

CARING FOR OUR



CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS

Sheffield City Council Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018/20

**IMPROVING THE
OUTCOMES FOR OUR
CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE,
ADOPTED AND
CARE LEAVERS**

CONTENTS

Forward	4
Introduction	5
The Pledge	8
Children in Care Council	10
Care Leavers Charter	11
Policies and Procedures	14
Corporate Parenting Oversight	15
Corporate Parenting Governance	19
Our Strategic Priorities:-	
Priority 1: Engagement and influence of children and young people	16
Priority 2: Educational achievement and attainment	19
Priority 3: Health and well-being	23
Priority 4: Permanence	28
Priority 5: Integrated placements and placement stability	30
Priority 6: Safeguarding and vulnerability	33
Priority 7: Care leavers	37
Appendices	45

FOREWORD

Cllr. Jackie Drayton



Cabinet Member
for Children, Young People
and Families

Deputies:
Cllr Mike Drabble
Cllr Dawn Dake

John Mothersole



Chief Executive,
Sheffield City Council

Jayne Ludlam



Executive Director
People Services

Our City's big ambition is that every child, young person and family achieves their full potential. This Strategy reflects how we are going to meet that ambition for our children and young people who are in care, who have been adopted, and who are care leavers. We are determined to ensure our children and young people in care, adopted and care leavers succeed. So we are proud to be writing the foreword to Sheffield's 'Corporate Parenting Strategy'.

The Corporate Parenting Board has developed the seven strategic priorities in this document and an action plan for their delivery.

We are proud to write this foreword and endorse this Strategy.

We hope you will share our ambition and support and contribute to their success wherever possible.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Sheffield's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2017 / 20.

'Corporate Parenting is the term used to refer to the responsibility of the council, to provide the best possible care and protection for children and young people who are 'looked after'. At the core of this responsibility is the moral duty to provide the kind of support that any good parents would provide their own children. This includes enhancing the quality of life of looked after children as well as simply keeping them safe.' *(House of Commons Children, Schools and Family Committee, March 2009)*


As corporate parents, Elected Members and Council officers have a statutory responsibility for the wellbeing of children in care. Elected Members play a large part in holding officers and partners to account, as well as being proactive in the corporate parenting role themselves.

This Corporate Parenting Strategy describes how the Local Authority and its partners, such as housing, health services and schools, act as responsible parents to children and young people living under their care. It is about how everyone involved including Elected Members, officers, teachers and GPs recognise that they are corporate parents and understand what they can contribute for us be the best corporate parents we can be to all children and young people in our care.

When providing a service for our children and young people in care, we should challenge ourselves by asking, **'would this be good enough for my child?'** We need to make sure that children and young people feel safe and secure, have stability in their lives, and that we help them to achieve their full potential by supporting them in fulfilling their ambitions and aspirations.

Building strong resilient children leads to strong resilient adults. Our corporate parenting responsibility sits within a context of a vibrant stable city that supports all aspects of family life. The children and young people we are responsible for now are our parents of tomorrow. Providing them with positive life chances will secure Sheffield's social and economic future.

This Strategy demonstrates the Council's commitment to ensuring that the life chances of every child and young person in its care are improved inline with their peers. This requires us all to be strong advocates to ensure their needs are met in the best way possible, and to prioritise access to our resources. It continues to work in partnership with children in care and young people, care leavers and carers to hear their views on how best to meet their needs. The new priorities that we have set are a direct response to our continued consultations and discussion.



Our commitment is demonstrated by the Sheffield Pledge to Children and Young People in Care; this details what children and young people can expect from our services when they are looked after. The Children in Care Council (CiCC) continues to grow in strength and we continue to build our working in partnership.

We continue to expect everyone working with children, in every agency and every part of our services, to expect the best and go the extra mile to support our children and young people looked after and care leavers.

We are accountable for the delivery of our plan to:

- Children in Care Council (CiCC)
- Care Leavers Union
- Sheffield Corporate Parenting Board
- Children Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee
- Children and Families Improvement Board

Our Strategy is a live document and is supported by a series of action plans that are driven within each priority theme group.

The strategic priorities in our Strategy have been determined by local and national priorities, and in continued consultation with children and young people. They are:

1. Keeping children and young people in care and care leavers involved in services.
2. Supporting success in Education, Training and Employment.
3. Ensuring Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers are Happy, Healthy and Resilient.
4. Identifying permanent homes and families for Children and Young People in Care.
5. Ensuring there are enough high quality and stable arrangements for all our children and young people in care and care leavers.
6. Keeping our Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers Safe.
7. Supporting our care leavers' journey to independence.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THE VISION

We will achieve our vision through:

- strong leadership and robust performance management
- maintaining the engagement and participation of service users in developing and implementing this strategy
- inclusive and effective partnership working across Sheffield City Council
- commitment to develop a workforce who understand the impact of trauma, attachment and loss issues for children in care and understand the importance of supporting young people through a therapeutic parenting approach

THE SHEFFIELD PLEDGE TO CHILDREN IN CARE

WE PROMISE to give you a **voice** by...

- Making sure that you can talk about any issues or problems you have with an independent advocate
- Listening to your views and tell you how your views influence the decisions we make
- Making sure you have the opportunity to contribute to your review in person and in writing
- Making sure you understand how to make a complaint and are supported through the process
- Making sure the Children in Care Council are involved in decision making that affects children in our care
- Consulting with you over decisions affecting your life
- Providing you with other opportunities where you can tell us what you think and where we can together plan for children in care and care leavers
- Involving young people in the recruitment of staff responsible for delivering services to children in care

WE PROMISE to help you **enjoy** **LIFE** and achieve goals by...



- Making sure you have access to appropriate and quality education provision that meets your needs
- Drawing up a regular Personal Education Plan with you, to encourage you to have high ambitions and help you get the best results you can
- Delivering against your Personal Education Plan
- Working with your school or college and the designated teacher to help you do your best
- Helping you learn English if it's not your first language
- Making sure you have your own books to read at home and have a library card
- Supporting you to attend and do well at school



WE PROMISE to help you GET READY for your **future** by...

- Planning with you about when to leave care and identify what support you will need and who will provide it
- Preparing you for independence by helping you to budget, cook, clean and experience what it might be like to live independently

- Helping you to find somewhere safe and suitable to live and to support you when you leave care
- Supporting you if you choose to go on to further or higher education
- Helping and supporting you to apply for jobs and to access training
- Making sure you have a completed pathway plan soon after your 16th birthday
- Ensuring that as part of your pathway plan, we will ensure that you apply for and receive all of the necessary documents you need
- Providing you with child friendly information on your rights and entitlements



WE PROMISE to keep you **healthy** by...

- Giving you access to high quality sexual health information, advice and support if you want it
- Giving you a say in what you would like to eat
- Meeting your religious and cultural needs, and ensure you have the opportunity to meet with other people who share your lifestyle
- Helping you if you do anything that is harmful like smoking, drinking alcohol or taking drugs, we will provide you with the advice and support you need and encourage you to lead a healthy lifestyle
- Keeping you safe from bullying and to take action if you tell us that you are being bullied



The Sheffield Pledge to children in care

Is a **PROMISE** that social workers, their managers and other professionals make to the children and young people in their care.

- Giving you support to access activities which take place outside normal lessons and to make sure you have somewhere to study and do your homework
- Making sure you have access to a laptop or desktop computer in your own home
- Making sure you get extra study support if you need or want it
- Supporting you to stay in your current school unless there are good reasons not to
- Giving you opportunities to gain work experience

My goldfish ate my homework



- Encouraging you to go to museums, libraries and youth clubs and to get involved in sports
- Celebrating and recognising your achievements
- Giving you opportunities to do volunteer work if you want to
- Ensuring that we have a diverse workforce and that young people are involved in the recruitment to the workforce
- Giving you an Independent visitor if it is in your best interest to have one



Library Card

WE PROMISE to help you REMEMBER YOUR HISTORY

by...

- Helping you to keep in regular contact with family members, if it is in your best interests
- Giving you access to your local authority records for free and support you with this
- Providing you with a 'life story' book and help you keep it up to date
- Providing you with your health history



- Providing you with information and advice on healthy eating and encourage you to make healthy choices and keep fit

LOOK AFTER YOUR TEETH



- Encouraging you to have regular health and dental checks



- Making sure that there is always someone you can talk to about your emotional and physical health and well-being



WE'RE ALL EARS

WE PROMISE to keep you safe

by...

- Making sure that you know your social worker well. We will aim to provide you with a profile of your social worker and endeavour to give you the choice of male or female
- Making sure you see your social worker once every 6 weeks and more if necessary
- Making sure you can contact your social worker when you want and that they return your call within 5 working days
- Not changing your social worker unless it is absolutely necessary
- Making sure you feel safe in your home and that you are happy where you live

stick or draw a picture of your social worker here



- Supporting you if you return to the care of your family
- Ensuring that your home is with carers who can meet your needs. We will provide you with a placement portfolio about your new placement/carers so that you know where you are going and who else will live there with you
- Making sure that you have an up-to-date care plan or pathway plan that says how we will meet your needs
- Involving you in planning services that meet your needs and explaining decisions fully
- Giving you advice and support to help you to stay safe
- Involving you in planning your review so that you feel part of it
- Making sure that you know your Independent Reviewing Officer and that they help plan with you what you need and check that those plans are carried out at least every 6 months
- Making sure you have access to a telephone and computer and that you have all of the contact details you need
- Being honest with you in a child friendly way and not using jargon

GOOD NUMBERS TO KEEP HANDY

Improving experiences for all children in care across Sheffield

Members of the Children in Care Council get opportunities to...

- Meet new people and make new friends
- Gain new skills
- Take part in fun creative activities and go on trips
- Increase self-esteem and confidence
- Make a difference to children and young people in care
- Talk to others in care and represent their views
- Contribute to professionals' meetings and deliver presentations

Help us, join us, make change ...

Sheffield Children in Care Council needs you!

CORPORATE PARENTING OVERSIGHT

Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of local authorities towards children and young people in care.

Corporate Parenting emphasises the collective responsibility of the Local Authority and its partners to achieve ‘good parenting’ for all children in care.

Corporate Parenting is not the sole responsibility of the children’s social work services. It is the responsibility of the whole council, including Councillors, our health service and other partners.

‘Good parenting’ includes ensuring the child / young person’s health, wellbeing and safety as well as things like succeeding in school or other hobbies and interests based on their individualised abilities and aspirations.

ELECTED MEMBERS


Although all Elected Members have corporate parenting responsibility, the tasks that need to be undertaken will differ according to the role(s) that individuals have taken on.

The different levels of responsibility can be summarised as follows:

UNIVERSAL RESPONSIBILITY (LEVEL 1)

All councillors must ask themselves:

- Do I understand why children need to be looked after, and the legal and policy framework that governs this?
- Am I aware of the governance arrangements for corporate parenting within my council?
- Do I know about the profile of the children in care of council – and the outcomes they are achieving compared with other local children?
- Can I be sure that we are providing the best care possible for our children in care and care-leavers? Would it be good enough for my child?
- Am I aware of our local Pledge to children in care and how I can contribute towards fulfilling it?
- Does the council have a corporate parenting strategy and, if so, what are the key points?

- 
- Am I taking responsibility for promoting the welfare of children in care and care-leavers in all my work for the council – and in my other capacities?
 - Are there any celebrations or other events that I can attend in order to demonstrate directly to children and young people in care that I want them to do well?
 - Do I know what the most important issues are for our children in care and care-leavers?

TARGETED RESPONSIBILITY (LEVEL 2)

For Councillors who undertake visits to children's homes or those with lead priority responsibility and members of the Corporate Parenting Board, their role will be more extensive. In addition to the above, they will need to ask themselves:

- Are the right structures and systems in place in order for my council to be an effective corporate parent, and are all the right partners involved?
- Am I up to date on current (and proposed) government expectations regarding the service to children in care and care leavers?
- Do I have access to both qualitative and quantitative information on the service, and enough knowledge to understand and evaluate this information?
- Do I know how well my council is doing in comparison with other councils, and our own past performance?
- Are there sound mechanisms within my council for hearing and responding to the views of children in care, care leavers and their parents/carers?
- Do I have a good picture of which needs we are meeting well and which we are failing to meet?
- Is there an action plan across the council and involving partner agencies to improve the service and to ensure it responds to changing needs?
- Do I know what our children in care and care leavers think about the service we are providing?

SPECIALIST RESPONSIBILITY (LEVEL 3)

Finally, there will be key roles where corporate parenting is at the heart of an individual's role. The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families, her deputies and the Lead Members for each Priority, will need to work closely with the Executive Director, People Services to ask themselves, in addition to the above:

- Are we providing both political and operational leadership in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in care and care leavers?
- Are effective governance arrangements in place to implement any decisions regarding children in care and care leavers across the authority and partner agencies?
- Have we undertaken an in-depth analysis of the needs of the council's care population and how far services are meeting those needs so as to inform future action?
- Is there a review process to ensure adaptation to changing needs?
- Have we made sure that the strategic plans of the children's services authority and joint plans with partner agencies meet the needs of looked after children and care leavers?
- Are we up to date with emerging research findings and new initiatives that should inform the direction of services?
- Do we have strong links with the Children in Care Council and does that body have all the support it needs to be effective?



OFFICERS

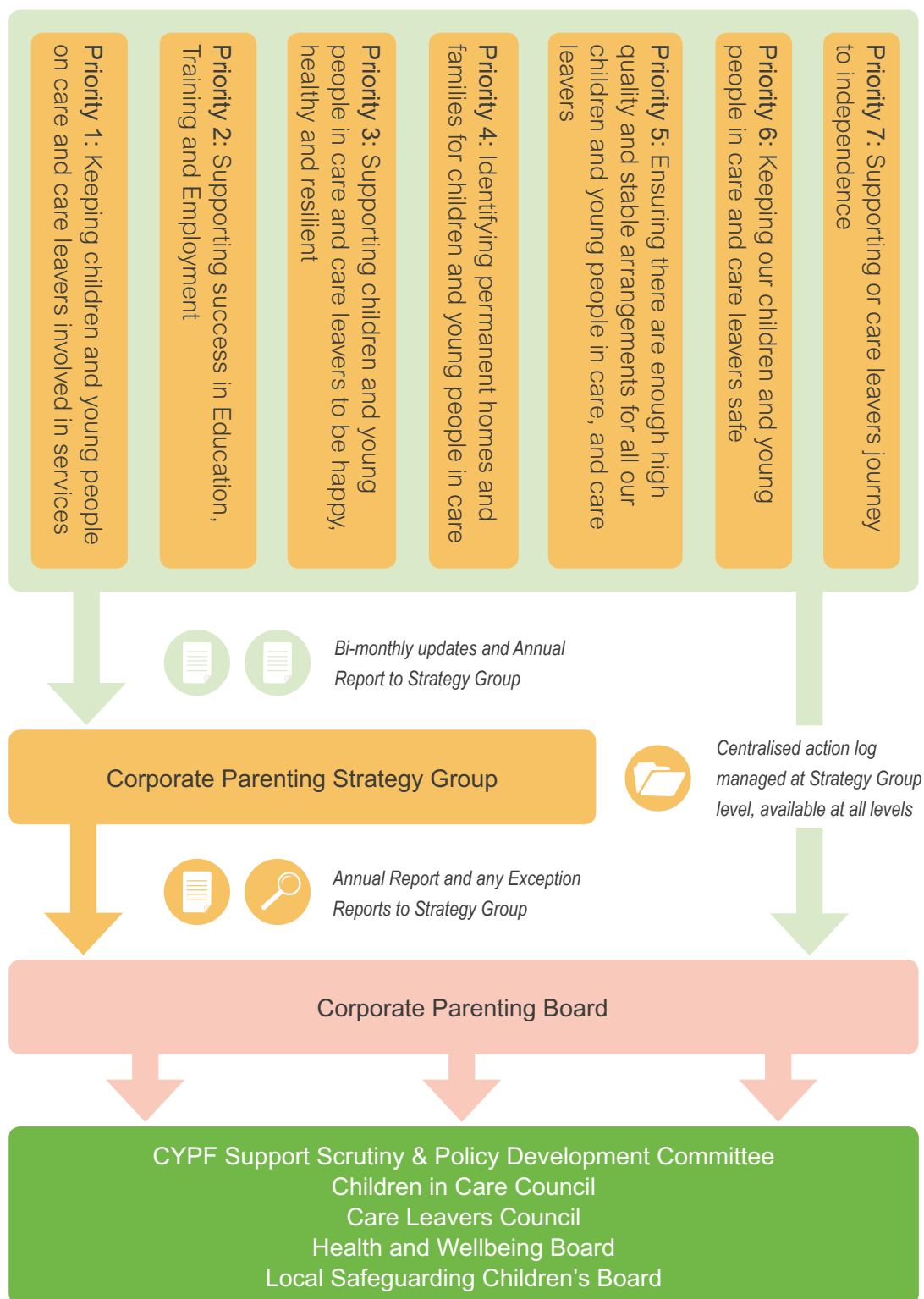
Officers have a crucial role to play in ensuring that services are developed and delivered to a high standard and that they inform Elected Members of the progress of the plan and any challenges that are being faced. They need to know about the children who are in our care and strive at all times to deliver the highest quality service. They are responsible for advising the panel and ensuring that any agreed actions are carried out as well as:

- Reporting to the Corporate Parenting Board on performance relating to children in care and care leavers;
- Reporting on information relating to fostering, adoption and small group home provision;
- Ensuring that the Corporate Parenting Board has all relevant information to ensure that it can provide robust monitoring of services provided to children in care and make decisions based on the most up to date information.

Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director, People Services has an 'open door' for all our care experienced children and young people to offer them the opportunity to have their voice heard. These sessions are held on the first Thursday of every month 4.00pm – 6.00pm.

The Director for Children and Families Services meets with both the Children in Care Council and the Sheffield Care Leavers Union on a quarterly basis.

CORPORATE PARENTING GOVERNANCE





OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PRIORITY 1 KEEPING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS INVOLVED IN SERVICES

Vision

To ensure that children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.

The Challenge

- To effectively engage children and young people so that their voice is evident and informs policy and practice.
- Ensure that children and young people are consulted at all stages of their care journey; involving children can improve the quality of decisions and lead to more stable placements.
- Children and young people in care do not readily talk about their worries or concerns. Social workers and carers need to pay attention not only to what children say, but also what they do not say and how they behave.
- Ensure that children and young people in care and care leavers participate fully in decision making at an individual, service and strategic level.
- The whole service stocktake undertaken in June 2017 identified that this is not always consistent and we could do better.

We believe that the experiences, views and ideas of children and young people should be captured, responded to and shared, to ensure best practice across services. The effective engagement and influence of children and young people in care and care leavers, and the personalisation of care services and support, will lead to improved and enhanced outcomes.

What we will do

Through this priority we will ensure we provide a wide range of appropriate ways for children to make their voice heard and be listened to. Our approach will include:

- **Structures:** We will ensure that structures for children and young people to have their say in the development and evaluation of services are relevant and age appropriate.
- **Consultation:** We will regularly consult with children to capture views about their experiences in care. This will be carried out through processes such as the annual children in care survey, group meetings in children's homes and other forums as relevant. We will respond to the views of children in an appropriate and timely manner.
- **Skills of children:** We will recognise the commitment of children in care and care leavers in involvement activity through accredited training packages and ongoing opportunities to develop skills and confidence.
- **Skills of the workforce:** we will involve children in care and care leavers in training and development of the workforce. We will ensure that our workforce training includes reflections on good practice in effective direct work with children and we will provide appropriate resources to support this. We commit to develop a workforce that understand the impact of trauma, attachment and loss issues for Children in care and understand the importance of supporting young people through a therapeutic parenting approach

What success will look like

	Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Reporting
1	Children in Care Council and Care Leavers' Union will meet regularly with senior management and elected members.	Minutes & agendas Shared vision and strategy	Annual Report
2	We will conduct regular consultations to seek the views of all children and young people and enable them to influence planning, delivery and evaluation of our services. Children and young people will have influenced service improvements.	Feedback will be used alongside performance indicators. Evidence of response to questionnaires	Annual Report
3	All children in care and care leavers will have access to an Independent Visitor.	No. of independent visitors	Dashboard
4	Information will be produced in a variety of child-friendly formats, including information on how to make a complaint.	Better access Take up of 'opt in' services	Annual Report
5	All staff will receive training in using child-centred approaches to ensure that children feel listened to in every part of their life.	Signs of Safety – training records	Annual Report
6	All workers will routinely seek and respond to the child's voice in every element of their work.	Signs of Safety training Audit case records	Annual Report
7	All children in care and care leavers will have access to an independent advocate.	No. of children who know about the IA service	Annual Report

PRIORITY 2 – SUPPORTING SUCCESS IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT VISION

To ensure that children and young people in our care attend school or other educational provision; that they learn; and that young people in care and care leavers have access to employment opportunities. As young people grow up and leave our care, we need to support them to be fully aware of the education and employment options open to them and assist them to engage in further or higher education or training, or move into work and to support a successful transition into adulthood.


The Challenge

Educational engagement and achievement is critical if children in care are going to lead fulfilled and successful lives. The Virtual School's plan centres around seven main themes identified as follows;

- Leadership, Management and Governance:
- Access to Education
- Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- Attainment and Progress
- Early Years and Post-16
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- Young Person's Voice

Key challenges are: -

- Embedding a new Virtual School offer following a period of transition over the past two years.
- That children in care have disproportionately high rates of poor attendance and exclusions.
- We know that there are some children in care in Sheffield that do not have a full time school offer.
- Personal Education Plans (PEPs) have not all been completed in a timely manner or to the expected standards.
- Attainment for Sheffield children in care is below city/national averages for all children.

- 
- The new Funded Early Learning entitlement that is available offers the opportunity to ensure that all eligible Sheffield children in care in the early years access their entitlements.
 - The high number of Sheffield children in care and care leavers classed as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).
 - The high proportion of the cohort who have SEND and the main identified need being Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).
 - Capturing the child's voice effectively and ensuring this informs our practice and priorities.

What will we do?

- Focus on improved partnership working and networking to take a lead role, identifying best practice and hold others to account to ensure everyone is contributing to improving education engagement and achievement of the young person.
- Monitor and challenge any child with poor attendance and/or exclusions and ensure schools record the strategies being used to address this issue in their PEP, including points for review; and work with the Social Care Service to investigate and improve the links between school attendance and social care placement.
- Work with the Admissions Services and schools in and out of city to ensure there is a seamless transition for all Sheffield children in care between key education phases. Monitor and challenge any child without a school place, not accessing a full time timetable or being educated offsite and support the Admissions Service and the Children Missing from Education Team to ensure all children have a full time offer.
- Ensure that all children have a high quality education plan that is regularly reviewed and updated and that takes into account the child's Educational Health & Care Plan (EHCP) and/or the social care plan where necessary. Ongoing monitoring and challenge will be in place focussing on any child not making expected or better than expected progress or where progress has dipped from the previous term.
- Rigorously track and monitor pupil premium spend to ensure this is used appropriately to raise the attainment of children in care.

- Lead training and development for all staff focussed on the education of children in care
- Commission an action research project championing best practice concerning Sheffield children in care.
- Ensure all eligible early years children access the Funded Early Learning (FEL) and young people in Post-16 access their bursary.
- Promote higher education and further education at an earlier age.
- Ensure Sheffield children in care and care leavers have dedicated and speedy access to Local Authority services equipped to monitor and challenge any setting where a young person has indicated they do not feel safe at school.
- Collate and act on feedback received from Sheffield children in care, received through the young person's voice section of their PEP. Work with partners to capture the voice of 'hard to reach' young people.
- Ensure that young people have access to quality careers advice at the right points throughout their education and at transition points to further education, employment or training.
- Work with roster carers and residential staff to ensure that carers are receiving the help and training they need to support the child or young person's outcomes.

What success will look like

	Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Reporting
1	There will be an action plan in place to monitor the Virtual School Offer	Existence of action plan	Annual Report
2	Looked After C&YP will have good school attendance	% CiC with persistent absence % of CiC with one or more fixed term exclusion	Dashboard
3	All CiC will have access to a full time school offer	No. of children on a part time timetable	Dashboard
4	All CiC on school roll within 20 days of not being in education	No of CiC not on school roll	Dashboard
5	CiC will attend schools that are Good or Outstanding	% CiC children attending good or outstanding school	Dashboard
6	All children in care to have a high quality personal education plan in place	% CiC who have a PEP % of CiC who have a PEP completed within 20 working days of a new education placement	Dashboard
7	At primary school CiC will achieve the best results they can.	Age related expectations in reading, writing and maths	Dashboard
8	CiC will finish secondary school having made good progress each year and achieved good GCSE results	Age related expectations English and Maths (GCSE)	Dashboard
9	All Early Years CiC are accessing FEL	FEL uptake	Dashboard
10	Young people have access to careers advice	No. of children who have received careers advice	Dashboard

PRIORITY 3 SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS TO BE HAPPY HEALTHY AND RESILIENT

Vision

To ensure that children and young people in care and care leavers are in good health or are being supported to improve their health and that their health needs are identified.

The Challenge

Children who have been looked after by local authorities have statistically poorer outcomes in many areas of life, including health. This is partly because they come into care with unaddressed health issues through poverty, neglect, abuse, exposure to toxic substances, parents' ill health and chaotic lifestyles. Additionally, frequent moves whilst in care can compound their difficulties and result in further compromise to their physical and mental health, education and future economic wellbeing (Merredew & Sampeys 2015).

- Most recent data suggests that around 60% of children in care have emotional and mental health problems and a high proportion experience poor educational, health and social outcomes after leaving care.
- We know that children in care are less likely to be up to date with their immunisations
- Children in care are more susceptible to problems of substance misuse.
- Statistics indicate that girls in care under 18 have a higher prevalence of teenage motherhood
- Children in care are more likely to be assessed as having a mental health disorder with a high prevalence of conduct disorders and emotional disorders. Compared to children from private households, even those from the most deprived socio-economic groups, children in care had significantly higher rates of mental health disorders (Ford et al, 2007 as cited in statutory guidance).



What we will do

Interventions for children in care and care leavers that focus on increasing the ability to have meaningful relationships, attachment figures and a sense of belonging will reduce risks. The NICE/SCIE guidance (2010) and the quality standard for the health and wellbeing of looked after children (2013) emphasise the need for warm and nurturing care in order to achieve long-term physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

Priority 3 group supports the operational work and aims to address and improve the health and wellbeing of Sheffield's children in care and care leavers through partnership working;

- Ensure that Children and Families policy and procedures with regards to health are up to date to ensure professionals have current and relevant information and guidance.
- Looked after young people have timely access to appropriate, services in order to address their health needs.
- Provide further training to foster carers to enhance their skills and knowledge. Training will be offered on health assessments and roles and responsibilities, ensuring that carers understand how to access universal services.
- Provide regular training on sexual health to carers and staff working with children in care and include the most up to date information regarding any changes to sexual health services in Sheffield.
- Social care and Health will continue to work together to improve the outcomes for children in care through continuous monitoring of health assessment processes and ensure a robust reporting process is in place. Incorporating a strengths and difficulties questionnaire into the health assessments to provide a more robust appraisal of mental health within the health assessment.
- Provide a holistic accessible early intervention Youth Information Advice and Counselling Service (YIACS) including a mental health pathway for 13-25 year olds, access to sexual health advice, screening and contraception, substance misuse, education, training and employment, and housing advice and support.
- Link with the 0-25 team managing transitions to ensure that the needs of care experienced young people are prioritised.

- Roll out the Healthy Minds Framework to embed an emotional wellbeing culture in all Sheffield schools with workforce development and consultation provided by CAMHS.
- Include information and resources for children in care and care leavers in a student wellbeing resource for Sheffield schools available on the Learn Sheffield website.
- Develop specific psychological offer within fostering to help carers support young people with complex needs
- EHC plans will be completed for children and young people when required
- Participate in a personal budgets pilot with children in care, as part of the NHSE Integrated Personal Commissioning programme to give children and young people choice and empower them to access opportunities for personal development

What will success look like

	Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Reporting
1	Monitor children's emotional wellbeing using SDQ	SDQ are completed, included in 90% statutory health care plans and reviews	Dashboard
2	Children, YP and carers have access to appropriate support for mental health needs.	Referrals are assessed by MAPS within 8 weeks and support is offered to carers while children are waiting for an intervention.	Annual Report
3	Health needs assessed on entering care in accordance to statutory guidance (DfE March 2015)	Initial health assessments completed within 20 working days	Dashboard
4	Have health needs regularly assessed in accordance to statutory guidance (DfE March 2015)	Statutory review health assessments of children under 5 -years 6 monthly, those over 5 years annually	Dashboard
5	Have access to health services	100% young people registered with GP	Dashboard
6	CiC and Care Leavers do not misuse drugs and alcohol	Young people identified as having substance misuse problem are referred as required and with agreement to the young people's substance misuse service or offered an intervention with support from specialist staff	Annual Report

7	Young people have good sexual health and access to contraception	Uptake of training to carers on the sexual health needs of young Access to testing and contraception is available to children and young people through youth settings, GPs, pharmacies and sexual health clinic	Annual Report
8	CiC will have good oral health	100% CiC registered with a dentist by the age of 2	Dashboard
9	CiC have receive immunisations as per routine immunisation schedule appropriate to the age they enter the care system	Immunisations are up to date	Dashboard
10	Ensure children in care have access and opportunity to engage in physical activities and exercise.	Children healthy weight and BMI Numbers of opportunities to engage in physical activities	Annual Report
11	C&YP in care have meaningful opportunities to give feedback about health services	Completion of user experience questionnaires	Annual Report
12	Children's developmental milestones in the early years are monitored.	Any concerns are addressed in the health plans, required support identified and referrals made where necessary	Annual Report



PRIORITY 4 – IDENTIFYING PERMANENT HOMES AND FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Vision

For our children in our care to find a place of permanence that provides the very best environment for children to feel safe and secure, which will enable them to reach their potential and enter adulthood being able to achieve fulfilling lives.

The Challenge

Children growing up in care and away from their families often experience multiple moves and disruption which can significantly impact on their wellbeing and outcomes. Our focus is to identify the most stable and permanent option for children and young people in order to offer them the best opportunity to thrive and reach their potential in a caring and loving environment. In this context, permanence can mean becoming part of a family under a Child Arrangement Order, Special Guardianship Order and Adoption.

- The number of children in care below 10 years who have remained looked after by the Local Authority for more than four years has risen over the past two years indicating that efforts to identify permanent alternatives needs to be increased.

What we will do

- Work with neighbouring local authorities to seek the best way to collaborate in our efforts to increase the numbers of adopters who might provide permanent homes for our children.
- Revise and re-issue our offer and arrangements to support Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders.
- Promote our Staying Put arrangements to foster carers caring for our children and young people.
- Further embed the examination of permanence option within our Independent Reviewing processes.

- Develop targeted recruitment campaigns for specific children and carers.
- Develop a workforce which understands the impact on trauma, attachment and loss issues for children in care and a therapeutic parenting approach.

What success will look like

	Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Reporting
1	Children taken into the care of the local authority will be housed in a permanent placement where appropriate	Number of children that are successfully reunited within their families Number of children in permanence arrangements	Dashboard
2	Adoption will be achieved for children and young people where this is part of their plan	Number of adopters approved each year Timeliness of adopter approvals Number of completed adoptions	Annual Report
3	Young people will have the opportunity to remain with their former foster carers in staying put arrangements	% young people in staying put arrangements	Dashboard
4	Where appropriate LA will encourage families offering long term stable foster placements to become special guardians	Number of Special Guardianship Order made	Dashboard
5	To reduce the number of adoptions, SGOs and CAOs that breakdown	% breakdowns	Dashboard



PRIORITY 5 – ENSURING THERE ARE ENOUGH HIGH QUALITY AND STABLE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ALL OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS

Vision

Sheffield children will be supported to remain wherever possible within families. When they require residential care we will have a range of placements suitable to meet needs of children. Sheffield children will be cared for whenever possible within Sheffield, minimising the need for external placements.

The Challenge

The demands on local authorities to ensure that they have sufficient placements at the appropriate skill level is increasing in line with a national rise in the numbers of children in care.

Sheffield has recently experienced a steady rise in the numbers of children becoming - looked after. This coincides with a time when the numbers of foster carers retained by the city has seen a gradual reduction.

In addition to rising numbers, there has also been evidence of a change in the profile of children in care with many of them showing a broader range of needs than has previously been the case. This will require a more focussed approach to support those directly caring for children whether they be foster carers or residential workers.

Sheffield has had an increase use of residential placements and sees increasing numbers of children placed external to the city since April 2016. This has identified not only a capacity issue locally but also a resource design challenge.

What more can we do/- what will we do:

- Develop an integrated placement service, bringing together commissioning and fostering to improve timeliness of placement identification and consistency of approach.
- Develop a range of schemes within the fostering service to provide specific support to identified children within specific need criteria. This will reduce need for placing children out of Sheffield or in residential placements, when not appropriate.
- Partner with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) through contract process to develop improved market management of local provision to enable Sheffield places for Sheffield children.
- Work with independent living services (- supported people) to commission a range of provision for young people 16-25 to ensure transition of child in care, to care leaver, to independent tenants is streamlined.
- Review current in-house residential service and develop a strategy to realign provision to meet current and projected needs of children and young people, establishing resources within Sheffield and reducing the need for out of city placements.
- Create support packages around placements that enable targeted responses supporting children and young people to prevent breakdown, improving stability, maximising outcomes and reducing need for crisis placements.
- Work with housing services to produce range of provision from internal stock that enable flexible responses for children in care and choice for young people leaving care, including training facilities, semi-independent flats and supported accommodation.
- Develop robust recruitment programs for in- house fostering increasing capacity in line with needs identified in sufficiency plan; enabling a net growth of carers increasing placement choice, improving placement matching and therefore improving stability and outcomes.

- Develop services that work closely with providers to reduce risk of breakdown in crisis periods, progress plans for reunification or placements within families for permanency.
- We will continue to support children to remain with their carers through a range of interventions that reduce crisis, improve stability.

What success will look like

1	<p>CiC will be placed in stable placements</p> <p>% of children with 3 or more placements</p>	<p>% of children (aged under 16) looked after for at least 2.5 years in same placements for at least 2 years</p>	Dashboard
2	<p>CiC will be placed in a Sheffield placement (when this is suitable for their needs)</p> <p>% of children placed 20 miles or over from home</p>	<p>% of children placed outside of Sheffield</p>	Dashboard
3	<p>CiC transitioning to care leaver will be able to 'stay put' or 'stay close' to their placement on becoming a care leaver</p> <p>% of young people staying put</p>	<p>% young people staying close</p>	Dashboard
4	<p>We will increase the number of Local Authority foster carers</p>	<p>Enquiry to assessment to approval</p> <p>No. foster carers</p>	Annual Report

PRIORITY 6 – KEEPING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS SAFE

Vision

That all children and young people will be protected and safeguarded. All services and individuals will work together to identify risk and vulnerabilities, delivering interventions to reduce them and improve outcomes for children and young people.


Safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility and everyone who has contact with children and young people and their families has a role to play.

The Challenge

Safeguarding and vulnerability measures apply to all children, especially those who are looked after or who have had care experience; for some children in and leaving care there are contributing factors that have the potential to increase their vulnerability and require additional safeguarding measures to be taken.

Children and young people's early experiences have a significant impact on their development and future life chances and as a result of their experiences both before during and after care, children in care and care leavers are at greater risk than their peers. These include children in care or care leavers who are, or are at increased risk of being:

- 'Missing from Home, Care or Education'
- Subject to sexual exploitation
- Entering the criminal justice system
- Involved in or on the periphery of being involved in gang activity
- Victims of crime and violence
- Victims of criminal exploitation
- Misusing drugs and alcohol.
- Placed out of city, including secure welfare placements.
- Victims of Domestic Abuse
- Excluded



Issues around attachment and negative experiences of relationships often provide barriers to engagement between professionals and children and young people.

Professionals need to identify strategies and interventions to overcome these barriers and develop co-operative and constructive professional relationships so that they can appropriately assess and appreciate the child's needs and identify how to meet these needs whilst taking into account their wishes and feelings.

There is clear evidence that a strengths- based approach is an important factor in affecting change and reducing risks and vulnerabilities. All agencies, throughout their interactions and interventions, whilst identifying and acknowledging the difficulties, need to identify strengths within the child or young person's life in the context in which they are living.

The challenge for individual agencies is to ensure that their interventions are child centred and undertaken in a timely manner based on evidence and informed, accurate and current assessments.

The challenge for multi-agency involvement is to ensure that there is agreed and understood, clear and consistent practice around information and intelligence sharing and the interventions are collaborative, holistic, take into account the child's wishes and feelings, involving families where appropriate to support the achievement of best possible outcomes. Interventions should be monitored and reviewed as part of a continuing process.

What we will do

There is growing evidence both locally and nationally of the need to safeguard young people based on their specific lived experiences, peer groups, social and learning contexts, as well as their family environment.

- A co-located multi-agency CSE service and the multi-agency Missing Hub will create the beginnings of a multi-agency vulnerable young people service on Floor 2 of Star House, bringing together services to manage Child Sexual Exploitation, Harmful Sexual Behaviour, missing, gangs, and risky teenage relationships etc.
- The new Hub will identify clear pathways into Early Help.
- Establish links to locality hubs ensuring a whole family approach and a direct route into programmes.

- Ensure a robust system for monitoring and analysing patterns of behaviour in children and young people who go missing from home to prevent reoccurrence, provide effective support and develop our preventative approach.
- To provide return interviews for all young people who go missing and to support them in identifying reasons which lead to them leaving their home.
- Minimise the number of children and young people entering the criminal justice system and provide swift and effective holistic interventions that ensure that those who do are supported to achieve positive outcomes.
- Through the Youth Justice Partnership we will continue to review and monitor prevention and diversion services, to ensure that we are making the best use of resources available, that they are targeted and equipped to adequately support children who are looked after and those who have left our care.
- Develop a citywide Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy which seeks to minimise the number of young people entering the criminal justice system via this route. This will include setting up a multi-agency panel to review all applications for injunctions for anti-social behaviour.
- To retain a focus across the children's workforce in respect of the vulnerability to children of grooming including online abuse.
- Ensure that relevant services work effectively together to prevent children and young people who are, or who have been, looked after from being sexually exploited. This will include further developing the multi-agency approach to training and the information sharing processes.

What success will look like

1	Reduction in children missing from care	Data and analysis of missing episodes	Annual Report
2	Consistent implementation of Missing from Home or Care protocol and procedures across all agencies.	Audit case files	Annual Report
3	Are safe from sexual exploitation	No. referrals to CSE Service	Dashboard
4	Reducing the number of children in care and care leavers involved in offending behaviour	% CiC referred for police intervention % CiC that are first time entrants to criminal justice system No. of CiC who receive criminal justice outcomes No. of care leavers supported by the Community Rehabilitation Company or National Probation Service	Dashboard
5	The number of CiC and care leavers being criminally exploited and involved in gangs and organised crime will reduce	No. of CiC and care leavers identified as involved gangs and/or organised crime	Annual Report

PRIORITY 7 –SUPPORTING OUR CARE LEAVERS JOURNEY TO INDEPENDENCE

Vision

Young people will be successfully supported from care to independence.

The Government report “Keep on Caring 2016” identifies five key outcomes for young people leaving care as:


- all young people leaving care should be better prepared and supported to live independently
- improved access to education, employment and training
- care leavers should experience stability in their lives, and feel safe and secure
- improved access to health support
- care leavers should achieve financial stability

Challenge

Outcomes for care leavers remain much worse than for their counterparts in the general population and the quality of leaving care services provided by local authorities remains variable. The care leaver cohort is also changing, as more children enter care at age 16 and over, and with more unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) entering the care system. These changes present new challenges for service providers.

Care leavers are a vulnerable group of young adults who have particular needs in relation to housing and homelessness. Around a quarter of those living on the streets have a background in care. The majority of care leavers leave care when they turn 18 and rising demands on social housing and other accommodation is making it increasingly difficult for young people to find suitable accommodation as they enter adulthood.

Care leavers are less likely to have achieved 5 A*-C GCSEs (37% of children in care compared to 80% of non-looked after children in 2012). Only 6% of care leavers go into higher education compared to 23% of their peers at aged 18.



Too many care leavers are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or are long term unemployed. There are currently significant challenges for many young people taking their first steps into the world of work.

Care leavers have told us that they often find it difficult to navigate services and work out what financial support they are entitled to. When you do not have the support of family to fall back on, particularly when having to meet the challenge of independent living at a much younger age than your peers, having access to timely financial help is crucial.

Children often enter the care system with a poorer level of physical and mental health than their peers, and their longer-term outcomes remain worse. Two thirds of children in care have at least one physical health complaint, and nearly half have a mental health disorder. Care leavers frequently tell us that they encounter a lack of support in accessing appropriate services. They often feel that the professionals working close to them do not have an understanding of their needs, particularly in respect of mental health. Care leavers also face difficulties around the transition from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to adult services.

What we will do

- Introduce housing support clinics into care leavers service to ensure effective planning and assessment.
- Develop 'trainer flat' and plan jointly an effective training package for independence for care leavers.
- Ensure sufficient accommodation is available that meets the needs of young people, and that young people are supported to be tenancy ready and have the resources to support independent living.
- Work with housing colleagues to ensure that Sheffield's housing policy recognises the needs of care leavers.
- Develop an SCC apprenticeship offer directed to care leavers.
- Develop a programme that supports care leavers access Education, Training or Employment.
- Work with Virtual School to support care leavers achieve successful outcomes and are ambitious for their future.
- Consider ways in which 'Pupil Premium' can be utilised by schools to ensure maximum outcomes for care leavers.

- Work with community services to develop Community Support Worker role supporting pathways to employment for care leavers.
- Extend advice and guidance from universities and Sheffield Futures to promote all options available to young people.
- Explore feasibility of extending service to seven days providing greater support and response to care leavers.
- Secure enrichment activities for care leavers.
- Ensure care leavers are adequately supported with issues around, relationships, sexuality and identity.
- Work with health colleagues to commission services that support the needs of care leavers including improved transitions to the adult mental health services.
- Commission speech and language therapy research with university with a view to commissioning provision within the leaving care service.
- Promote 'Staying Put' and 'Staying Close' as viable options for young people leaving care.
- Conduct a full review of care leaver financial procedures.
- Work with DWP to develop mechanism that ensures care leavers gain fair and consistent access to benefits.

What success will look like


1	Care leavers are in touch and receiving services	% care leavers in touch No. care leavers with personal advisor	Dashboard
2	Care leavers are supported to develop meaningful plans to help them prepare for the future and support their transition to adulthood	% care leavers with an up to date pathway plan	Dashboard
3	Care leavers have somewhere safe to live after they leave care	% Care leavers in suitable accommodation	Dashboard
4	Care leavers have access to information, advice and guidance	% Care leavers 16 plus allocated a PA	Dashboard
5	Young people will have the opportunity to stay put or stay close on leaving care	% young people who are staying put % young people who are staying close	Dashboard
6	Care leavers have access to apprenticeships	No of care leavers on apprenticeships schemes	Dashboard
7	Care leavers will be support to engage in Education, Employment or Training	% Care Leavers in EET	Dashboard
8	Care leavers supported to attend university where it is their aspiration	No. care leavers attending university	Dashboard



PARTNER AGENCIES

Partner	Priorities	
Children in Care Council	1, 2, 3, 7	Are a group of individuals who are in care between the ages of 13-18. They run this CiCC to try and change young people's lives that are being brought up through the care system.
Care Leavers Union	1, 2, 3, 7	Are a group of individuals who have left local authority care. The group bring together the voices and experiences of care leavers to inform and improve the current care system.
Public Health	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	The Children and Young People's Public Health team is responsible for the commissioning and effective delivery of health and well-being services for children, young people and maternity services.
Schools	2	Schools providing education across the city including community and voluntary controlled schools voluntary aided, trust, foundation and academies.
Fieldwork	1, 2	The Fieldwork Service structure includes three area based fieldwork services, Children's Disability Service, Sheffield Safeguarding Hub and an Emergency Duty Team.
MAST	1, 2	Multi Agency Support Teams (MAST) work locally with children, young people and families to provide a range of services which help improve well-being, school attendance, learning, behaviour and health care. Promoting the early identification of children with additional needs, by delivering high quality preventative and supportive services to enable children to continue living successfully with their families and communities.
SEND	2	The SEND Team is locality-facing, working across the seven school localities. Early Years settings, special schools and post-16 providers such as Sheffield College are currently supported as "additional" localities. There are seven SEND Managers, each with responsibility for one locality and at least one special school or post-16 provider. The SEND Managers work closely with locality SENCOs and lead head teachers to make decisions about the support needed for children and young people with SEND.
School Admissions	2	School admissions allocate places at all community and voluntary controlled schools and coordinate applications for voluntary aided, trust, foundation and academy schools across the authority.
Education Psychology	2	Educational Psychologists provide a service to children, young people and their families, as well as to school staff in Sheffield. We help to find solutions to worries and concerns people might have about how children are developing, progressing or learning.

Partner	Priorities	
MAPS	2, 3	Multi-Agency Psychological Support (MAPS) for Looked After Children is a specialist team that helps Sheffield children in care (aged 0-18) with psychological issues which may have been caused through the trauma of early life experiences.
CAMHS	2, 3	Our Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) treat children and young people with a range of difficulties that are seriously impacting on their mental health and emotional wellbeing.
Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group	3	The CCG is an NHS organisation made up of the 82 local Sheffield GP practices. Their purpose is to ensure high quality, efficient and cost effective healthcare services for people across the city. The CCG are responsible for planning and buying (otherwise known as commissioning) many of Sheffield's healthcare services. This includes hospital care as well as services people receive within a community setting (for example community and district nurses). Working with other clinicians, healthcare professionals, patients and the public, to deliver high quality, efficient and cost effective healthcare services for people across the whole of Sheffield.
Early Years Inclusion Team	2	The Early Years Inclusion Service supports young children with complex needs at home and the transition into early year's settings. Our Early Years Inclusion Team includes Specialist Teachers and Teaching Assistants who work with young children who have additional needs.
Youth Justice	1, 2	Sheffield YJS is key to the successful delivery of the Youth Justice System in Sheffield. The Youth Justice Service is a multi-agency team made up of representatives from four statutory partners: Children, Young People and Families (Sheffield City Council), South Yorkshire Police, The Probation Service and Primary Care Trust. These representatives work alongside a range of other staff including those from the voluntary sector.
Fostering Service	1, 2, 4, 5	Sheffield 'in house' foster service provide high quality safe care within a family setting for children and young people who are unable to live within their own families. The service provides a range of carers able to best meet the emotional, physical, cultural and spiritual needs, and those relating to the ethnicity and background, of all the children and young people in public care, looked after by the authority.
Independent Placement Providers	2, 5	Sheffield work closely with independent placement providers, when we are unable to place a child with one of our own approved carers we work closely with independent providers to find suitable accommodation.



Partner	Priorities	
Residential Homes	2	Sheffield provides in house residential care for Looked After Children and short break respite care for children with disabilities in Sheffield. We currently provide care for up to 25 children and young people in 5 directly managed mainstream homes and up to 18 children in 3 short break respite homes for children with disabilities.
Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector	2, 3	The local authority works in partnership with the VCF sector. Accessing and commissioning additional services for example SEND services, youth services etc.
School Nursing	2, 3	School Nursing is part of the Trust's 0-19 Service through which we support children and their families at home and at school from birth to 19 years old.
Housing	5, 7	Sheffield housing service is the UK's second largest landlord with 41,500 properties, under their management. Housing is a key partners in ensuring that care leavers have sufficient accommodation choices.
Police	5	Police form part of the local authority's multi agency response to areas such as safeguarding, youth justice, CSE.
Learn Sheffield	2	Learn Sheffield is a not for profit schools company which is focussed on school improvement and owned by Sheffield's schools and colleges (who own 80%) in partnership with Sheffield City Council (who own 20%).
Sheffield Children's Hospital	3	Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust is one of only four dedicated children's hospital trusts in the UK and provides integrated healthcare for children and young people, including community and mental health care as well as acute and specialist services. They see children from 0-16 in most cases and in some cases up to 18.

APPENDICES

Glossary of some key terms

Team/Word used	Meaning
CAMHS	The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service treat children and young people with a range of difficulties that are seriously impacting on their mental health.
Family Finders	There is a family finder within each Adoption team whose role is to identify families suitable for children that are currently awaiting placement.
IFA placements	Independent Fostering Agencies recruit and support their own foster carers and work closely with local authorities to find the best placement for children in care.
MAPs	Multi-Agency Psychological Support for Children in care are a small team of professionals from health, social services and education whose role is to respond to the mental health needs of children and young people who are looked after by Sheffield City Council.
MAST	Multi agency support teams. There are 3 in Sheffield; North, East and West.
NEET	Not in education, employment or training.
NICE and SCIE guidelines	National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines is for the NHS, local charities and anyone with a responsibility for commissioning or providing healthcare, public health or social care services.
Pathway Plan	The Pathway Plan is different to the Care Plan in that it prepares for the young person's future in much more details. The pathway plan must make plans for; health and development; education; training and employment; contact with parents, wider family and friends; managing money.
Permanence	The condition of being permanent. In this context, this refers to placements being permanent.
Policy	A course or plan of action.
Protocol	Protocol is used in the context of being the official procedures or processes
Pupil Premium	The pupil premium is additional funding given to publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
Restorative Justice	Restorative processes bring those harmed by crime or conflict, and those responsible for the harm, into communication, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires. This is a brief questionnaire used in children's social care to understand emotional well-being in 4 to 16 yr. olds.
SHOBPA	A decision on whether a child should be placed for adoption (known as SHOBPA)
Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs)	Special Guardianship is a formal court order that was introduced on 30 December 2005 which allows parental control over a child by individuals other than the parent. This could be a grandparent, close relative or even a family friend.

This document can be supplied in alternative formats,
please contact 0114 273 4982
Sheffield City Council
www.sheffield.gov.uk



When you have finished with
this document please recycle it

80% recycled

This document is printed
on 80% recycled paper