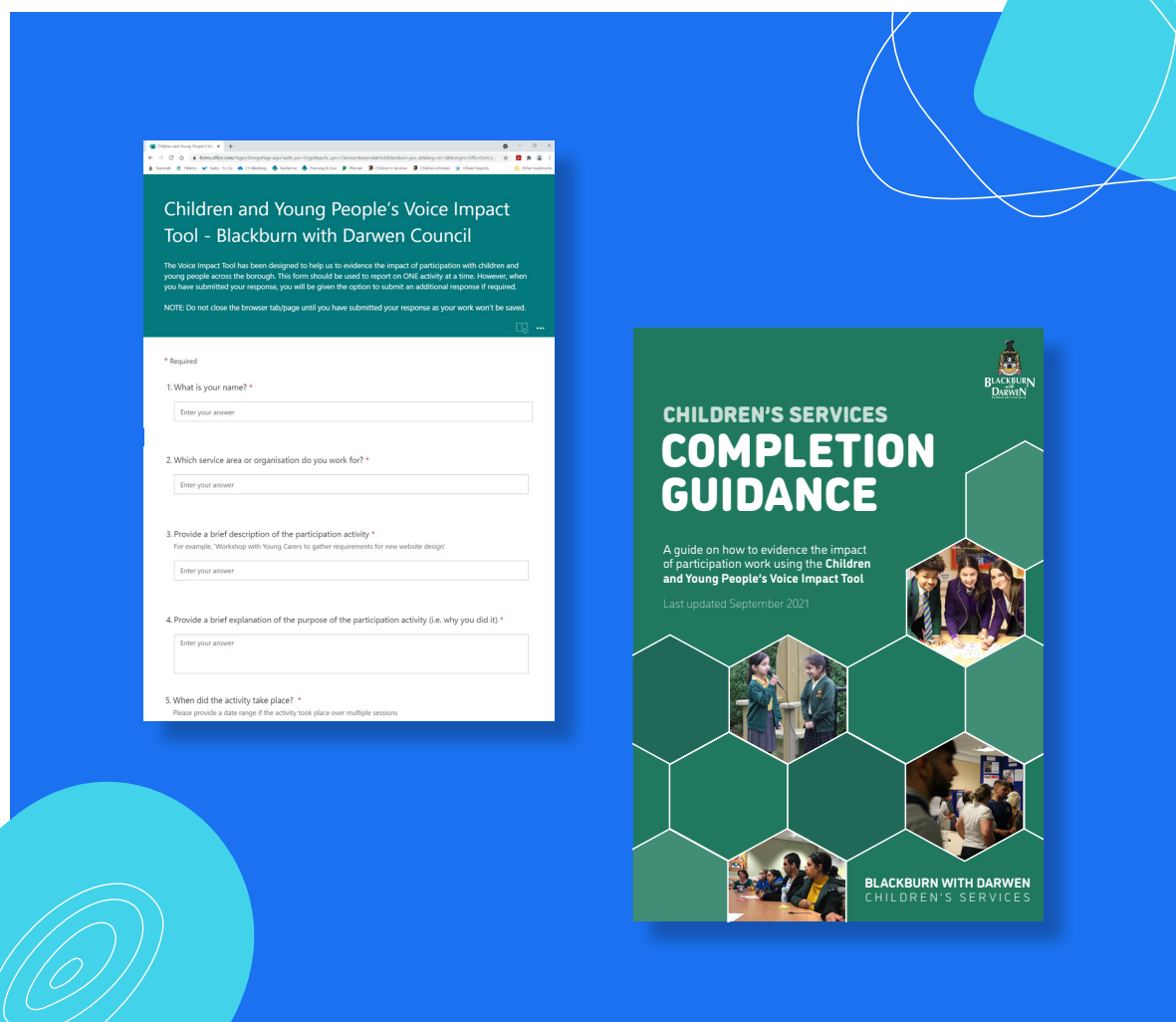
Children and Young People's Voice Impact Tool

To ensure we capture all youth voice activity accurately, we have developed a new Children and Young People's Voice Impact Tool that will be completed and submitted by the Participation Champion for each organisation or service area on a quarterly basis.

The evidence submitted is assessed on the following:

- The details of the activity
- The impact that participation activity has had
- The quality of the work and an honest evaluation and feedback

This information will be shared at strategic meetings both by professionals and children and young people.



The image displays two key components of the initiative. On the left is a screenshot of the 'Children and Young People's Voice Impact Tool - Blackburn with Darwen Council' form. The form is titled 'Children and Young People's Voice Impact Tool - Blackburn with Darwen Council' and includes a note: 'The Voice Impact Tool has been designed to help us to evidence the impact of participation with children and young people across the borough. This form should be used to report on ONE activity at a time. However, when you have submitted your response, you will be given the option to submit an additional response if required. NOTE: Do not close the browser tab/page until you have submitted your response as your work won't be saved.' The form contains five numbered questions, each with a text input field: 1. 'What is your name?' (Required), 2. 'Which service area or organisation do you work for?' (Required), 3. 'Provide a brief description of the participation activity' (Required, with an example: 'Workshop with young Carers to gather requirements for new website design'), 4. 'Provide a brief explanation of the purpose of the participation activity (i.e. why you did it)' (Required), and 5. 'When did the activity take place?' (Required, with a note: 'Please provide a date range if the activity took place over multiple sessions'). On the right is a poster titled 'CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMPLETION GUIDANCE'. The poster features the Blackburn with Darwen Council logo at the top right and the text 'A guide on how to evidence the impact of participation work using the Children and Young People's Voice Impact Tool'. It also states 'Last updated September 2021'. The poster is decorated with several hexagonal images showing children and young people engaged in various activities, such as sitting at a table, standing and talking, and working on a project. The bottom right corner of the poster reads 'BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN CHILDREN'S SERVICES'.



**How will we know if
we are doing better and
making a difference?**

We will know when we are doing better and making a difference because children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen will see, say and feel the following things...

See



Children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen will see...

- improvements made as a result of their ideas
- more children and young people taking part in activities and enjoying what is on offer in the community
- people making healthy choices
- more young people enrolling in education or training when they leave school
- more young people with good jobs and high aspirations for their futures

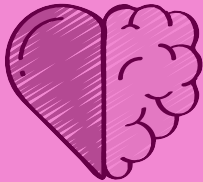
Say



Children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen will say...

- how their thoughts and ideas have helped to make positive changes
- they have lots of different things to do that they enjoy
- they feel confident in their abilities to make good decisions and know where to go and who to ask if they need help
- they are happy to go to school/college and when they're there they learn lots
- they work in a job they wanted, or are confident they will get the job they want

Feel



Children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen will feel...

- they are listened to and that their thoughts and opinions matter
- safe, welcome and included
- they get the right help and support, when and where they need it
- they have lots of opportunities available locally to help them socialise, learn, achieve and be healthy
- they are prepared and confident to move into adulthood
- that they are having fun and learning

How To Get Involved

If you are aged between 8 and 25 years, are in the care of the local authority and would like to have your voice heard, why not get involved in our Forums?

For more information about the Junior, Senior or Leaving Care Forums please contact Liz Clarkson on 01254 298630 or elizabeth.clarkson@blackburn.gov.uk

If you are aged between 11 and 18 years, you can also take part in the BwD Youth Forum or stand for election as Youth MP. To find out more, contact Liz Clarkson on 01254 298630 or email elizabeth.clarkson@blackburn.gov.uk

You can get up to date information via bwd-yps.co.uk or our social media sites:

 facebook.com/BWDYoungPeoplesServices

 twitter.com/bwd_yps

 instagram.com/bwd_yps



Thank you to the children and young people of the Senior and Junior Voice forums, BwD Youth Forum, KND SEND group, Inclusion group and Leaving Care forum and who have produced this strategy in collaboration with us.



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMPLETION GUIDANCE

A guide on how to evidence the impact of participation work using the **Children and Young People's Voice Impact Tool**

Last updated October 2021



WHY USE THE TOOL?

As a public body, local authorities have an obligation to capture the views of their local community to help shape and improve services, and to ensure commissioning decisions are informed by the experiences, ambitions and expectations of users. Our partners are expected to contribute to this too.

When services are redesigned or decisions are made that will have an impact on children and young people, we have a duty to consult with them. For some of the more vulnerable groups in our community, this duty is strengthened even further by our statutory obligation to coproduce services with them and involve them in strategic decision-making. Wherever possible, coproduction should be the participation approach adopted, regardless of which groups or 'categories' are involved ([click here to read our co-production handbook online](#)).

For organisations where participation and coproduction is not a statutory obligation, such as those in the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector, this approach is still considered to be best practice and is a great way to demonstrate your value to customers and funders.

The importance placed upon effective participation with children and young people has grown considerably in recent years and this is being reflected in inspections, where levels of engagement with children and young people is often a key line of enquiry. Whereas in the past, simply being able to verbalise progress was sufficient, this is no longer the case.

Instead, local authorities are now expected to provide a comprehensive bank of evidence that demonstrates their commitment to participation and, as a result, the new Children & Young People's Voice Impact Tool has been designed to help us capture this information.

This document will provide guidance on how to answer some of the questions included in the form. If you have any queries about any of the questions not mentioned within this guide, contact Elizabeth Clarkson by emailing elizabeth.clarkson@blackburn.gov.uk

How to find the Voice Impact Tool

To use the online Voice Impact Tool survey, scan this QR code using a smartphone or visit forms.office.com/r/eGW6hX61M5



QUESTIONS GUIDANCE

Question 8

How did you involve children and young people in the design, planning and/or delivery of this activity?

Examples of this would include children and young people having a role in:

- Deciding what, how, when, and/or where they would like to be engaged;
- Design or delivery of a participation programme, activity, content and/or its supporting resources;
- Presenting and feeding back on participation outcomes;
- Deciding and implementing next steps;
- Subsequent monitoring and evaluation activities.

The extent of involvement should be made clear - for example, did the children and young people inform, agree, direct, design, deliver or even quality assure as part of the activity?

Question 9

What did you consider or put in place to ensure the activity was attractive and accessible to children and young people?

Examples of this would include:

- Any training provided to children and young people/resources that were designed to help them to take part;
- Training provided to facilitators to support coordination and delivery;
- Venue selection e.g. based on availability of public transport links, familiarity and positive associations by the group of young people to engage, accessibility;
- Range of communication tools, assistive technology to ensure those with communication needs can fully participate;
- Incentives (examples below)

Tailoring the activity around a fun programme of activities or a particular topic or activity of interest to that group of young people, rewards, progression opportunities, free transport, instant wins – coming away with something tangible at the end.

Question 13

Who is, or will be, better off as a result of what you did?

This is the 'so what?' section of the submission. The participation activities listed in your submission will most likely have resulted in positive changes. This could include changes to an existing service or resource, the creation of a new service or resource and changes to your organisation's delivery of budget priorities. You may have also learned lessons which could contribute to the outcomes of another distinct project or wider programme of work.

Details of this will be included in question 11 of this submission. For question 13, you will need to consider how these changes have, or may, impact on children and young people.

Your response should outline the **actual difference this has made** to children and young people. What has been the benefit to the lived experience of children and young people as a result of this participation and the subsequent changes/decisions made? Who is better off and why? This could be from an individual, group or community perspective. For example:

What was learned?	What changed?	What was the impact?
Change and impact at the individual level E.g. feedback is used to influence the individual experience of a child or young person.		
Young person finds it awkward to socialise with friends due to their assistive technology	Assistive technology was upgraded to a more discreet and fully portable solution	Young person has now made lots of new friends and like taking part in activities
Change and impact at the group level E.g. feedback is used to influence the experiences of a particular age group or other cohort.		
Limited opportunities for younger children to socialise during the summer holidays	Number of activities and activity options for children aged 5-8 years increased	Increase in the number of younger children taking part in holiday club activities
Change and impact at the community level E.g. feedback is used to influence the experiences of all children and young people.		
Parks are no longer a popular place to meet friends due to anti-social behaviour	Regular patrols put in place to help reduce anti-social behaviour concerns	Increase in the number of children and young people visiting the borough's parks

Question 14

Please list evidence to be included with this submission that supports the above

Evidence is required that clearly demonstrates:

- Effective participation is taking place with children and young people (supportive, inclusive, informed by the views of children and young people);
- Information shared is acted upon (and where it can't be, the reason why is explained);
- Children and young people are kept informed on how their views are helping to instigate change and shape services;
- Benefits achieved as a result of participation are quantified;
- Children and young people are involved in the monitoring, evaluation and review of services that impact them.

Whilst there is often a place for reports and written case studies, the voices of children and young people often provide a more powerful message when evidencing participation, change and benefits realisation. As such, please consider creative evidence options such as videos, photographs and examples of art and design produced by children and young people during the course of the participation activities listed in your submission.

After submitting your response, please email any attachments you wish to be used as evidence to elizabeth.clarkson@blackburn.gov.uk

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The Children & Young People's Voice Impact Tool form should be used to report on **one** activity at a time. However, when you have submitted your response, you will be given the option to submit an additional response if required.
- Please remember not to close the browser tab/Forms page until you have submitted your response as your work will not be saved.
- If you would like a copy of your response, email elizabeth.clarkson@blackburn.gov.uk



1 What is corporate parenting?

When a child or young person comes into care, the council and our key partners become their corporate parent. We must work together to ensure they get the best possible start in life.



Councillor Julie Gunn

Executive Member for Children, Young People & Education

In my mind, being a corporate parent is about being a positive role model, making sure we help children and young people to aim high, supporting them to become confident to speak out and to be confident that their voice will be heard, and proudly standing up for children and young people with experience of care.



Jayne Ivory

Strategic Director, Children's Services & Education (DCS)

"In Blackburn with Darwen, our vision is that care-experienced children and young people will grow up to have a happy and healthy life, experience success and overcome challenges.

To make sure this happens we will work with them, the people that love and care for them, and their corporate parents to get them the right help at the right time so that they can each benefit from effective support".

2 Making It Happen: How you can help

ELECTED MEMBERS

Elected members will provide the political and professional leadership of our corporate parenting commitment and will advocate for looked after children and our care leavers when making key decisions.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Children's Services staff will reflect corporate parenting principles when carrying out their duties, and commit to effective participation and to improving outcomes for children and young people.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The council's Public Health function will support improved health outcomes for looked after children and care leavers through the consideration of their physical, emotional and mental health needs.

HEALTH SERVICES

Health service providers will help improve the health and wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers by providing regular health assessments and timely access to health services.

THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

The Virtual School will help to secure successful educational outcomes for children in our care and care leavers, and work towards narrowing the attainment gap so everyone can reach their potential.

SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Schools, colleges and any other educational establishments will monitor the progress of looked after children, and support our children in care and care leavers to meet their goals and achieve academic success.

HOUSING NEEDS

The council's housing team will support the provision of suitable accommodation choices for care leavers who are ready to live more independently, to help reduce the risk of homelessness.

POLICE/OTHER SERVICES

The police, community organisations and others will provide important services and support for our looked after children and care leavers to keep them safe and meet their individual needs.

3 Our promise to children in care

We have promised children and young people that they will be:

- ✓ able to know and trust their social worker or Personal Adviser
- ✓ listened to and told what to expect throughout their care journey
- ✓ able to tell us what is working well and what we could do better

Children and young people will be:

- ✓ treated as an individual and not just a case number
- ✓ listened to and encouraged to contribute to the support they need
- ✓ given enough time to get to know their social worker or Personal Adviser

We will make sure that children and young people:

- ✓ are able to talk freely and openly to their social worker or Personal Adviser
- ✓ are listened to about what they like and want, as well as any worries they have
- ✓ are listened to about what they enjoy doing at home and at school, such as hobbies
- ✓ play a role in deciding together about what help is needed for them and their family
- ✓ receive the right help at the right time - this includes from the council's services as well as other key services, such as local health providers and their school or college
- ✓ feel comfortable telling us what is working well and what we could do differently

4 Our priorities for 2021-2024

OUR 6 CO-PRODUCED PRIORITIES

1 Participation

This priority is about empowering children and young people to express their voices and influence the decisions the council makes.

2 Placements

This priority is about making sure we provide children and young people with a safe, caring and comfortable home to live and grow up in.

3 Education

This priority is about making sure that children and young people can be happy and successful in their learning, and meet their personal goals.

4 Health

This priority is about looking after the health of children and young people, including their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

5 Identity

This priority is about supporting children and young people to build a sense of identity so that they understand their own histories.

6 Preparation for Adulthood

This priority is about supporting young people to develop the life skills that they need to live independently when they grow older.

Download the full strategy

To view the full version of the strategy, scan this QR code using your phone's camera



SCAN ME

Blackburn with Darwen's

Corporate Parenting Strategy

2021-24

*Version for Children
and Young People*

Contents

Forewords

Councillor Julie Gunn	3
Jayne Ivory, Strategic Director	4

Section One

Introduction	6
Your Corporate Parents	7
Putting You First	8

Section Two

Our Priorities	10
• Participation	11
• Placements	13
• Education	15
• Health	17
• Identity	19
• Preparation for Adulthood	21

Section Three

Making It Happen	24
Key Contacts	26
Pledges From Your Corporate Parents	27

Julie is a councillor who was elected by the public in a local election. She is the 'Lead Member' for children, young people and education.



This means that she makes sure your voice is heard when the council is making decisions for the future, like deciding what to spend money on.

Foreword

Councillor Julie Gunn

When I am asked 'what does it mean to be a corporate parent?' I reply that it is the most important part of any councillor's role. Sometimes, councillors don't even know that until they are in the job. In my mind, being a corporate parent is about:

- Being a positive role model and showing you and other children and young people how to take on the challenges that life brings, even if we are not sure how ourselves
- Making sure we help you to aim high and don't just settle for 'good enough' when we could achieve much more
- Supporting you to become confident to speak out and to be confident that your voice will be heard
- Seeking out your views and feelings, celebrating your successes, and helping you to work through the things that maybe didn't go so well
- Proudly standing up for you and other children and young people with experience of care

We will do all of this so that, together, we learn how to deal with whatever life brings. In short, being a good corporate parent is about being a decent parent, and that is our promise to you.

Jayne is the Strategic Director for Children's Services & Education and she manages the services that we provide to you.



Jayne works with Julie to make sure the council is keeping you safe and meeting your needs.

Foreword

Jayne Ivory, Director

Being a good parent is the most important role that those of us who are fortunate enough to have children undertake. At the time of writing this introduction, we are corporate parents to you and 372 other children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen.

Parenting doesn't come with a job description and we know the well-known saying 'it takes a village to raise a child'. In Blackburn with Darwen, we have a clear vision of what we would like for you.

Our vision is that you will grow up to have a happy and healthy life, experience success and overcome challenges. To make sure this happens we will work with you, the people that love and care for you, and your other corporate parents to get you the right help at the right time. This is so you can benefit from effective support.

We have worked with other care-experienced children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen to develop this strategy for how we plan to improve things for cared-for children and care leavers.

This strategy sets out what you both want and need from us, our partners, and communities. This is because it's important that we demonstrate to you that we are fulfilling one of the most important responsibilities we have as a local council - that we are ambitious Corporate Parents and Corporate Grandparents for you.

Over the next few pages of this document you can see how we will plan to do this.



01.

Introduction

We know that being in care isn't always easy and that it can create extra challenges and pressures for you. This strategy is all about making sure that we are good corporate parents for you so that you can grow up to lead a happy, healthy life.

When you came into care, the council became your corporate parent. This does not mean that we have replaced your parents or the other people in your life that love you and care for you. Instead, it means that we will give you the same level of care and support that we would want for our own children. This is because you deserve the very best chances in life.

Being a good corporate parent to you means that we will:

- ✓ act in your best interests at all times
- ✓ promote your physical and mental wellbeing
- ✓ encourage you to express your views, wishes and feelings
- ✓ take those views, wishes and feelings into account
- ✓ make sure you can access the services that you need
- ✓ encourage you to aim high and help you to achieve your goals
- ✓ try to secure the best end results for you at all times
- ✓ prepare you for adulthood and independent living

Back in 2017, the government published a set of rules for local councils on how to be a good corporate parent. We are responsible for following these rules so that you can thrive, both now and in the future as you get older. This strategy will tell you what you can expect from the council, Children's Services, and your other corporate parents over the next 3 years.

Your Corporate Parents

We take our role as your corporate parent very seriously. In fact, looking after you is one of the most important jobs we do. But we are not acting alone. Putting you first means that we need to work with a wide range of services and partners.

Local councillors

Councillors are elected during local elections and they make sure that we are doing a good job for you

Children's Services

Children's Services staff will work with you directly to make sure that your needs are met

Virtual School

The Virtual School works with your school to support your learning and help you do as well as you can

Public Health

The Public Health team make sure you can access high-quality health and wellbeing services

Health Services

Health Service providers will support you to look after your physical and mental health and wellbeing

Schools & Colleges

Your school or college will work with you to help you achieve your academic goals and ambitions

Housing Needs

Our housing teams will make sure you have a safe and comfortable place to live when you grow older

The Police

The Police will work to keep you safe and support you if you become a victim of crime, or witness one

Other Services

Other services across the council will also help you by developing innovative ways to support your needs

Putting You First

What is our promise?

We promise that you will be:

- ✓ able to know and trust your social worker or Personal Adviser
- ✓ listened to and told what to expect throughout your care journey
- ✓ able to tell us what is working well and what we could do better

How will we work with you?

You will be:

- ✓ treated as an individual and not just a case number
- ✓ listened to and encouraged to contribute to the support you need
- ✓ given enough time to get to know your social worker or Personal Adviser

How will we achieve this promise?

We will:

- ✓ make sure you can talk to your social worker or Personal Adviser
- ✓ listen to what you like and what you want, as well as any worries you have
- ✓ listen to what you enjoy doing at home and at school, including your hobbies
- ✓ work with you on deciding, together, what help is needed for you and your family
- ✓ make sure that you receive the right help at the right time - this includes from the council's services as well as others, such as local health services and your school
- ✓ make sure you can tell us what is working well and what we need to do differently



Our Priorities

01

Participation

This priority is about helping you to express your views, wishes and feelings so that you can influence the decisions we make

02

Placements

This priority is about making sure that we provide you with a safe, comfortable and caring place to live and grow up in

03

Education

This priority is about making sure your educational needs are met so that you can be happy and successful in your learning

04

Health

This priority is about looking after your physical and mental health and teaching you how to look after your own health

05

Identity

This priority is about building your sense of identity, including who you are and where you came from, so you know yourself

06

Preparation for Adulthood

This priority is about helping you develop life skills so you can look after yourself and live independently when you grow older



Priority 01

Participation

Our Priority for 2021-2024

Participation is all about ‘taking part’. We promise to support you to make your voice heard. This is so that you can influence the decisions and services that affect you. We will also make sure the adults in your life treat you with respect.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:



Senior Voice member
“Without our contributions, decisions may not hold the young person in mind”



Junior Voice member
“I like people to listen to what I am saying. This makes me feel happy, because I know I am being listened to”

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✔ Continued to seek your views and opinions to help us improve our services
- ✔ Appointed two care leavers to represent the voice of children and young people at important council meetings such as the Corporate Parenting Executive Board
- ✔ Used digital platforms to make sure you can still access the Voice groups
- ✔ Continued to involve you in interviews for Children’s Services staff members
- ✔ Involved you in Investing in Children Membership Award™ assessments for some of the services that work with you. This is so you could have your say on the quality of these services, including what has been working well and what needs to improve



Priority 01

Participation

Our Priority for 2021-2024

Participation is all about 'taking part'. We promise to support you to make your voice heard. This is so that you can influence the decisions and services that affect you. We will also make sure the adults in your life treat you with respect.

We promise to:

- ✔ Offer a range of Voice groups and opportunities and increase the number of children and young people engaging in youth voice and social action activity
- ✔ Share best practice and promote your achievements with people who work for the council, our partners, the public, and other children and young people
- ✔ Make sure that participation is as diverse as possible - this includes developing and delivering activities and programmes in ways that meet a diverse range of needs
- ✔ Increase the opportunities for under-represented children and young people to be able to challenge, question and offer their views locally, regionally and nationally
- ✔ Increase the number of children and young people involved in staff interviews
- ✔ Develop a Young Inspectors programme to give you the opportunity to inspect the services you receive in Blackburn with Darwen and help to make them even better

What will success look like?

- ✔ Quarterly reporting based on feedback from our Participation Champions across all service areas that shows how they have used your feedback to improve their service
- ✔ Regular reports on the learning from consultations with you and other children and young people will be produced - this will ensure that your voices are heard by all
- ✔ You will have even more opportunities to take part in participation activity and the activities you take part in will have a clear impact on your learning and development
- ✔ Increase in the number of services who have achieved the Investing in Children Membership Award™ or have committed to the Young Inspectors programme



Priority 02

Placements

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We promise to make sure that you have a safe, comfortable and caring place to live and grow up. This involves making sure your carers have the right skills to look after you. We will also try to make sure you are able to live close to the place you were born. This is so you can maintain your family relationships.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:



Senior Voice member
"This priority is good and everyone needs a comfortable and safe place to live. This is something I have"



Junior Voice member
"I am confident that young people will feel supported in placements"

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✓ Increased the number of long-term foster placements for you and other children
- ✓ Set up two new supported accommodation provisions in the borough, so that you and other young people have an improved choice in placement options when you turn 16
- ✓ Increased the number of foster carers and developed their skills through training
- ✓ Committed to the 'Staying Put' offer for young people aged 18 years or older who wish to remain with their foster carers into adulthood
- ✓ Made sure that transition planning starts earlier at 16 or 17 years of age to ensure there are no gaps in the services and placement options available to you once you turn 18



Priority 02

Placements

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We promise to make sure that you have a safe, comfortable and caring place to live and grow up. This involves making sure your carers have the right skills to look after you. We will also try to make sure you are able to live close to the place you were born. This is so you can maintain your family relationships.

We promise to:

- ✓ Make sure that you are living in a placement where carers understand your needs and have the skills to meet these needs and promote your emotional well-being
- ✓ Make sure you have regular family time with those are closest to you, and ensure you have quality time with those professionals who form your support network
- ✓ Recruit more foster carers in the borough, and develop their skills, so that more children and young people can be placed with a local family who loves them
- ✓ Make sure you have positive and supportive relationships to support you as you grow up - this involves having a consistent group of key professionals in your life
- ✓ Make sure you are living with people who understand you and can offer you a safe and nurturing place to live and grow up in, so that you can feel secure
- ✓ Support you to develop your independence skills early in your life

What will success look like?

- ✓ Increase in children and young people in placements with local foster carers
- ✓ Increase in young people who are matched long-term with their foster carers to promote your emotional stability and support your plan for permanence
- ✓ For those young people who wish to stay with their foster carers after 18, we will support you to do so with an increased number of 'Staying Put' placements
- ✓ The number of children and young people who have had 3 or more placements over the previous 2 year period will reduce and children will have more stability
- ✓ Fewer out-of-borough placements, so you can grow up in the place you know



Priority 03

Education

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We promise to do everything that we can to meet your education needs. This is so you can be happy and successful in your learning and achieve your goals.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:

Senior Voice member

"This priority ensures that young people are supported to access education in any circumstance i.e. during Covid-19 or normal day-to-day living"

Junior Voice member

"I think that this priority is fantastic because I have everything that I need to have my dream job as a teacher"

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✓ Everyone has a school place that can meet their needs
- ✓ In our most recent set of exams (2019) our Year 6 and Year 11 students performed above nationally expected levels when compared with other children and young people in care
- ✓ School attendance is very good with an average of 94%
- ✓ Setting up the New Directions service from the Virtual School to support young people as they leave school to go to college, training or work
- ✓ Only one permanent exclusion between 2017 and 2020



Priority 03

Education

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We promise to do everything that we can to meet your education needs. This is so you can be happy and successful in your learning and achieve your goals.

We promise to:

- ✓ Help you to have a positive return to your education setting after the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic and support with any issues you might have
- ✓ Check on your academic attainment and progress and make sure you are getting the right support at the right time to help you achieve your goals
- ✓ Listen and respond to your views on your education and celebrate your successes
- ✓ Train school staff and other adults to help them better understand your needs
- ✓ Provide help from specialist staff at the times when you need it most
- ✓ Host a Celebration of Achievement event for you every year

What will success look like?

- ✓ Everyone will have a school place that meets their needs so they can be happy and successful
- ✓ We will have better academic outcomes at the end of primary and secondary school than other children and young people in care across the country
- ✓ Attendance will continue to be good and increase to at least 95%, and we will have better attendance than other local councils across the country
- ✓ There will be no permanent exclusions
- ✓ After secondary school, everyone will have a place to go to in education, training or employment



Priority 04

Health

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We promise to look after your physical and mental health. This involves making sure you can access health services. We will also support you to make healthy choices and develop your skills so you can look after your own health. This is so you can live a healthy and happy life and achieve your goals for the future.

This priority involves...

- ✓ Making sure you have regular health assessments with a doctor, dentist and nurse
- ✓ Supporting you to make positive health choices and providing you with opportunities to develop personal and social skills so you can look after your own health in the future
- ✓ Offering you support and timely access to health services
- ✓ Making sure that health professionals know about you so that they can make sure you have the right support at the right time, and so you don't have to repeat your life story
- ✓ Using your views and experiences to shape health services for the future
- ✓ Listening to you and providing advice and support to help you live a healthier life
- ✓ Helping you have a smooth transition from Child to Adult health services

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:

Senior Voice member
"This [is] everything that we can hope for from a Health priority. It covers all areas"

Junior Voice member
"People need to know that we need supporting with our health and wellbeing. I think this is a good priority because our health is important"



Priority 04

Health

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We promise to look after your physical and mental health. This involves making sure you can access health services. We will also support you to make healthy choices and develop your skills so you can look after your own health. This is so you can live a healthy and happy life and achieve your goals for the future.

We promise to:

- ✔ Provide ongoing health support for you up until you become 25 years old
- ✔ Co-ordinate and support health professionals and other agencies to make sure that your health needs are properly met - this includes supporting your mental wellbeing
- ✔ Provide training to foster carers and health and social care professionals to raise awareness of your health needs and their responsibilities as a corporate parent
- ✔ Make sure that you receive a high-quality health assessment, either every six months or once a year depending on need, up until you become 18 years old
- ✔ Make sure that you receive a letter when you leave care that provides you with all of the important information about your health. This will include immunisation status, ongoing health needs and key health contacts - for example, GP and dentist details
- ✔ Support you as you transition from child health services to adult health services

What will success look like?

- ✔ You will be up-to-date with your dental assessments and vaccinations
- ✔ You will be offered regular health assessments, which will be completed on time
- ✔ You will receive a full and accurate health summary letter when you leave care
- ✔ The professionals in your life will be knowledgeable about your health needs
- ✔ You will be supported when you transition from child to adult health services
- ✔ You will be happy with the support you receive from local health services



Priority 05

Identity

Our Priority for 2021-2024

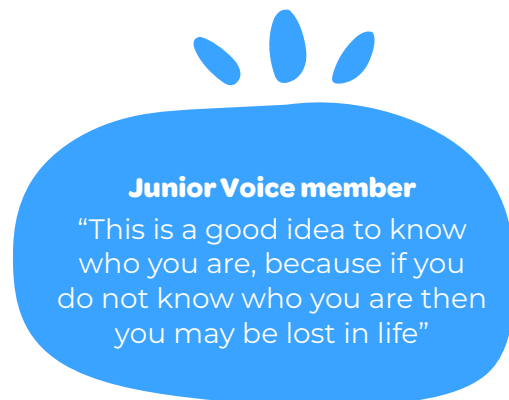
We promise to build your sense of identity. This is so you understand who you are, where you came from, and what's important to you. We will celebrate the differences that make you unique and help you to develop your self-esteem.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:



Senior Voice member
“This is something that I agree with, we are supported with our identity and what we can achieve”



Junior Voice member
“This is a good idea to know who you are, because if you do not know who you are then you may be lost in life”

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✓ Ensured that children and young people in long-term foster care were provided with information about their life story
- ✓ Provided training for social workers to improve their skills in helping children and young people to better understand their life history and experiences
- ✓ Recruited a diverse group of foster carers to make sure that, wherever possible, children and young people live with carers who reflect their cultural and religious background



Priority 05

Identity

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We promise to build your sense of identity. This is so you understand who you are, where you came from, and what's important to you. We will celebrate the differences that make you unique and help you to develop your self-esteem.

We promise to:

- ✓ Help you keep a record of important events, achievements and people in your life
- ✓ Encourage you to achieve your goals and celebrate your successes when you do
- ✓ Support and help strengthen the relationships that are important and help you stay connected to those that you love throughout your childhood and into adulthood
- ✓ Work with you to change the language we use. This is so that your corporate parents don't use jargon or words or phrases that make you feel uncomfortable

What will success look like?

- ✓ Life stories and other direct work tools will be used to make sure that you and other cared-for children and young people can access information about your life stories
- ✓ Where possible, the professionals in your life (including your social worker) will stay the same so they maintain a good understanding of your life story and experiences
- ✓ Consultations with you and other care-experienced children and young people about your views of life in care will take place and these will inform our work



Priority 06

Preparation for Adulthood

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We promise to help you develop life skills by the time you leave care. This is so you are able to care for yourself and live independently when you become an adult. We will also help you access further education, training or employment.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:

Senior Voice member
"This leaves me feeling confident, when moving into that stage in my life"

Junior Voice member
"This is really important - as adults we need to be able to look after ourselves"

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✔ Increase in the number of young people 'staying put' with their foster carers
- ✔ A number of care leavers have attended university and achieved great results
- ✔ We have worked with New Directions and education staff at colleges to make sure you are able to receive excellent advice and guidance about your next steps in life
- ✔ Developed a range of courses to support young people back into education
- ✔ We have made sure that your voice is heard in your Personal Education Plan
- ✔ Supported young people to find a safe and comfortable place to live



Priority 06

Preparation for Adulthood

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We promise to help you develop life skills by the time you leave care. This is so you are able to care for yourself and live independently when you become an adult. We will also help you access further education, training or employment.

We promise to:

- ✓ Develop opportunities for you to access local apprenticeship schemes
- ✓ Develop links with local training and employment providers in the borough
- ✓ Make sure you have support in all areas, to help you reach your goals and potential
- ✓ Provide a careers advisor to help you access education, employment or training
- ✓ Improve your access to the council's mental health services via the REVIVE team
- ✓ Improve your access to community leisure facilities in the community
- ✓ Treat you as an individual with your own unique needs - no 'one size fits all'
- ✓ Do what we can to make sure you have stability in your life and have the skills you need to grow into an independent adult - this includes a focus on 'Staying Put'
- ✓ Develop training for foster carers on independence and the role of Leaving Care

What will success look like?

- ✓ You will have a safe place to call 'home' - this may be your own flat or house
- ✓ You will be supported to access relevant education, employment or training
- ✓ You will have a good quality Pathway Plan that is reviewed every six months
- ✓ You will have the skills and knowledge you need to become independent
- ✓ You will have ongoing support during your remaining time in education



Making It Happen

Now you have helped us to develop the strategy, it's up to us to make sure the 6 priorities we have set happen. All of your corporate parents have a role to play in helping to make this strategy a success. Here is what you can expect from them.

Local councillors

Your local councillors will support and challenge your corporate parents to make sure that they are doing as good as job as possible. They will consider your needs, and the needs of other care-experienced children and young people, when making important decisions. They will also support the council to improve the services that we provide.

Related priorities:

01

02

03

04

05

06

Children's Services

Everybody who works for Children's Services is responsible for abiding by the promises we made in this strategy. This includes the commitment to listening to your opinions and involving you in decisions. They are also responsible for using our priorities, as well as feedback you give to them, to make the services they provide for you even better.

Related priorities:

01

02

03

04

05

06

Public Health

The council's Public Health team will play a role in achieving the Health priority. They will do this by making sure that you are able to access high-quality health and wellbeing services in Blackburn with Darwen, and that these services meet your specific needs.

Related priorities:

01

04

Health services

Local health services will also support us in achieving the Health priority by promoting your health and wellbeing. They will design and deliver effective services to meet your health needs and work with you to provide the care, guidance and support you want.

Related priorities: 01 04

Schools and colleges

Your school or college will play a key role in achieving the Education and the Preparation for Adulthood priorities. They will do this by providing you with a high-quality education and by helping you to prepare for whatever comes next e.g. training, university or work.

Related priorities: 01 03 06

Virtual School

The Virtual School will also help us to achieve the Education pledge by supporting you and your school to make sure you are able to do as well as you can academically. They will monitor your progress at school so that you are able to achieve your learning goals.

Related priorities: 01 03 06

Housing Needs

The council's Housing Needs team will help us achieve the Preparation for Adulthood priority by supporting you to find you a safe, comfortable place to call 'home' when you are ready to live more independently. They will make sure you have a range of options.

Related priorities: 01 06

The Police and Other Services

Whilst the Police are not directly responsible for achieving our priorities, they will help to keep you safe and protect you from harm. Other services across the council will also work with us to develop new ways of meeting your needs - to find out more about what they have planned over the next few years, take a look at the pledges on pages 27-28.

Key Contacts



Participation

Your contact for the Participation priority is Imran Akuji. He is responsible for the council's adolescent services.



Placements

Your contact for the Placements priority is Judith Fennell. She is responsible for adoption, fostering and permanence.



Education

Your contact for the Education priority is Charlotte Hesketh. She is responsible for the Virtual School and your education.



Health

Your contact for the Education priority is Caroline Waldron. She is a Deputy Designated Nurse for looked after children.



Identity

Your contact for the Identity priority is Elizabeth Mannion. She is responsible for our services for looked after children.



Preparation for Adulthood

Elizabeth Mannion is also your contact for the Preparation for Adulthood priority. She is responsible for Leaving Care.

Pledges From Your Corporate Parents



Tracy Lysons

Early Help & Support Service Manager

The Early Help service will mentor and seek to offer opportunities for children and young people, helping to raise aspirations.



Janette Clarke

Head of Social Care - Children's

I promise to strive towards all children achieving a sense of belonging in a permanent family setting where they feel safe, happy and can reach their full potential.



Paul Fleming

Strategic Director, Resources

I will ensure we listen and then apply innovative approaches to support the delivery of improved outcomes for our children.



Jo Siddle

Deputy Director - Education & Schools

I pledge to ensure our children receive the highest quality of Education, listening to need and ensuring our children are at the heart of decisions made.



Denise Park

Chief Executive

I will continue to meet and listen to all of our children and young people.



Shirley Goodhew

Consultant in Public Health

I promise to seek the views of young people to inform local policy and programmes to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

Pledges From Your Corporate Parents



Andrea Sturgess

Head of Communications & Engagement

I pledge to listen to young people and improve how we target our main communications messages to reach them and meet their needs.



Imran Akuji

Head of Adolescents, Partnerships & Performance

I pledge to ensure we work alongside children and young people to build confidence and develop new skills, ensuring that you are empowered and your views are heard to help influence decisions and shape services you receive.



Dwayne Lowe

Head of Highways & Network Operations

I pledge to work with local learning providers to develop more opportunities for supported internships and work experience providing an exit route for young people with additional learning needs and/or disabilities from education into the workplace.



Anna Haworth

Named Nurse for Looked After Children (NHS)

We promise to engage with children and young people, listening to their health concerns and to support meeting those health needs as quickly as possible



Thank you to the children and young people of the Senior and Junior Voice groups who have produced this strategy in collaboration with us.



Blackburn with Darwen's

Corporate Parenting Strategy

2021-24

*Version for BwD's
Corporate Parents*

Contents

Forewords

Councillor Julie Gunn	3
Jayne Ivory, Strategic Director	4

Section One

Introduction	5
The Local Picture	6
Our Promise to Children in Care	8

Section Two

Our Priorities	9
• Participation	10
• Placements	11
• Education	12
• Health	13
• Identity	14
• Preparation for Adulthood	15
Key Actions & Indicators of Success	16

Section Three

Making It Happen	24
Being Accountable	26
Messages From Children in Care	27



Foreword

Councillor Julie Gunn

When I am asked 'what does it mean to be a corporate parent?' I reply that it is the most important part of any councillor's role. Sometimes, councillors don't even know that until they are in the job. In my mind, being a corporate parent is about:

- Being a positive role model and showing children and young people how to take on the challenges that life brings, even if we are not sure how ourselves
- Making sure we help children and young people to aim high and don't just settle for 'good enough' when we could achieve much more
- Supporting children and young people to become confident to speak out and to be confident that their voice will be heard
- Seeking out children and young people's views and feelings, celebrating their successes, and helping them work through the things that maybe didn't go so well
- Proudly standing up for children and young people with experience of care

We will do all of this so that, together, we learn how to deal with whatever life brings. In short, being a good corporate parent is about being a decent parent, and that is the promise that we have made to children and young people in our borough.



Foreword

Jayne Ivory, Director

Being a good parent is the most important role that those of us who are fortunate enough to have children undertake. At the time of writing this introduction, we are corporate parents to you and 372 other children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen.

Parenting doesn't come with a job description and we know the well-known saying 'it takes a village to raise a child'. In Blackburn with Darwen, we have a real clear vision of what we would like as outcomes for our care-experienced children and young people.

Our vision is that they will grow up to have a happy and healthy life, experience success and overcome challenges. To make sure this happens we will work with them, the people that love and care for them, and their corporate parents to get them the right help at the right time so that they can each benefit from effective support.

We have worked with care-experienced children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen to develop this strategy for how we plan to improve things for our cared-for children and care leavers.

This strategy sets out what they want and need from us, our partners and communities. This is because it's important that we demonstrate that we are fulfilling one of the most important responsibilities we have as a local council - that we are ambitious Corporate Parents and Corporate Grandparents.

Over the next few pages of this document you can see how the council will plan to do this.

01.

Introduction

This strategy sets out how corporate parents in Blackburn with Darwen will work together to ensure that children and young people in care, and those who have left our care, can grow up to lead happy, healthy lives and experience success.

When a child or young person comes into care, the council and our partners become their corporate parent. This means our elected members, officers and partner agencies have a collective responsibility for ensuring that every looked after child is given the best possible start in life so they can grow up to lead happy, healthy lives and achieve their full potential.

Our approach to corporate parenting is founded on the principle that looked-after children deserve the same standard of care, love and support that any good parent would want for their child. We ask that all corporate parents consider the following questions: “Would this be good enough for my child? If I were that child, would it have been good enough for me?”

Asking yourself these critical questions will help you ensure that the needs of looked-after children and care leavers are at the forefront of everything you do. Whilst being in care can pose additional challenges for children and young people, it is important to remember that they want what every other child wants - to be listened to, to be loved, and to be kept safe.

This strategy is informed by the corporate parenting principles set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and has been developed in collaboration with looked-after children and young people in the borough to ensure that it reflects the diverse needs of those who come into care. Together, we have co-produced six key priority areas for us all to focus on.

We believe that this strategy will support our joint work on the most important issues, so we can achieve the best possible outcomes for our looked-after children and care leavers here in Blackburn with Darwen. We will also work with the borough’s Voice groups to review the strategy on a regular basis to ensure that it is being used to drive progress and change.

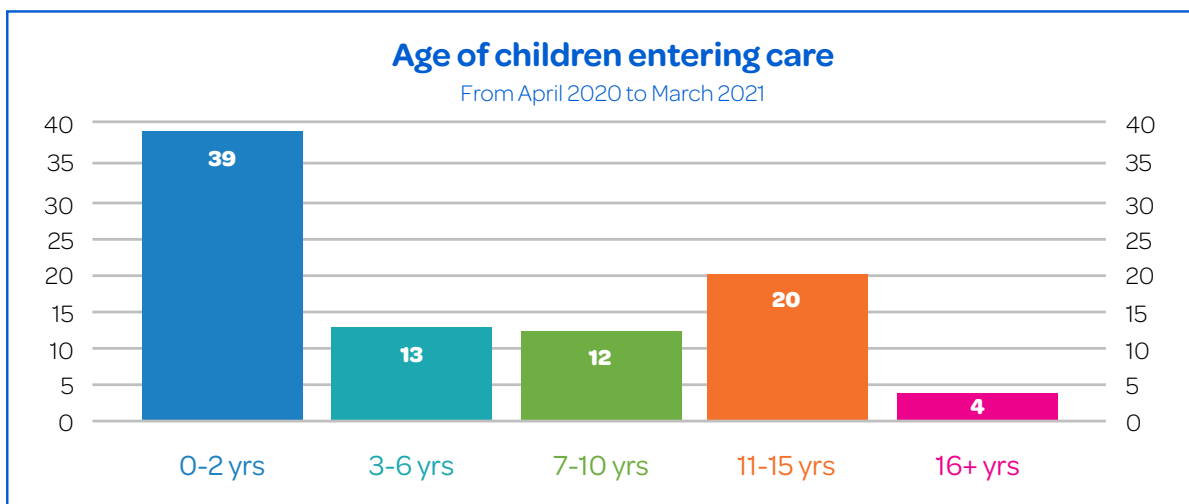
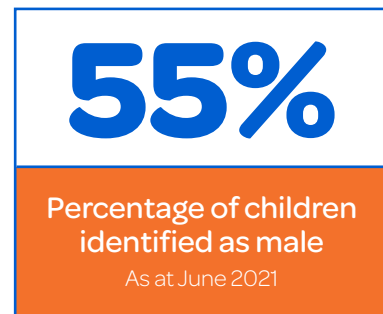
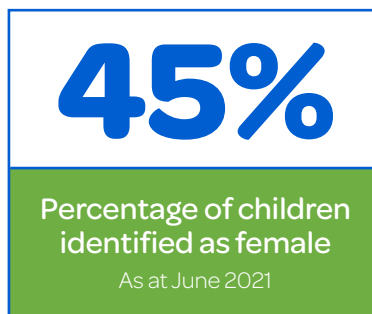
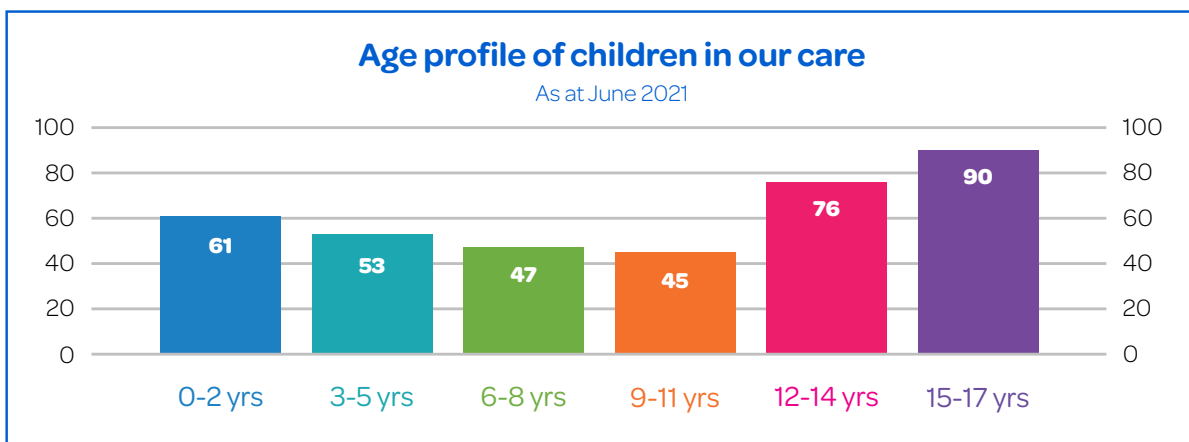


Additional Resources

Statutory guidance on applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers is [available at Gov.uk](#)

The Local Picture

Key statistics and indicators from the Corporate Parenting Dashboard and other sources. Data correct as at June 2021.



41%

Percentage of Care Leavers aged 19 to 21 in education, employment or training

Comparator average - 51% in March 2020

97%

Percentage of Care Leavers aged 19 to 21 in touch with the council

No comparator data available

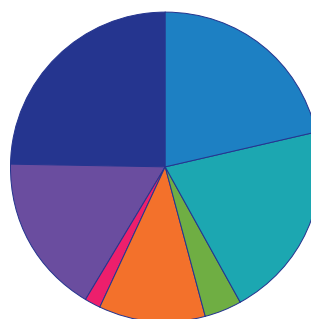
Where are children in care placed?

As at June 2021

Foster Placements (in-house)	121
Friends & Family	64
Foster Placements (in-house)	61
Placed with Parents	60
Children's Homes (agency)	24
Adoptive Placements	14
Res Accom Not Subject to CH Regs	13
Other	8
Children's Homes (in-house)	3
Prison/HMYOI	1
NHS	1
Secure	1
Family Centre/Mother & Baby Unit	1
Residential School	0
Independent Living	0

Destination of care leavers

From April 2020 to March 2021



Reached 18	27	21%
Returned to parents	26	21%
Moved in with relatives	5	4%
Other reason	14	11%
Child Arrangement Order	2	2%
Adopted	21	17%
Special Guardianship	31	25%

96 per 10,000

Number of children in our care per 10,000 of the 0-18 year old population

Comparator average - 107 per 10,000 in March 2020

97%

Percentage of Care Leavers aged 19 to 21 in suitable accommodation

Comparator average - 88% in March 2020

Percentage of children in our care with a disability

From a total cohort of 372

5%

Percentage in adoption placements

From a total cohort of 372

4%

Our Promise to Children in Care

What is our promise?

We have promised children and young people that they will be:

- ✓ able to know and trust their social worker or Personal Adviser
- ✓ listened to and told what to expect throughout their care journey
- ✓ able to tell us what is working well and what we could do better

How will we work with children and young people?

Children and young people will be:

- ✓ treated as an individual and not just a case number
- ✓ listened to and encouraged to contribute to the support they need
- ✓ given enough time to get to know their social worker or Personal Adviser

How will we achieve this promise?

We will make sure that children and young people:

- ✓ are able to talk freely and openly to their social worker or Personal Adviser
- ✓ are listened to about what they like and want, as well as any worries they have
- ✓ are listened to about what they enjoy doing at home and at school, such as hobbies
- ✓ play a role in deciding together about what help is needed for them and their family
- ✓ receive the right help at the right time - this includes from the council's services as well as other key services such as local health providers and their school or college
- ✓ feel comfortable telling us what is working well and what we could do differently

Our Priorities

01

Participation

This priority is about empowering children and young people to express their voices and influence the decisions we make

02

Placements

This priority is about making sure we provide children and young people with a safe, comfortable and caring home

03

Education

This priority is about making sure that children and young people can be happy and successful in their learning

04

Health

This priority is about looking after the health of children and young people including their physical and emotional needs

05

Identity

This priority is about supporting children and young people to build a sense of identity so that they know their own histories

06

Preparation for Adulthood

This priority is about supporting young people to develop the life skills they need to live independently when they grow older



Priority 01

Participation

Our Priority for 2021-2024

Care-experienced children and young people will be supported to make their voices heard so that they can influence the decisions and services that affect them. We will also ensure they are treated with respect and dignity at all times.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:

Senior Voice member
“Without our contributions, decisions may not hold the young person in mind”

Junior Voice member
“I like people to listen to what I am saying. This makes me feel happy, because I know I am being listened to”

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✔ Continued to seek the views of children and young people to improve our services
- ✔ Appointed two care leavers to represent the voice of children and young people at important council meetings such as the Corporate Parenting Executive Board
- ✔ Used digital platforms to ensure access to the Voice groups during Covid-19
- ✔ Involved young people in the recruitment of key Children’s Services personnel
- ✔ Involved children and young people in Investing in Children Membership Award™ assessments for a range of services so they could have their say on the quality of these services, including what has been working well and what needs to improve



Priority 02

Placements

Our Priority for 2021-2024

Children in our care will have a safe, comfortable and caring place to live and grow up. We will ensure their carers have the right skills to look after them and try to make sure that they are able to live close to the place they were born so that they can maintain important relationships with members of their family.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:



Senior Voice member
“This priority is good and everyone needs a comfortable and safe place to live. This is something I have”



Junior Voice member
“I am confident that young people will feel supported in placements”

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✓ Increase in the number of long-term foster placements
- ✓ Set up two new supported accommodation provisions in the borough, so that young people have an improved choice in placement options when they turn 16
- ✓ Increase in the number of foster carers who developed their skills through training
- ✓ Committed to the ‘Staying Put’ offer for young people aged 18 years or older who wish to remain with their foster carers into adulthood
- ✓ Made sure that transition planning starts earlier to ensure there are no gaps in the services and placement options available once young people are 18 years old



Priority 03

Education

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We will do everything that we can to meet the education needs of children in our care and care leavers by championing their attendance, attainment and progress so they can be successful in their learning and achieve their goals.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:

Senior Voice member

“This priority ensures that young people are supported to access education in any circumstance i.e. during Covid-19 or normal day-to-day living”

Junior Voice member

“I think that this priority is fantastic because I have everything that I need to have my dream job as a teacher”

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✓ Everyone has a school place that can meet their needs
- ✓ In our most recent set of exams (2019) our Year 6 and Year 11 students performed above nationally expected levels when compared with other children and young people in care
- ✓ School attendance is very good with an average of 94%
- ✓ Setting up the New Directions service from the Virtual School to support young people as they leave school to go to college, training or work
- ✓ Only one permanent exclusion between 2017 and 2020



Priority 04

Health

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We will support improvements in the physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers by promoting access to local health services. This will support children and young people to make healthy choices and develop skills so that they can manage their own health.

This priority involves...

- ✓ Providing regular health assessments with a doctor, dentist and nurse
- ✓ Supporting children and young people to make positive health choices and providing them with opportunities to develop skills so that they can look after their own health
- ✓ Offering children and young people support and timely access to health services
- ✓ Making sure that health professionals know and understand the children and young people they work with, to improve the provision of support and reduce frustrations
- ✓ Using children and young people's views and experiences to shape health services
- ✓ Providing advice and support to help children and young people live healthier lives
- ✓ Supporting timely and effective transitions from Child to Adult health services

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:

Senior Voice member

"This [is] everything that we can hope for from a Health priority. It covers all areas"

Junior Voice member

"People need to know that we need supporting with our health and wellbeing. I think this is a good priority because our health is important"



Priority 05

Identity

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We will ensure that children and young people know who they are, and why they came to be looked after. We will celebrate the differences that make each and every one of them unique and help them to develop their self-esteem.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:

Senior Voice member
“This is something that I agree with, we are supported with our identity and what we can achieve”

Junior Voice member
“This is a good idea to know who you are, because if you do not know who you are then you may be lost in life”

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✓ Ensured that children and young people in long-term foster care were provided with information about their life story
- ✓ Provided training for social workers to improve their skills in helping children and young people to better understand their life history and experiences
- ✓ Recruited a diverse group of foster carers to make sure that, wherever possible, children and young people are able to live with carers who reflect their cultural and religious background



Priority 06

Preparation for Adulthood

Our Priority for 2021-2024

We will help young people develop life skills by the time they leave care so they are able to care for themselves and live independently when they become an adult. We will also help support access to education, training or employment.

What Children and Young People said

Whilst developing this strategy, we asked some of the children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups what they thought of our priority for 2021-2024:

Senior Voice member
"This leaves me feeling confident, when moving into that stage in my life"

Junior Voice member
"This is really important - as adults we need to be able to look after ourselves"

Recent Achievements

Since the last version of this strategy, we have had the following successes:

- ✔ Increased the number of young people 'staying put' with their foster carers
- ✔ A number of care leavers have attended university and achieved great results
- ✔ We have worked with New Directions and education staff at colleges to make sure young people are able to access advice and guidance about their next steps in life
- ✔ Developed a range of courses to support young people back into education
- ✔ Ensured that the voices of young people are heard in their Personal Education Plans
- ✔ Supported young people to find a safe and comfortable place to live

Corporate Parenting Priorities

Key Actions & Indicators of Success



Priority 1 - Participation

We have committed to...

- ✔ Increasing the range of children's rights and participation training available for people who work with children and for children and young people themselves, including the development of a Young Inspectors model. Where possible, we will accredit that training
- ✔ Offering a range of voice groups and opportunities to make sure we increase the number of children and young people engaging in participation, youth voice and social action activity (meaning being involved in doing something positive in their community)
- ✔ Sharing best practice and promote the achievements of children and young people with staff and partners, the public and other children and young people using all available forums – including social media (when appropriate)
- ✔ Ensuring that participation is as diverse as possible and that activities/programmes are developed and delivered for all young people
- ✔ Increase the range of opportunities for vulnerable children and young people to share their voice and to be able to challenge, question and offer their views locally, regionally and nationally
- ✔ The timely and quality recording and reporting of the impact of participation, youth voice and social action activity
- ✔ Increasing the group of children and young people who have been trained and supported to contribute to recruitment processes
- ✔ Investigating and developing a Young Inspectors programme that has commitment from all partners. This will empower children and young people to inspect the services they receive in Blackburn with Darwen



Priority 1 - Participation

What will success look like?

- ✓ Quarterly reporting based on feedback from the individual Champions across all service areas - including what has worked well and what we need to do better, and how services are implementing changes following the feedback from children and young people
- ✓ Good practice that evidences the work of children and young people will be shared, showcased and celebrated
- ✓ Regular reporting on the outcomes and learning from consultation activity with children and young people will be carried out, ensuring their voices are heard and that the impact they make on the improvements in service delivery is recorded and recognised
- ✓ An increase in participation activity with a clear impact on learning and development for children and young people
- ✓ An increase in the number of services achieving the Investing in Children membership award and/or who have committed to participation in the Young Inspectors Model

Priority 2 - Placements

We have committed to...

- ✓ Making sure that children and young people are living in a placement with carers who understand their needs and are able to ensure that these needs are well met to promote their emotional well-being
- ✓ Ensuring that children and young people have regular family time with those who are closest to them, including quality time with the professionals who form their support network
- ✓ Making the recruitment of more foster carers in the borough our focus and priority so that more children and young people can benefit from local placements in Blackburn with Darwen





- ✓ The training and development of our foster carers so that more children and young people, whatever their needs, can be placed within a family in situations where this is possible and appropriate
- ✓ Ensuring that children and young people have positive and supportive relationships to support them as they grow up and approach adulthood, with greater consistency of key professionals in their lives
- ✓ Making sure that children and young people are living with people who understand them, and can provide a nurturing and warm placement where they can feel secure
- ✓ Supporting children and young people to develop your independence skills early in their lives, not just when they are approaching adulthood and preparing to move out

Priority 2 - Placements

What will success look like?

- ✓ We have will have higher number of children and young people in placements with in-house foster carers
- ✓ We will have a growing number of young people who are matched long term with their foster carers to promote their emotional stability and support their permanence plan
- ✓ For those young people who wish to stay with their foster carers post 18, they will be supported to do so with an increased number of 'Staying Put' placements
- ✓ The number of children and young people who have had 3 or more placements over a 2 year period will greatly reduce, achieving greater stability
- ✓ We have fewer out of borough placements overall, keeping our local children in local placements



Priority 3 - Education

We have committed to...

- ✓ Helping children and young people to have a positive return to their education setting after the disruption in 2020/21 and to support them with any issues they might have
- ✓ Checking on children and young people's academic attainment and progress ensuring they are getting the right support at the right time to help them achieve
- ✓ Listening to and responding to children and young people's views on their education and celebrating their successes
- ✓ Training school staff and other professionals to help them better understand the needs of care-experienced pupils
- ✓ Providing help from specialist staff at the times when children and young people most need it

Priority 3 - Education

What will success look like?

- ✓ Everyone will have a school place that meets their needs so they can be happy and successful
- ✓ We will have better academic outcomes at the end of primary and secondary school than other children and young people in care across the country
- ✓ Attendance will continue to be good and increase to at least 95%, and we will have better attendance than other areas across the country
- ✓ After secondary school everyone will have a place to go to in either education, training or employment
- ✓ We will hold a celebration of achievement event every year



Priority 4 - Health

We have committed to...

- ✔ Providing ongoing health support for looked after children and care leavers up to the age of 25
- ✔ Co-ordinating and supporting health professionals and other agencies in all issues in relation to the health needs of looked after children and care leavers
- ✔ Providing training to foster carers and the wider health and social care economy to raise awareness of looked after children/care leavers' health needs and the role of a corporate parent
- ✔ Facilitating the completion of a high quality six monthly/annual health assessment for all looked after children up the age of 18 years
- ✔ Ensuring that all young people leaving care will receive a letter summarising their health details, immunisation status, ongoing health needs and key health contacts, for example, GP and dental details
- ✔ Supporting transitions from child services to adult services - for example, CAMHS/ELCAS to Adult mental health services

Priority 4 - Health

What will success look like?

- ✔ Data will evidence good performance in terms of children who are up to date with dental assessments and their immunisations
- ✔ All children and young people have been offered a health assessment which is subsequently completed within time scales and meets the required quality standard
- ✔ Health summary letters for young people leaving care - a copy to be kept within the young person's health records as evidence. Audits to be undertaken to monitor this



- ✔ Evaluation forms received from delegates who attend training sessions will evidence their effectiveness
- ✔ Evidence of contacts recorded with the Enhanced LAC Nurse team from Personal Advisor, young people and Social Worker
- ✔ Evidence of support for transitions from child to adult services will be recorded on the Health contact spreadsheet
- ✔ Feedback from looked after children, care leavers and the professionals and carers who provide support will be positive



Priority 5 - Identity

We have committed to...

- ✔ Helping children and young people to keep a record of important events, achievements and people in their lives
- ✔ Positively encourage children and young people and celebrate their successes
- ✔ Supporting and helping to strengthen the relationships that are important to children and young people and helping them stay connected to those that they love throughout their childhood and into adulthood
- ✔ Promoting agreed terminology across the partnership to avoid jargon or language that makes young people feel uncomfortable

Priority 5 - Identity

What will success look like?

- ✔ Life stories and other direct work tools will be consistently used to make sure that children and young people can access information about their life stories to understand what happened in their past and provide them with a better sense of their identity



- ✔ Where possible, the professionals in the lives of children and young people (including their social worker) will stay the same
- ✔ Consultations with care-experienced children and young people about their views of life in care will take place and these will inform the work of Children's Services, our partners and other corporate parents



Priority 6 - Preparation for Adulthood

We have committed to...

- ✔ Developing opportunities for care-experienced young people to access local apprenticeship schemes
- ✔ Developing links with local training and employment providers in the borough
- ✔ Ensuring that care-experienced young people have support in all areas, to help them reach their goals and potential
- ✔ Providing young people with a careers advisor to help them access education, employment or training
- ✔ Improving access to the council's mental health services via the REVIVE team
- ✔ Improving access to community leisure facilities in the community
- ✔ Treating every care-experienced young person as an individual with their own unique needs - no 'one size fits all'
- ✔ Doing what we can to make sure that children and young people have stability in their lives and the skills they need to grow into independent adults - this includes a focus on 'Staying Put'
- ✔ Developing training for foster carers on independence and the role of Leaving Care



Priority 6 - Preparation for Adulthood

What will success look like?

- ✓ Increase in care-experienced young people having a safe and suitable place to call home
- ✓ Increase in young people accessing relevant education, employment or training
- ✓ Increase in young people attending, and being successful, at university - if this aligns with their ambitions and goals
- ✓ Care-experienced young people will have a good quality Pathway Plan that is reviewed every six months
- ✓ Young people will have the skills and knowledge they need to become independent
- ✓ Care-experienced young people will receive ongoing support during their remaining time in education
- ✓ Increase in young people accessing community services

Making It Happen

The responsibility for achieving the commitments we have made to looked after children and care leavers is shared by the whole authority in partnership with relevant agencies, such as education establishments and local health services.

Elected Members

Elected members will provide the political and professional leadership of our corporate parenting commitment and will advocate for looked after children and care leavers by prioritising their needs in council decision-making, considering how plans and policies might affect them, and ensuring that the council is honouring the pledges it has made.

Related priorities:

01

02

03

04

05

06

Children's Services

Children's Services staff are likely to have the most direct contact with our children in care and care leavers and are expected to reflect corporate parenting principles when carrying out their duties. This includes a commitment to effective participation and a continued focus on improving the outcomes of each and every child or young person.

Related priorities:

01

02

03

04

05

06

Public Health

The council's Public Health function will support improved health outcomes for looked after children and care leavers through the consideration of their physical, emotional and mental health needs when developing strategies and commissioning services.

Related priorities:

01

04

Health services

Health service providers will play an important role in improving the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of all looked after children and care leavers. This includes the provision of regular health assessments and ensuring timely access to health services.

Related priorities: 01 04

Schools and colleges

Schools, colleges and other education establishments have a range of responsibilities including monitoring the progress of looked after children, making sure that children in care and care leavers are in school and supporting them to achieve academic success.

Related priorities: 01 03 06

Virtual School

The Virtual School will provide leadership, strategic direction and foster partnership working with schools to secure successful educational outcomes for children in care and care leavers, and narrow the attainment gap so everyone can reach their potential.

Related priorities: 01 03 06

Housing Needs

The council's housing team will play an important role in supporting the provision of suitable and safe accommodation options for care leavers who are ready to live more independently. This also includes a duty towards mitigating the risk of homelessness.

Related priorities: 01 06

The Police and Other Services

The police, community organisations and others will provide important services and support for our looked after children and care leavers to keep them safe and meet their individual needs. This includes the provision of advice and guidance, mentoring, victim support, drug and alcohol services, community leisure facilities and transport links etc.

Being Accountable

Children and young people have told us that they would like to receive feedback on a regular basis to see how well we are using the strategy to improve outcomes. To enable this, we have identified leads for each of the six strategic priorities.

Priority	Lead
Participation	Imran Akuji Head of Adolescents, Partnerships & Performance Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Placements	Judith Fennell Head of Permanence and Corporate Parenting Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Education	Charlotte Hesketh LAC Virtual Head & Assessment Officer Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Health	Caroline Waldron Deputy Designated Nurse - Safeguarding Children and LAC Blackburn with Darwen CCG and East Lancashire CCG
Identity	Elizabeth Mannion Service Lead - Children in Our Care, Children with Disabilities and Leaving Care Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Preparation for Adulthood	Elizabeth Mannion Service Lead - Children in Our Care, Children with Disabilities and Leaving Care Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Messages From Children in Care

When producing this strategy, we asked children and young people who take part in the Junior and Senior Voice groups to share their views and experiences of being in care to help corporate parents, like yourself, get to know them better.

I am 10 years old + have been in foster care since I was 7 my foster carer has helped me when I was home schooling. I have been to lots of fun places in the last 3 years that I have never been I now attend the Junior voice group and have made new friends, I have also done archery, canoeing, arts and crafts, sports and baking. My old social worker really helped me with things that I needed like arranged contact with my mum. I feel happy and looked after :)

Maisie, 10 years old

"I am 10 years old. I have been in foster care since I was 7. My foster carer has helped me when I was home schooling. I have been to lots of fun places in the last 3 years that I have never been. I now attend the Junior Voice group and have made new friends. I have also done archery, canoeing, arts and crafts, sports and baking. My old social worker really helped me with things that I needed like arranged contact with my mum. I feel happy and looked after :)"

I am Taome and I'm 9/10 on the 5th of December
I joined my auntie and uncle (foster carer)
when I was 5 nearly 6 so I've been with them
for 4 years they have helped me through
everything I am really enjoying living with
them. I go to the Junior voice and
find it really fun my social worker is
currently helping us get the SGO

Taome, 9 years old

"I am Taome and I'm 9/10 on the 5th of December. I joined my aunty and uncle (foster carer) when I was 5, nearly 6, so I've been with them for 4 years. They have helped me through everything. I am really enjoying living with them. I go to the Junior Voice and find it really fun. My social worker is currently helping us get the SGO".

My name is Amber & I am 15 years
old. I was placed in foster care on the
6th April so roughly about 4 & a half
years. I couldn't ask for anyone else
as my foster carer supports me so
much. I am also very lucky to be
able to live with my brother too!

I have learnt lots of new skills
and has been introduced to lots of
new things like the voice & majorettes.

Amber, 15 years old

"My name is Amber and I am 15 years old. I was placed in foster carer on the 6th [of] April, so roughly about 4 and a half years [ago]. I couldn't ask for anyone else as my foster carer supports me so much. I am also very lucky to be able to live with my brother too! I have learned lots of new skills and have been introduced to lots of new things like the Voice and Majorettes".

Your Pledges To Our Children & Young People



Tracy Lysons

Early Help & Support Service Manager

The Early Help service will mentor and seek to offer opportunities for children and young people, helping to raise aspirations.



Janette Clarke

Head of Social Care - Children's

I promise to strive towards all children achieving a sense of belonging in a permanent family setting where they feel safe, happy and can reach their full potential.



Paul Fleming

Strategic Director, Resources

I will ensure we listen and then apply innovative approaches to support the delivery of improved outcomes for our children.



Jo Siddle

Deputy Director - Education & Schools

I pledge to ensure our children receive the highest quality of Education, listening to need and ensuring our children are at the heart of decisions made.



Denise Park

Chief Executive

I will continue to meet and listen to all of our children and young people.



Shirley Goodhew

Consultant in Public Health

I promise to seek the views of young people to inform local policy and programmes to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

Your Pledges To Our Children & Young People



Andrea Sturgess

Head of Communications & Engagement

I pledge to listen to young people and improve how we target our main communications messages to reach them and meet their needs.



Imran Akuji

Head of Adolescents, Partnerships & Performance

I pledge to ensure we work alongside children and young people to build confidence and develop new skills, ensuring that you are empowered and your views are heard to help influence decisions and shape services you receive.



Dwayne Lowe

Head of Highways & Network Operations

I pledge to work with local learning providers to develop more opportunities for supported internships and work experience providing an exit route for young people with additional learning needs and/or disabilities from education into the workplace.



Anna Haworth

Named Nurse for Looked After Children (NHS)

We promise to engage with children and young people, listening to their health concerns and to support meeting those health needs as quickly as possible

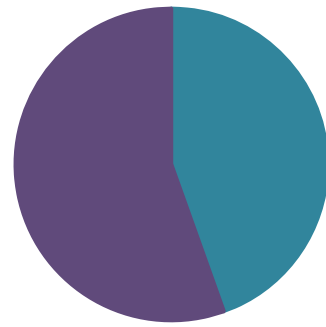


Thank you to the children and young people of the the Voice Forums who have produced this strategy in collaboration with us.



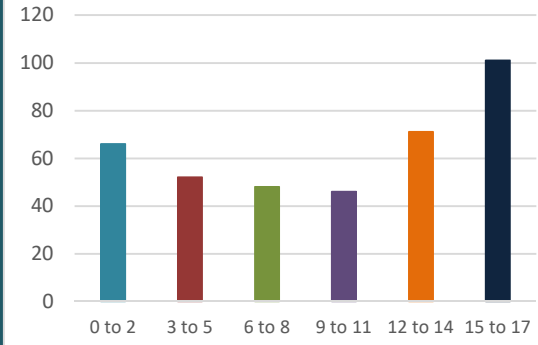
Children in Our Care - 3rd September 2021

Gender of Children in Our Care



Female	171	45%
Male	213	55%
Total CIOC	384	

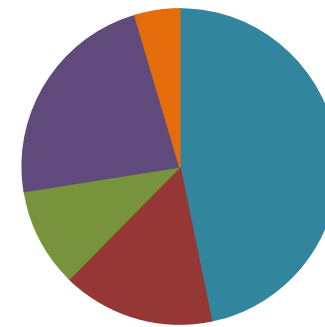
Age Profile of Children in Care



0 to 2	66	9 to 11	46
3 to 5	52	12 to 14	71
6 to 8	48	15 to 17	101

Entering Care Sep 20 to Aug 21

Age of children entering care



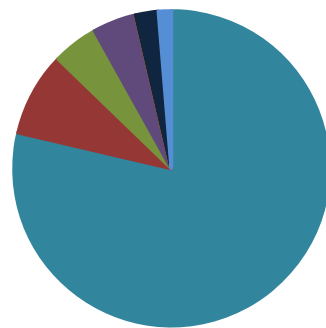
0 to 2	51 (47%)	11 to 15	25 (23%)
3 to 6	17 (16%)	16+	5 (5%)
7 to 10	11 (10%)		

Children in Our Care since 2008

Number of Children in our care since 2008



Ethnicity of Children in Our Care

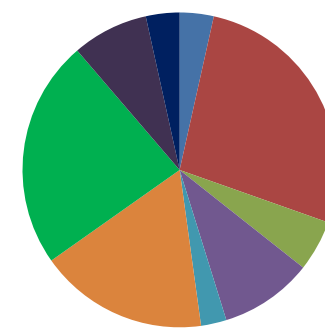


White/UK	302	79%
Asian Pakistani	33	9%
Other	18	5%
Mixed	17	4%
Black	0	0%
White Other	9	2%
Asian Other, incl Indian	5	1%

Where are children in care placed?

Foster Placements (in-house)	113
Friends & Family	68
Foster Placements (agency)	65
Placed with Parents	65
Children's Homes (agency)	19
Res Accom Not Subject to CH Regs	18
Adoptive Placements	15
Other	9
Children's Homes (in-house)	6
Prison/HMYOI	2
Family Centre/Mother and Baby Unit	2
NHS	1
Secure	1
Residential School	0
Independent Living	0
# Children in Our Care with a Disability	18
% Children in Our Care with a Disability	5%

Destinations of Care Leavers



Reached 18	4 (3%)
Returned to parents	31 (27%)
Moved in with relatives	6 (5%)
Other reason	11 (10%)
Child Arrangement Order	3 (3%)
Adopted	20 (17%)
Special guardianship	27 (23%)
Aged 18+ remain current carers	9 (8%)
Independent Living	4 (3%)

Entering/Leaving Care since 2001

	Entering	Leaving	Net
Total in 2001	111	95	16
Total in 2002	103	117	-14
Total in 2003	131	134	-3
Total in 2004	102	104	-2
Total in 2005	119	100	19
Total in 2006	94	104	-10
Total in 2007	97	92	5
Total in 2008	114	104	10
Total in 2009	151	94	57
Total in 2010	112	123	-11
Total in 2011	155	128	27
Total in 2012	125	149	-24
Total in 2013	123	120	3
Total in 2014	89	125	-36
Total in 2015	163	139	24
Total in 2016	170	139	31
Total in 2017	161	143	18
Total in 2018	162	153	9
Total in 2019	155	144	11
Total in 2020	110	134	-24
Total in 2021	75	63	12

*Please note this table is calculated by calendar years

CLA as at 31st March

	2020/21	2019/20
CLA as at 31st March	374	411
Male	207 (55%)	228 (55%)
Female	167 (45%)	183 (45%)
0 to 2	57 (15%)	73 (18%)
3 to 5	55 (15%)	63 (15%)
6 to 8	49 (13%)	52 (13%)
9 to 11	43 (11%)	52 (13%)
12 to 14	78 (21%)	77 (19%)
15 to 17	92 (25%)	94 (23%)
White/UK	291 (78%)	327 (80%)
Asian Pakistani	37 (10%)	42 (10%)
Other	15 (4%)	13 (3%)
Mixed	20 (5%)	18 (4%)
Black	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
White Other	5 (1%)	4 (1%)
Asian Other, incl Indian	6 (2%)	6 (2%)

Entering Care / Destinations of Care Leavers

	2020/21	2019/20
Age of children entering care		
0 to 2	39 (44%)	57 (38%)
3 to 6	13 (15%)	35 (23%)
7 to 10	12 (14%)	20 (13%)
11 to 15	20 (23%)	31 (21%)
16+	4 (5%)	8 (5%)
Destinations of Care Leavers		
Reached 18	27 (21%)	34 (24%)
Returned to parents	26 (21%)	32 (23%)
Moved in with relatives	5 (4%)	10 (7%)
Other Reason	14 (11%)	19 (13%)
Child Arrangement Order	2 (2%)	3 (2%)
Adopted	21 (17%)	21 (15%)
Special guardianship	31 (25%)	23 (16%)

*Please note the 2020/21 figures are provisional

Performance compared with national, regional and comparator averages

	Current - BwD***	Comparator Average*	Regional Average*	National Average*
Number of children in our care (CIOC) per 10,000 0-18 year old population	99	107	97	67
% in foster care	64%	73%	67%	72%
Of which - in-house provider or family and friends approved care	47%			
Of which - Other provider	17%			
% in adoption placements	4%	3%	2%	3%
% in residential/resi schools/secure/other residential provision	11%	14%	14%	15%
% placed at home with parents	17%	8%	13%	7%
Placement Stability (% of CIOC with 3 placements or more in a yr)	10%	10%	9%	11%
Placement Stability (% of CIOC in same placement for past 2 yrs & in care for 2.5 yrs+)	59%	68%	69%	68%
% of Care Leavers aged 19-21 in touch with the LA	97%			
% of Care Leavers aged 19-21 years old in Education, Employment or Training	46%	51%	49%	53%
% of Care Leavers aged 19-21 years old in suitable accommodation	98%	88%	89%	85%
Adoption Scorecard (rolling 3 yrs) - entry into care to adoption placement (days) (A1)	449			
Adoption Scorecard (rolling 3 yrs) - Placement Order to matching (days) (A2)	211			
% of children in our care aged 10-17, in care for over 12 months, who have offended	0.6%			
Number of unaccompanied asylum seekers in care	3			

*Comparable information as at March 2020 **CIOC offending data for Q1 2020/21 only ***Current BwD data as at 3rd September 2021



CHILDREN IN OUT OF BOROUGH PLACEMENTS

JUDITH FENNELL

HEAD OF SERVICE

CHILDREN IN OUR CARE, CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND LEAVING
CARE

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- The Children Act 1989 Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children's Homes Regulations 2015 (Regulation 41)
- Legal obligation requiring a responsible authority to notify the host authority when a child in care is moved across boundaries.

LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Local arrangements are agreed through the North West Help and Protection Forum

Page 105 Complimented by the Childrens Safeguarding Assurance Partnership Contextual Safeguarding Task and Finish Group

- Partner agencies representation from health, Lancashire Constabulary, Childrens Services, including Engage
- Blackburn with Darwen has designated business support function who collate notifications from other Local Authority's and record on protocol so this information is captured

INTERFACE WITH HEALTH AND POLICE

- Duty to notify health colleagues out of the area
- Lack of consistency with Police being notified of children coming into Lancashire

NUMBERS OF CHILDREN PLACED IN BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

Placing authority with two more placements in BwD	Number of CYP
Lancashire County Council	110
Blackpool Borough Council	15
Rochdale Met Borough Council	9
Liverpool City Council	7
Manchester City Council	5
Bury Met Borough Council Fostering Agency	6
Cheshire East Council	3
Oldham Met Borough Council	5
Cumbria County Council	4
Tameside Met Borough Council	3
Wakefield Met District Council	3

TYPES OF PLACEMENTS

- Adoption
- Independent Fostering Agencies
- Residential
- Semi independent living

OFFER OF SUPPORT

- Engage Team examples of having supported 2 Looked After Children at risk of CCE and CSE
- 1 young person open August 2020 and closed February 2021 – team supported transition to move within LCC boundary due to accommodation offer
- 1 young person open September 2018 and closed in February 2021 – concerns re: County Lines

NEXT STEPS

CSAP Board identified at 3 strands of work:

- Expectations on Local Authority's placing in area
- Our own approach to children placed in our area
- Our approach to placing outside the area

NEXT STEPS CONTINUED

- Mapping exercise and open communication with regulated and unregulated private providers to build working relationship
- Develop a provider forum and communication strategy for residential children's homes (information pack)
- Develop a pack that can be shared with children's homes outlining expectations
- Improve health notifications and information sharing
- Develop standard response to Local Authority making inappropriate placements in the area