Corporate Parenting Strategy
2018-2020
1. Introduction
2. Corporate Parenting
3. What is Birmingham Children’s Trust?
4. Our pledge to children in care and care leavers
5. The role of corporate parents including elected members, officers and partner agencies
6. The voice of our young people and adults
1. Introduction

At Birmingham Children’s Trust (BCT), it is our job to work with the most disadvantaged children and young people of Birmingham and keep them safe, happy and healthy.

We work with care and compassion to listen to what children need and we involve them in the decisions that affect them.

We understand, too, that everyone’s needs are different. So we structure our services in a way that means we can adapt to what’s right for every child.

Based on the most up-to-date research, we know that our children are very likely to have experienced significant trauma and abuse prior to being in our care. They may also be at greater risk of sexual exploitation, going missing, offending and they are likely to experience greater educational challenges.

It is essential that our children in care and care leavers receive the best possible services from us as corporate parents. We have a collective responsibility to support them in achieving what we would want for our own children.

We believe that good local service provision is likely to improve our children’s life opportunities.

Birmingham Children’s Trust and Birmingham City Council take their corporate parenting responsibilities very seriously. Collectively, we are fully committed to being the best parent we can be to our children.

This strategy and the accompanying plan provide an overview of the Trust and the Council’s continued commitment to children in care and care leavers.

2. Corporate Parenting

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 says that when a child or young person comes into the care of a local authority, or is under 25 years of age and was looked after by an authority for at least 13 weeks after their 14th birthday, the named local authority becomes their corporate parent.

This means that they are responsible for acting in the child’s best interests and promoting their physical and mental health and wellbeing by:

- encouraging them to express their views, wishes and feelings, while promoting high aspirations and trying to secure the best possible outcomes for them.
• making sure they have access to appropriate services.

• making sure that they are safe, that they live in stable homes, and that they develop positive relationships.

• preparing them for adulthood and independent living by supporting their education and work interests.

3. What is Birmingham Children’s Trust?

Birmingham Children’s Trust exists to make a positive difference for children, young people and families in the city. The Trust delivers services previously provided by Birmingham City Council.

For a long time these services were inadequate, and much more was needed to be done to support disadvantaged children and young people in the city to ensure their needs were consistently met.

Important improvements have been made in the way we listen and learn from children, in our social work practice and in the support to our staff to enable them to do their jobs as well as they can.

Birmingham Children's Trust was launched in April 2018 to help accelerate these changes.

What does it mean to be a Trust?

There aren't many more important things in life than looking after young people. When we get it right, we unlock some amazing potential.

Birmingham Children’s Trust believes that working collaboratively is the best way to do this. That means bringing the whole of the city together: staff, young people, families, the wider council and partners.

The Trust is building on the progress it has already made and knows there are still challenges ahead. But with a single focus on helping Birmingham’s children be healthy, happy and confident, it will make a significant difference to the futures of the city’s children and young people.

Success will mean:

• Healthy, happy, resilient children living in families.

• Families able to make positive changes.

• Children able to attend, learn and achieve at school.
• Young people ready for and contributing to adult life.
• Children and young people safe from harm.

The Trust will:
• work with care and compassion to listen to what children and young people need and involve them in the decisions that affect them.
• focus on the strengths that exist in every family and use them to bring about positive change.
• understand that everyone’s needs are different, and therefore structure services in a way that means services can adapt to what’s right for every person.

4. Our pledge to children in care and care leavers

The Birmingham Pledge, developed with children in care and care leavers, has identified 11 promises that underpin our commitment to children in care and care leavers.

The pledge is based on what our children have told us is most important to them.

Promise 1  We promise to make sure we will tell you about this pledge, and keep reminding you of it throughout your ‘in care’ journey.

Promise 2  We promise to involve you in decisions that affect you and to listen to and take account of your views.

Promise 3  We promise that we will work hard to find you the best possible place for you to live.

Promise 4  We promise to make sure you have every opportunity possible to achieve at school.

Promise 5  We promise to encourage you to take part in all available activities that the city has to offer to ensure that your talents, hobbies and interests are met and to support you to do the things you enjoy.

Promise 6  We promise to take care of your health, and encourage you to be healthy.

Promise 7  We promise to provide you with a good and clear assessment of your needs, and an up to date care plan and a PEP (personal education plan).
Promise 8  We promise that you will have your own social worker who visits you regularly and gives you details about how to contact them or someone else if they are away when you need them.

Promise 9  We promise we will help you stay in touch with your family, friends and other people who are important to you.

Promise 10  We promise to listen to what you have to say.

Promise 11  We promise to work with you and give you all the help and support you need to successfully move from care to adult life.

5. The role of corporate parents including elected members, officers and partner agencies.

Corporate Parenting Board

The Birmingham Corporate Parenting Board meets quarterly to actively discuss issues that are important to children and young people in care and care leavers. The Board is responsible for making sure that the Corporate Parenting Strategy and the accompanying action plan is monitored to ensure that children receive the best possible services.

The Board is made up of members from Birmingham Children's Trust, Birmingham City Council, the Children in Care Council, elected members and other partner organisations.

The Corporate Parenting Board works closely with the Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Forum.

The Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum have carried out a number of campaigns working with the Corporate Parenting Board including challenging and improving pocket money allowances.

They are also working with the Independent Reviewing Officer Service to improve reviews. They meet regularly with senior managers and have presented at local, regional and national events.

Whilst the Corporate Parenting Board is an appropriate forum for elected members and relevant officers from the Trust, local authority and partner agencies to come together and offer challenge and support around services, it is not the only way in which elected members discharge their duties as corporate parents.

Corporate Parenting Task and Finish Groups

The Corporate Parenting Task and Finish Groups are chaired by the Corporate Parenting Manager.
Members of the group are made up of internal and external professionals and partner agencies and are selected dependent on the agenda.

The Corporate Parenting Task and Finish Groups report to the Corporate Parenting Board.

Young people and care leavers are actively encouraged to get involved and share their views and experiences in a range of participatory ways.

**Role of Elected Members**

Elected members have a crucial role to play in ensuring that Birmingham puts children in care and care leavers at the heart of all it does.

Birmingham Children’s Trust believes that effective corporate parenting in Birmingham requires that all elected members:

- Are aware that there may be children in care and care leavers living in their ward, make an effort to find out about and understand the issues that children in care and care leavers may face, and the support they may need from the local authority and the Children’s Trust.
- Be proactive in ensuring that social workers, foster carers, children in care and care leavers know how to contact them.
- Ensure that Birmingham Children’s Trust is made aware of any issues with services for children in care and care leavers within their ward.
- Take an active interest in facilities for children and young people, and speak to staff about how they support the inclusion of children in care and care leavers.
- Know what provision (e.g. housing) is available for children in care and care leavers.
- Be aware of the role and its implications for discharging the local authority’s legal responsibilities for children in care and care leavers – this information is available at [https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/info/1/about_the_trust/29/what_is_corporate_parenting/2](https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/info/1/about_the_trust/29/what_is_corporate_parenting/2)
- Develop knowledge and awareness of the services available for children in care and care leavers, across Birmingham Children’s Trust, Birmingham City Council and relevant partner agencies.
- Advocate for children in care and care leavers – ensuring their voices are heard, their needs are met, and their achievements celebrated.
- Prioritise the needs of children and young people in council decision-making and budget setting discussions.
- Consider the potential impact of all council decisions on children in care, care leavers and foster carers.
• Ask appropriate questions of officers across the Trust and council, not just in children’s services, about the quality of services provided to children in care and care leavers, and ensure that any issues identified are resolved in a timely manner.
• Be accessible to professionals, carers and children in care and care leavers who may wish to raise issues or concerns.
• Take an active interest in the issues facing children in care and care leavers at a regional and national level, and bring any examples of good practice or new ways of working to the attention of the Corporate Parenting Manager.

Corporate Parenting Enquiry - Vulnerable Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The needs of children in care and care leavers and the work of the corporate parenting panel continues to feature prominently on the Birmingham City Council Children’s Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme.

In 2017 the overview and scrutiny committee undertook an enquiry In conjunction with Councillor Joe Calouri, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families, Islington Council, the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) and the Local Government Association (LGA).

Its focus included the role and function of the corporate parent, reviewing current structures and processes to support the corporate parenting function, embedding the voice of children and young people in care into corporate work, and exploring good practice and case studies.

In April 2017 the Committee's Corporate Parenting report was agreed at City Council with recommendation 1 in the report stating:

“Elected members to commit to at least one activity from a menu of involvement during a 9 month period”

A summary indicated that 87% of elected members completed the ‘menu of involvement’ in April/May 2017 and the spreadsheet containing these commitments was published on the Council’s website and is available at [http://bit.ly/2DBcFFo](http://bit.ly/2DBcFFo). Members made over 900 commitments.

This enquiry and the subsequent activities and feedback from elected members has helped shape the elected members’ corporate parenting handbook (see appendix 1), and the menu of involvement has proven to be beneficial in providing a range of opportunities for elected members to get involved as corporate parents.

Activity undertaken by elected members as corporate parents during this enquiry as Corporate Parents, this includes:

- Supporting with fostering and adoption recruitment
- Introducing reward partners to support young people
- Supporting work experience and taster days,
- Involvement in bespoke aspirational projects with young people, staff and partners
- Corporate Parenting Monitoring Visits to Residential Homes and Supported Accommodation.
- Fundraising throughout the period to provide young people with experiences.
- Gaining feedback and views from Children in Care, Care Leavers and Foster Carers and ensuring they are shared with professionals.

**Independent Reviewing Officer Service (IRO)**

The IRO service is responsible for making sure that the Trust and local authority, as a corporate parent, gives consideration and weight to children's wishes and feelings in their care plans, and that it responds to children's needs.

The Head of the IRO service produces an annual report for the consideration of the Corporate Parenting Board. This report includes areas of good practice and areas for development.

**Advocacy service**

The Birmingham Rights and Participation Services offers issue-based advocacy for children in care and care leavers and support to children and young people within the child protection process.

Every child and young person, regardless of their age, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender, religion or belief has the right to have their views taken into account when professionals are making decisions about them. Every professional has a duty to actively seek these views in their care planning and day to day work.

Advocates support children and young people to acknowledge issues and disagreements and to take these forward – building skills to self-reflect, communicate and challenge appropriately.

They encourage young people to be aware of their rights and empower them to use those rights to have their voices listened to.

**Working with Partners**

Under the Children Act 2004, local authorities have a duty to promote cooperation between ‘relevant partners’, including the police, the NHS and education providers, while those partners have a duty to cooperate with the local authority in turn.

Guidance on the Act highlights that corporate parenting is a ‘task that must be shared by the whole local authority and partner agencies’.

Birmingham Childrens Trust works alongside partners to support them in delivering their corporate parenting role, especially in relation to the provision of services.

**Case Study – Partnership working Birmingham Childrens Trust and Fortem 2018**

Charles House - Fortem Management trainee Challenge 2018
Charles House is located in the south of the city and provides a service for children throughout Birmingham who have a statement of special education needs and attend special schools, many of which also have some form of sensory disorder.

Charlies as it is known to many young people and parents is described as the glue that holds families together, offering respite care (short breaks) for young people and relief for their families and carers. The time these children spend at Charlies helps them move forward with their disability in a safe and loving environment.

A previous Ofsted inspection report described the building as shabby. In addition to this, due to budget pressures the home was faced with the possibility of closure in 2017. Following a city-wide petition and attention from a number of local media outlets and Councillors, Charles House was saved and as of the 1st April operates under Birmingham Children’s Trust.

Each year Fortem Management Trainee team choose a Trainee Legacy Project, a special project that will make a huge difference to the lives of people within the community. In 2018 the team decided to pick Charles House.

The huge challenge ahead was to renovate previously unused areas of Charles House and create an independent living facility for the young people and spacious sensory garden.

The rear garden had been out of action for a number of months due to issues with the paving which was caused by the roots of the trees in the garden. Fortem will be transforming the existing area into a sensory garden – a place where the children can go and play and be proud of.

Most of the children at Charles House don’t often get a chance at independence as many require care 24 hours a day.

Both Fortem and Birmingham Childrens Trust felt the children would benefit from opportunities to learn about and perform basic day to day chores in a household. In light of this, Fortem transformed the current storage area into an independent living facility. This is now a fantastic facility where the children can cook, make drinks, and generally be on their own and relax with an integrated lounge area.

The sensory garden had been out of use for two years and children were unable to access the garden due to a number of health and safety precautions. Large tree roots grow through the ground making it virtually impossible to cover this service with any flooring in a safe manner. The management team spent many hours consulting with each other, experts and the home to find a solution that would first of all work but most importantly provide the right environment for the young people.

When designing and building this area the team took into account all needs of the staff and children consulting on a regular basis with the home manager, staff and young people on everything from space, sizing and acceptable colours of paint and equipment.

Birmingham Children’s Trust feels the management trainee team have set a fantastic example of team working on a project where they have faced challenges on a daily basis.
and overcome them together to ensure that the young people and staff get the best outcome.

Fortem also secured 12 of their additional suppliers to support the project. They are also now reward partners of Birmingham Childrens Trust.

The young people at the home are very excited about their new independent living area and have already started using the facility to do washing and food preparation and cooking.

The sensory garden has provided a fantastic and colourful open space where the young people have already spent hours enjoying their time with staff and parents.

**Education – Birmingham Virtual School**

The Birmingham Virtual School (BVS) is the Children in Care Education Service, and works in partnership with the child or young person’s school to make sure they are supported at all stages of their education and have the best opportunities to be successful in their adult lives.

BVS is responsible for providing leadership, strategic direction, good inclusion and partnership working with schools and colleges to secure successful educational outcomes for all children and young people in care.

Children in care attend schools and educational provision across Birmingham and other local authorities. The Virtual School monitors their attendance and achievements and ensures that their educational success is always a top priority in care planning.

**Case Study - Birmingham Virtual School (BVS) Raising Aspiration Programme**

To support the learning of young people out of ‘school-time’ during holiday and weekend periods.

The main aim of the BVS is to narrow the gap between children in care (CiC) and both the Birmingham average and national average. In consequence, the Raising Aspirations Programme (RAP) has been designed not only to raise aspirations but to develop young people’s self-confidence and self-esteem whilst improving their capacity to learn and to develop skills in key areas.

This longitudinal programme intends to provide a structure whereby each event introduces our young people to new skills and experiences and the possibility of achieving qualifications.

The summer holidays of 2017 saw an extensive offer across a number of age groups for our young people. Some examples include:

**Acker Activity Centre** - Youngsters at Ackers were fully engaged in exciting activities including skiing, jungle trekking, climbing and canoeing. It was tremendous to see their confidence grow over the week as they tried new activities. The feedback from these young people was really positive with 85% enjoying the week, 100% made new friends, 68% felt that their confidence at working with new people had improved and 100% felt braver at trying new things.
**Birmingham Repertory Theatre Spy School** - A Literacy Programme for Key stage two young people, feedback from young people was that the programme improved confidence in working in a team, listening and communication skills.

**Aspire Programme** - a multi-activity learning programme for Key Stage Three young people. This included graffiti Art, Puzzle Company, Circus skills, Sports day & Wise Up Team challenges.

**Sports Brand Challenge** - Student participants reported an improvement in their confidence in working as a member of a team, leadership, communication and problem solving skills along with their ability to plan and organise tasks.

The RAP Programme has enabled the following outcomes:

**Key Stage Four**

In the last full academic year the 47 Key Stage Four young people (YP) who participated in the Raising Aspirations Programme (RAP) all gained qualifications: a 100% success rate.

These include qualifications in:

- NCFE Level 1 Introductory Award in Music Tech (8YP)
- NCFE Level 2 Introductory Award in Music Tech (5YP)
- NCFE Level 1 Award in Investigating Enterprise Skills (8YP)
- Sports Leaders Level 1 & 2 (8YP)
- Level 1 Award in Investigating Enterprise Skills (10YP)
- Level 2 Award in Occupational Studies: Music Technology Hardware and Software (6YP)
- Skills for Independent Living qualification (2YP)

These qualifications have been run by Blue Whale and Sport4Life.

Following our work with Blue Whale over the summer 2017 Blue Whale sent us the following feedback regarding our young people.

“We had an incredible week with the young people, thank you for bringing them to us. There was an amazing vibe at the Whale and we are truly honoured to have spent time with so many creative, humorous and gifted young people.” Julie Simpson at Blue Whale.

3 of these 47 young people achieved 8 GCSEs at grade C or above. The remaining 44 did not achieve such impressive results. For these students the BVS qualification becomes perhaps even more important as it reflects what can be achieved and so may impact positively on their self-esteem and may influence future pathway choices. 100% of the young people were pleased to have gained an additional qualification, with 80% feeling that they had learnt new skills and felt more confident about working in new environments and meeting new people.

During the remainder of the 2017/18 academic year there were a further KS4 RAP events planned that led to qualifications along with developing confidence and skills in the following vocational areas.
• Occupational Studies – The focus will be You-tubing and editing of visual communication.
• Award in the Principles of Customer Service where young people will also receive a Welcome Host Certificate.
• Hair & Beauty qualification

Geese Theatre has run several really successful events with feedback from the young people and staff being very positive. At each of the events 100% of the young people felt that as a result of the project they were ‘better at getting along with people”, “had done something they never thought they could/would do”, “felt like others had listened to their ideas”.

Key Stage Three

October half term – Young people were involved in creative literacy through CSI reading, poetry writing and rapping. 82% loved/liked it and 73% of the young people felt that these activities had helped them appreciate/enjoy literacy activities.

February 2018 half term - This focused on creative maths and study skills and worked with nine young people.

80% liked/loved these sessions, 30% felt that it had improved their confidence in taking part in maths activities and 30% felt that the sessions had developed their confidence in working with new people.

Easter holiday 2018 - For those young people who did well with their SATs and who have the potential to aspire to University a two day event at Aston University to introduce them to life there. Of the target Uni-link group who were able to attend, 93% ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that they are more likely to go to University than before, as a result of attending this event.

Case Study - Working in partnership for sustainable education, employment and training for care leavers

Since April 2017 the number of care leavers aged 17 – 21 who are in education, employment or training has increased from 59% to 65%, putting Birmingham above the national average of 48%.

We have achieved this through partnership work in and out of the Trust and City Council. We recognise that care leavers who are Not in Education Training and Employment (NEET) need additional support from specialist services. These services should combine knowledge of career pathways and provision with specialist engagement skills and understanding of the additional barriers faced by care leavers who are NEET. Currently our NEET support service partners are Talent Match, Barnardos, Princes Trust and DWP.

The Care Leavers Service also offers its own EET Advice and Guidance drop-in every Friday at new Aston House and our new Jobs Workshop every other Wednesday at the Lighthouse young people’s centre.
Without the support of the care leaver’s service I wouldn’t have received the job offer from HMCTS, so for that I’m thankful. You have supported me with sourcing right information and chasing things up to ensure I’m ready for my new start. RG

The Care Leavers Service also sends out a monthly newsletter to over 500 care leavers containing all the latest apprenticeship vacancies in the council, opportunities and employment schemes for care leavers, and it allows our young people to share information and ideas.

I’ve just reviewed the E-Newsletter and think it’s a great idea! I’m currently on my placement year with Hewlett Packard Enterprise and this year the push to employ individuals on apprenticeships is huge! This is a fantastic way for young people to get ahead in their career whilst being mentored by the best in the IT industry.

The care leaver’s conferences are now embedded in our yearly calendar - with one conference each year being entirely focussed on careers and education. The conferences combine workshops, competitions, networking and consultation.

Going forward, the plan is to work in closer partnership with the Virtual School to increase the number and range of careers and other EET events for our young people.

There is a fine line between being NEET and EET – so when a young person moves out of the NEET cohort into education, employment or training we have a range of key professionals in place to keep a discrete eye on them and to flag up any worries before they get to crisis point.

These key professionals include mentors, personal tutors, welfare officers, student advisers, head teachers, pastoral managers, line managers, assessors, education advisers and many more – depending on the type of EET setting that the young person is in. This partnership work is ongoing and can be intensive, but it is essential.

From September 2018 a newly agreed system will ensure that all 18+ Personal Advisers are invited to the final PEP (personal education plan) meeting post-18. In addition, the young person will be offered ongoing PEP meetings to the end of the academic year 13, which will be facilitated by the Virtual School and attended by the 18+ Personal Adviser. These meetings will ensure that the Care Leavers Service has all relevant education information and will ensure a smooth transition for those young people going onto Higher Education.

There are many examples of how these partnerships have helped to keep a young person in EET: A recent example is Simon who told his Aftercare Adviser that he didn’t want to go to college anymore – with no specific reason and no contingency plan. His Aftercare Adviser contacted the EET manager and the young person’s support worker. The EET manager contacted his personal tutor at college. The tutor advised that Simon’s attendance had dropped but he would, on this occasion, keep Simon’s college place open. The EET manager then spoke to the support worker and the young person, who agreed to return to college. The support worker agreed to remind, encourage and enable him to attend. The tutor promised to make contact if SY showed any further signs of dropping out. So far, so good - Simon will gain his L1 qualifications and will be able to progress onto L2 which will give him the qualifications he needs to find employment in the future.
Partnership working is essential – we are all part of the corporate parenting network and everyone’s contribution is essential for ensuring our young people become fulfilled and independent adults.

**Health Service Providers**

Health providers in Birmingham have important responsibilities for improving the health, both physical and psychological, of all our children in care and care leavers.

Health assessments are undertaken and specialist nurses for children in care ensure that personal health plans (Health Passports) are developed with the child or young person and that they are fully implemented and maintained with the support of professionals and carers/parents.

**The 18+ Care Leavers Service**

The Birmingham 18+ Care Leavers Service supports young people as they prepare to move into independent life as an adult.

The service provides support to young people from age 18 to 21 and this can continue where the young person remains in education, including up to age 25.

The 18+ Care Leavers Service is part of Birmingham Children’s Trust and through its links to organisations in the community it supports care leavers to access support in a number of areas including housing, education and training, work experience and health services.

The team provide a supportive service that means young people are not on their own.

The level of service provided depends on individual needs but in general support can be provided with:

- Finding somewhere suitable and safe to live
- Helping with finding education, training, work experience or a job
- Help with managing money and accessing the financial support needed
- Advice on keeping healthy and accessing health services
- General advice and guidance if problems occur

**Case Study - Birmingham Children’s Trust: Celebrating our young people and adults in all we do**

At Birmingham Children’s Trust we believe in celebrating achievements, key milestones and special occasions with our young people and adults.

We have developed and implemented a full calendar of events each year for children in care, care leavers, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Our reward partners work in partnership with us at all our events to ensure that we can provide quality and meaningful opportunities and experiences for all.
Our 2017-18 events have included the following:

**Believe and Achieve Awards** - Birmingham Childrens Trust in partnership with Birmingham Virtual school holds three Believe and Achieve celebration awards evenings each year. These events celebrate the educational achievements and personal key milestones of our children in care and care leavers.

“I have never been to an awards event before; when my name was called I could not believe it, celebrating with my family was so special for me. It has helped with my confidence, thank you”

**Foster Carer Awards** - Birmingham Children’s Trust holds annual Foster Carer Awards to celebrate the achievements and commitment of its foster carers. Councillors are invited to join in these celebrations.

Adoption Summer Event – Fun event for all adoptive parents and their children and families.

Sporting Events – we hold a number of inclusive sporting events throughout the year for all ages and abilities with support of our partners throughout the city. We also offer opportunities for our young people and adults to attend a range of sporting events throughout the year.

“Thank you for this, it was a great day and the first opportunity most of us had to go to a test match. Thanks for offering us these great opportunities”.

Life Skills workshops - Life skills workshops for all ages, in partnership with Birmingham City Football Club, Barclays, City Serve and Birmingham Wellbeing service. This event is for the whole family and there is something for everyone:

“This day has been fantastic there is something for all the family that is fun but educational. My son enjoyed making his own smoothie on the bike and the tour of the stadium.

6. The voice of our young people and adults

**Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum**

The Children in Care Council (CICC) and Care Leavers Forum (CLF) meet regularly and members of both groups attend the Corporate Parenting Board, where issues are raised on behalf of young people. Members of the Board are then tasked to explore and address certain issues.

Both groups work hard to ensure communication flows two ways and issues identified have clear plans in place to address issues raised.

When our young people raised concerns around pocket money the Corporate Parenting Board led a full review which resulted in a change of allowances and discussion and best practice advice shared with officers and carers. Our CICC then produced a resource that is shared with children in care to make sure they are fully aware of their rights and entitlements.
Feedback from both groups states that being a part of the Corporate Parenting Board enables young people’s voices to be central and drive officers’ priorities.

Both groups host a number of events (informal and formal) that help develop positive relationships between senior managers and young people.

**Examples of 2017/18 engagement:**

- Consulting children and young people specifically about their views on their social workers and what makes an ideal social worker – the outcome has been shared with social workers, and incorporated into ongoing training and resources produced to share with professionals.
- Hosting events across the city working with other children in care, including a debate for 50 care leavers in the Birmingham City Council chamber.
- Talking to children and young people about their future plans and aspirations, feeding information back to the Corporate Parenting Board, and producing resources to better promote the aspirations of children in care.
- Meeting with the Local Government Association, Department for Education and Ofsted to discuss front-line services both as individuals and their peers’ experiences.
- Continuing to promote and recruit for other members of CiCC and CLF.
- Attending various national events.

**Birmingham Roaring Lions**

The aim of the forum is to enable children with disabilities and special educational needs to openly and freely voice their opinions on issues that affect them.

The forum is also a place to share experiences, successes and milestones with others in a fun and relaxed environment.

Members of the forum are between the ages of 8 – 18 and meetings are supported by the Edgbaston Foundation with meetings taking place every 6 weeks at Edgbaston Stadium in Birmingham.

The Birmingham Roaring Lions provide a written report to the Corporate Parenting Board on a quarterly basis.

**Meaningful Engagement**

The voices of disabled children are very important to Birmingham Children’s Trust and we are always looking for ways to have more meaningful engagement with children who are non-verbal.
In 2017 we invested in training Makaton local tutors across our four homes for children with disabilities. Training is delivered to staff teams and there is now support within each home for the use of Makaton.

Makaton is used in Birmingham schools and a familiar language for many of the children who access the services. The environments have become Makaton friendly and children have many ways to express their views through using Applications on IPads, signs and symbols, signing and picture recognition.

The tutors have also put on taster sessions for the parents using the service. Taster sessions for parents are very important

A quote from one of the tutors “On a recent parents’ taster course I taught the sign for ‘want’ and one of our new mothers became very emotional and shared that her son makes the same hand shape all the time”

Children have been involved in the recruitment of staff in two ways. A panel of children agreed how they would score candidates and which questions they would like to ask them. They then interviewed the candidates. Other children have been able to give their views and opinions through meeting the candidate and completing an activity with them. This is taken into consideration for the final score of the candidate and is a vital component of the recruitment process.

The young people now have their very own forum supported by Birmingham Children’s Trust

Fun Interactive engagement sessions take place every 6 weeks where the discussion is led by the young people through creative play. They share their wishes, views and feedback on all areas with the Corporate Parenting Manager and also the Corporate Parenting Board on a quarterly basis. One of the current topics is planning a winter spectacular for all young people across the four homes.
# 7. Corporate Parenting Outcomes Framework 2018/20

## 1. Children in care and young people experience warm, nurturing care

This builds on the principle of encouraging warm and caring relationships between the child and carer that nurture attachment and create a sense of permanence.

**Outcome**

- Evidence of local arrangements for all carers of children and young people in care to receive ongoing high-quality core training and support packages - that equip them to provide warm, nurturing care.
- Feedback from children and young people in care, that they received warm, nurturing care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Children’s Trust Leadership responsible for monitoring outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Director Children in Care Provider Services and Corporate Parenting Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior management responsible for reporting on outcomes to the above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Adoption and Fostering Birmingham Children’s Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Commissioning Services Birmingham Children’s Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 2. Children in care and young people receive care from services and professionals that work collaboratively.

Collaborative working between professionals and services, including carers, promotes high quality and consistent care and a stable experience of placements for children and young people in care.

**Outcome**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Children’s Trust Leadership responsible for monitoring outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Director Children in Care Provider Services and Corporate Parenting Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior management responsible for reporting on outcomes to the above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Adoption and Fostering Birmingham Children’s Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Commissioning Services Birmingham Children’s Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Team working with the child or young person to work collaboratively to manage the multidisciplinary care plan, with the named lead social worker taking a lead professional role.
- Effective local information-sharing protocols between health, social care and educational services.
- The carer is part of the team working with the child or young person.
- The team working with the child or young person has access to a consultancy service (e.g. CAMHS) to support collaboration on complex casework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.</th>
<th>Children in care and young people live in stable placements that take account of their needs and preferences. Well-planned care that takes account of the needs and preferences of children and young people in care promotes stability and can reduce the need for placement changes and emergency placements.</th>
<th>Overall Children’s Trust Leadership responsible for monitoring outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A strategy to commission a diverse range of placements for children and young people in care, which includes arrangements for considering sibling co-placement.</td>
<td>Assistant Director Children in Care Provider Services and Corporate Parenting Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children in care and young people involved in discussions about placement choices and changes.</td>
<td>Senior management responsible for reporting on outcomes to the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrangements for identifying potential carers among extended family and friends and assessing them for suitability at the start of the care planning process.</td>
<td>Head of Adoption and Fostering Birmingham Children’s Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrangements to ensure that the child or young person gets to know their new carers and placement through visits and, where possible, overnight stays before they move to the placement.</td>
<td>Head of Commissioning Services Birmingham Children’s Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcomes

- Children in care and young people’s satisfaction with their placement.
- Carer satisfaction with decisions made to place children or young people in their care.
- Feedback from children and young people in care that they were involved in decisions about placement changes.
- Placement stability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.</th>
<th>Children in care and young people have ongoing opportunities to explore and make sense of their experiences and views.</th>
<th>Overall Children’s Trust Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reporting on outcomes to the above</td>
<td>Children in Care Heads of Service Birmingham Children’s Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of their identity and relationships

- Developing a positive identity is associated with high self-esteem and emotional wellbeing.
- Ongoing activities e.g. life story work, to explore and make sense of identity, life history and appropriate health history.
- Coordinate ongoing contact with people who children and young people in care value, including former carers, siblings, other family members, friends or professionals, if this is desired and in their best interests.

Outcomes

Feedback from children and young people in care, that:

- They feel supported to explore and make sense of their identity, life history and health history
- They feel supported to have continued contact with people they value
- Have a supportive peer network

5. Children in care and young people receive specialist and dedicated services within agreed timescales.

Children in care and young people have particular emotional needs, and often behavioural needs relating to their experiences before entering care and during the care process.

Children in care and young people:

- Receive specialist and dedicated services to meet their needs, delivered on a continuing basis within agreed timescales.
- Health plans to be monitored and updated by independent reviewing officers, social workers and the lead health professional to ensure that the child or young person’s continuing needs are being met and health passports are completed.
Case management and treatment to continue for young people in care moving from child to adult mental health services, until a handover with an assessment and completed care plan has been developed with the adult service.

Outcomes

Feedback from children in care and young people that they have access to the services they need.

- Feedback from carers that they feel the needs of children and young people that they look after are being met through access to specialist and dedicated services when needed.

6. **Children in care and young people who move across local authority or health boundaries continue to receive the services they need.**

- Children in care and young people should not be disadvantaged when they move across local authority or health boundaries and should continue to receive the services they need.
- Good transition planning enables transfer of relevant information and continuity of services.
- Children in care and young people also value continued contact with the same professionals when they move areas Outcomes Arrangements in place before a child or young person is placed across a local authority or health boundary:
  - The placing authority shares relevant information
  - That an assessment of health needs has been carried out
  - There is agreement between placing and receiving teams about schooling and healthcare
  - Arrangements have continued contact with key professionals when they are placed across a local authority or health boundary

7. **Children in care and young people are supported to fulfil their potential and should enjoy**

- Head of Service Independent Review Service

| Overall Children’s Trust Leadership responsible for monitoring outcomes |
| Assistant Director Children in Care Provider Services and Corporate Parenting Manager |
| Senior management responsible for reporting on outcomes to the above |
| Children in Care Heads of Service NHS |
| Designated Doctor for Children in Care NHS |
| Designated Nurse for Children in Care |
### 8. Care leavers move to independence at their own pace, the transition to adulthood can be difficult for young people in care.

As with all young people, those leaving care value being able to move to independence at their own pace.

- Pathway planning is responsive to the needs of young people preparing to leave care and equips them with the skills they need to live independently.
- Care leavers are given the option to remain in a stable foster home or residential home beyond the age of 18, and to return to the care of the local authority, including their previous placement (if possible), if they experience difficulty in moving to live independently.
- A range of accommodation and support is available for care leavers.

#### Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership responsible for monitoring outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Director Children in Care Provider Services and Corporate Parenting Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management responsible for reporting on outcomes to the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher Birmingham Virtual School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham City Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Childrens Trust Leadership responsible for monitoring outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Director Children in Care Provider Services and Corporate Parenting Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management responsible for reporting on outcomes to the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Service – Provider Services (18+ Leaving Care Service, UASC,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Feedback from care leavers that they felt supported to move to live independently when they were ready.
- Care leaver satisfaction with their accommodation.
- Accommodation status of young people leaving care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Homeless &amp; Edge of Care</th>
<th>Head of Adoption and Fostering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birmingham Children’s Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcome monitoring takes place on quarterly bases in report format to the Assistant Director of Children in Care Provider Services and Corporate Parenting Manager
For more information:

Email: trustcomms@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
Visit: birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
Follow us on Twitter: @bhamchildtrust