

# Policy prototype

**FALKIRK COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING POLICY  
A RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL TO SUPPORT THOSE LEAVING CARE**

Draft- December 2020

# CONTENTS

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| PART 1 | Policy Statement                           |
| PART 2 | Introduction                               |
|        | Legislative Background                     |
| PART 3 | Understanding Corporate Parenting          |
|        | Training/Induction                         |
|        | Knowledge Base                             |
| PART 4 | Flexible arrangements                      |
|        | Availability of budgets                    |
|        | Coordination of work undertaken            |
|        | Additional Support, Training and Resources |
| PART 5 | Outcomes for care experiences young people |
|        | Setting goals                              |
|        | Maintaining relationships                  |
| PART 6 | Implementation of policy                   |
|        | Review of policy                           |

### PART 1 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy confirms Falkirk Council's commitment to the duties of Corporate Parenting, and sets out the resources and flexibility available to all employees to effectively support care experienced young people, who have left care but are entitled to ongoing support until the age of 26, using a relationships based approach to effectively support them.

### PART 2 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 placed a new set of duties on local authorities, and a range of other public bodies, to become corporate parents to care experienced young people. This duty is placed upon us until a care experienced person reaches the age of 26, to carry out a number of duties to uphold their rights and secure their wellbeing. These six duties are as follows:

- to be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of children and young people to whom this Part applies,
- to assess the needs of those children and young people for services and support it provides,
- to promote the interests of those children and young people,
- to seek to provide those children and young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing,
- to take such action as it considers appropriate to help those children and young people-
- to take such other action as it considers appropriate for the purposes of improving the way in which it exercises its functions in relation to those children and young people.

The Council recognises that Corporate Parenting is the responsibility of all of its employees, and not those who are specifically employed in the support of care experienced young people. Therefore, this policy and the provisions within it, aim to give all employees the knowledge and tools to embed Corporate Parenting into their working life, and to help improve the quality of life and opportunities of our care experienced young people.

The Leaving Care Team in Social Work Services providing practical advice and support to help young people live independently, however, they have been significantly stretched by the increase in the age limit on this duty. This has made relationships-based practice for all more difficult to achieve. This policy aims to make Corporate Parenting the responsibility of all employees, and that all services are working consistently to support care experienced young people. However, The

---

---

Leaving Care Team continue to deliver the critical management of this function, and a first point of contact for any care experienced young person who we have a duty to.

Work to develop this policy has been carried out by a group of varied employees, along with care experienced young people, using a service design approach. This work found that young people leaving care, and people who work for local authorities, explain a range of barriers mean they find it difficult to maintain connections. Above all, the work of this group found that the ability to build strong relationships between corporate parents and young people, to be able to show love, and to have trust in employees to do this, were the fundamentals to excellent Corporate Parenting. This policy aims to help the Council and its employees to help provide support to break down the barriers to building relationships. Further details of this project are available at <http://relationshipsfirst.net/>

In addition, this policy considers the Council of the Future 'RITA' values to be critical to the success of it. These are as follows:

- Responsive – we will work to meet the needs of care experienced young people, in a way that works for them
- Innovative – we will seek new solutions to support care experienced young people, and encourage employees to think of individual solutions for individual problems
- Trusted – our employees will be trusted to carry out this work, by their colleagues, managers and care experienced young people
- Ambitious – the success of this work will lead to increased positive outcomes and destinations for care experienced young people.

## PART 3 UNDERSTANDING CORPORATE PARENTING

Before any work to support care experienced young people can be undertaken, it is vital that all employees understand the purpose of Corporate Parenting, the impacts on care experienced young people, and how they can make a difference. This will be achieved in the following ways.

### **Training/induction**

Training on corporate parenting, including information about the care system, how young people experience care, and outcomes for care experienced young people, will be delivered on a regular basis for all Council employees. This will be compulsory for all employees, and completion of this every two years will be subject to monitoring by Human Resources and managers.

---

---

The overall purpose of all the training provided is to ensure awareness of duties of corporate parenting role and resources available to ensure consistency in council values and relationship practices. In addition, it will seek to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions held regarding the care system, and to provide an overview of how trauma-informed practice can be used.

The content of the training will be updated on a regular basis, to ensure that it is up-to-date and remains relevant to staff. Examples of previous work to support care experienced young people should also form part of the training, to give more understanding about employee's potential roles in this work. Care experienced young people will also be included in the development of this.

The format of training will be made available in a number of ways appropriate to different services, including online through OLLE, and face to face sessions for those who do not work in office settings. Staff will be able to choose which method is most appropriate to them.

As well as this, all new employees to the Council will be required to complete a Corporate Parenting induction course as part of their induction programme.

In addition, a three day intensive Corporate Parenting training course will be developed, with modules in this to be delivered as required to employees who are providing support to care experienced young people.

Managers will also be required to undertake an additional OLLE training course on how to support their employees with this work and Corporate Parenting.

### **Knowledge base**

To complement the training programme, a Corporate Parenting Knowledge Base will be established, which can be accessed by all employees and provide a range of materials and resources which can further their knowledge of this areas. Where appropriate, these will be made relevant to different areas of the Council, for example, Housing or Revenues and Benefits. This will also include information related to our partner corporate parents, including contact details, who we can work with to provide support to young people.

Care experienced young people will be involved in the development and maintenance of this Knowledge Base.

---

---

## PART 4 SUPPORTING CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE

In the course of our working lives, Falkirk Council employees may work with and support care experienced young people in a variety of ways. While many of these encounters may be limited, there will be times when an employee has sustained contact with a care experienced young person, and may wish to provide additional support in fulfilment of our Corporate Parenting duties. This includes care experienced young people who may be employed with us, on a permanent or temporary basis.

In doing so, it is recognised that providing such additional support will not always be possible within the day to day times and duties of an employee's role. In fact, it would be preferable for employees to provide this time and support in a way that is beneficial to the young person. As such, this may involve working at days or times outwith their usual working pattern, or incurring expenses to provide such support. This will depend on the outcomes agreed upon with the young person.

Where an employee is involved in additional support of a care experienced young person, this should be fully agreed on with the young person to ensure that they are happy with the support.

The employee should discuss the work to support a care experienced young person with their manager, before it is formally agreed upon. However, it should be stressed that this is not to seek permission to carry out this work, but to agree any flexibility required with them, and to manage the impact on the rest of their team as a result of any change to working hours.

### **Coordination of support**

The coordination of support for care experienced young people is managed by the Leaving Care Team, who remain the first point of contact for care experienced young people. Where an employee has agreed to provide support to a young person, this must be discussed with the Leaving Care Team at the earliest opportunity. They will ensure that the Support Database is updated with details of the employee and the support planned to be given. This will then be updated with regular reviews of the support provided.

The coordination of this support work by the Leaving Care Team will ensure that:

- No duplication of support is provided
  - Forms of support are appropriate to the young person
-

- 
- A record of persons working with the young person is maintained
  - The employee providing support can be advised of pertinent matters relating to the young person, if required
  - Ensuring that the work of a Positive Outcomes Plan is not incompatible with the employees' substantive role

Assistance from other Corporate Parents who can provide support can also be utilised.

The Support Database will be updated and maintained solely by the Leaving Care Team.

The Leaving Care Team will also provide employees with the Positive Outcomes Plan, which should be completed in conjunction with the care experienced young person.

Please see part 5 for further details on this.

### **Flexible arrangements**

To enable supportive relationships with the care experienced young person, it is recognised that time will be required for employees will be required outwith their working hours.

This should be discussed with their manager, with as much notice as possible, to ensure it does not adversely impact on the work of their team. However, managers should empower staff to undertake this work wherever possible.

Where an employee is supporting a young person outwith their usual working pattern, the time taken to do this will be recognised. Dependent on the needs of their service, this can be done in the following ways:

- A flexible working pattern arranged for that day for the staff member
- Time credited to their flexi hours, to be used at a later date
- If the above cannot be facilitated, then consideration of payment of hours worked can be made

Where flexible working hours or flexi time is being used, this should be monitored by managers in the usual way. The Chronos flexi-time working system will be updated, to enable working times to be recorded 7 days a week, and to include reasons to monitor this type of work.

---

---

Where a care experienced person is employed by the Council, and supported by another employee in the same department, where possible, they should work together on a regular basis to ensure the relationship is maintained and supported.

### **Availability of budgets**

It is recognised that an employee may incur expenses in the work with the care experienced young person. A Corporate Parenting budget will be made available for reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out this support. This budget will be contributed to by all departments, as part of their commitment to Corporate Parenting.

The budget will be administered centrally, with a fast-track payment system put in place to ensure that payments can be made to the employee within 48 hours, subject to supporting documentation and approval.

Details on the amount spent of the budget, and general areas of spend, will be made available for all to view on the Knowledge Base, to ensure transparency in spending.

### **Additional support, training and resources**

Before ongoing support can be provided to a care experienced young person, the employee will have access to the following training courses. Agreement will be made as to which are to be completed, depending on the need:

- Building Trust
- Mental Wellbeing
- Safeguarding
- Drugs and Alcohol Awareness
- Understanding Trauma
- How to Develop and Maintain a Positive Outcomes Plan
- 

The above training courses will be incorporated in the three day intensive Corporate Parenting training programme, to be completed as appropriate.

These training courses are also complemented by other courses available on the Council's OLLE system, which will be completed as part of every employee's ongoing personal development.

The work undertaken with the young person, and any needs arising from this, should form part of the employee's regular 'Good Conversation' with their manager.

---



---

As part of the Knowledge Base, regular updates will be provided in here for employees supporting young people to let them know of previous good practice.

A group will be set up to support employees, by allowing them to meet with other employees supporting young people, and experienced practitioners, to discuss any issues and promote good practice. This will meet regularly, either virtually or in person as appropriate, and will be open to anyone involved in Corporate Parenting.

The work of Corporate Parenting will continue to be promoted throughout the Council, to ensure all employees are aware of this duty and why colleagues may be engaged in this work.

## PART 5 OUTCOMES FOR CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE

While this policy is intended to promote positive relationships between employees and care experienced young people, the use of this time should be used to help support them to more positive outcomes.

This should be documented in a Positive Outcomes Plan, which will look at all goals that the young person is looking to achieve. Some of this work may also be assisted by other departments or agencies, as appropriate.

This may relate to specific goals (e.g. applying for college) or more long-term support with a less specific outcome (e.g. support through early years of parenthood). While it is not essential to record every meeting with a young person, the Positive Outcomes Plan should be regularly referred to and reviewed to ensure that it remains relevant.

If a young person's circumstances change, (e.g., do not maintain college course attendance) this does not mean that support should end for the young person. The Positive Outcomes Plan should be revised accordingly depending on the new circumstances.

The employee and Leaving Care Team will conduct regular reviews of a young person's Positive Outcomes Plan, to ensure that all support required can be given, and to ensure details of this are kept up to date.

---

---

## **Setting goals**

In setting goals for the Positive Outcomes Plan, this should be done in full discussion with the employee and the care experienced young person, to ensure their full agreement with the outcomes contained in this. These goals can be long or short term, and can be revised as required. The Leaving Care Team will provide the required documentation for this plan, and support as required. The employee should also complete the training course 'How to Develop and Maintain a Positive Outcomes Plan' before carrying out this work.

## **Maintaining relationships**

It is recognised that, in developing a supportive relationship with a young person in line with Corporate Parenting, that not all meetings will be directly related to the Positive Outcomes Plan. These can be arranged as required to meet the needs of the young person.

## **Employment with the Council**

Where a care experienced young person is employed by the Council, even on a temporary or work experience basis, the Positive Outcomes Plan should consider whether appropriate training can be provided which will lead to a recognised qualification. In addition, where employment is coming to an end, a recognised statement of the skills and experience of the young person should be provided, to be used for evidence for future employment. This should be developed in line with the work of the 'Family Firm' in the Leaving Care Team.

## **Ending the Plan**

The care experienced young person may withdraw from the plan of support at any time. However, the reasons for doing so will be fully discussed with them by a member of the Leaving Care Team, and a revised plan put in place to continue work towards their proposed outcomes in another way. Where an employee wishes to withdraw from a plan of support, or is leaving Falkirk Council, this should be discussed with the Leaving Care Team at the earliest opportunity, to allow for a revised plan of support to be put in place as soon as possible. This could either be with the Leaving Care Team, or another employee if appropriate.

# **PART 6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

---

---

The implementation of this policy will begin in January 2021, following briefing sessions for relevant managers and Chief Officers. Online and printed publicity materials will be used to ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and the online Knowledge Base to find out more.

### **Review of policy**

The policy will be reviewed annually by the relevant managers and Chief Officers, to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and is meeting the objectives set out in this. Review of the policy will include feedback from care experienced young people, and employees, to ensure their views are fully included in the ongoing development of the policy.

Equality impact assessments will be carried out on a regular basis, to assess the impact on care experienced young people. As such, this may involve working at days or times outwith their usual working pattern, or incurring expenses to provide such support. This will depend on the outcomes agreed upon with the young person.

---