



Care Inspectorate Corporate Parenting Plan 2017-2020

Foreword

We are very pleased to introduce the Care Inspectorate's Corporate Parenting Plan 2017-20. It is now more than a decade since a national review of services for looked after children and young people recognised that a focus on improving corporate parenting was "the single most important thing that will improve the future of Scotland's looked after children" (Extraordinary Lives, 2006). While we have undoubtedly made some progress, outcomes for our care experienced young people are still not improving quickly enough. There is much more still to do to overcome the barriers that these young people face.

Understanding of what it means to be a good corporate parent is still developing but we now have clear guidance to help us. Corporate parents have a responsibility to understand the lives and experiences of care experienced young people and to take any action necessary to achieve the best for them. The duties set out in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 provide us all with a challenge. But they are also an opportunity to show that we care enough to go the extra mile to do our best for our children and young people.

The Care Inspectorate is strongly committed to helping build a rights based, world class care system in Scotland. This means children, young people and their families getting the care and support they need, when they need it, for as long as they need it, wherever they live. The new Care and Health Standards set out clearly what all of us are entitled to expect when we experience care. These include being helped to develop a positive view of oneself and to form trusting and secure relationships (S3.5); experiencing warmth, kindness and compassion (S3.9) and feeling loved, valued and secure (s3.10). They will challenge us all but they are not, and cannot be, unachievable.

The Scottish Government's 2015 strategy "Getting it right for looked after children and young people" noted three factors critical for success in improving outcomes – listening to the views of children and young people; developing partnership across systems; and creating an improvement culture that empowers practitioners, families and communities. These fit well with the Care Inspectorate's priorities which seek to put people at the heart of all we do, to work in collaboration with others and to support a culture of continuous improvement.

This plan details a number of ways in which we already exercise our responsibilities as corporate parents. We have a huge asset in our knowledgeable, skilled and committed staff and we are proud of our achievements. However, we know there is always more we need to do and this plan also sets out a challenging agenda which will strengthen our approach further.

Karen Reid
Chief Executive

About the Care Inspectorate

The Care Inspectorate is the official body responsible for inspecting standards of care and for supporting improvement in social work services in Scotland. That means we regulate and inspect care services to make sure they meet the right standards and help them improve if needed. We also carry out joint inspections with other scrutiny bodies to check how well different organisations in local areas are working to support adults and children. We help ensure social work meets high standards. Across all of our work, we provide independent assurance and protection for children, young people and adults experiencing care, for their families and carers and the wider public. In addition, we play an important role in supporting improvements in the quality of care, and reducing health and social inequalities, in Scotland. The findings from our inspections and other work helps inform and influence local and national policy.

Our actions are guided by the following commitments:

Person-centred – we will put people at the heart of everything we do

Fairness – we will act fairly, be transparent and treat people equally

Respect – we will be respectful in all that we do

Integrity – we will be impartial and act to improve care for the people of Scotland

Efficiency – we will provide the best possible quality and public value from our work

What is a corporate parent?

When a child or young person becomes 'looked after', the state takes on certain responsibilities to safeguard and promote their welfare and wellbeing. Children and young people may be 'looked after' at home, where a legal requirement has been made by a children's hearing which says they should continue to live at home with their family with supervision and support from a social worker. Or they may live with relatives or friends, with foster carers or in a children's house with other young people. A few young people need to live in a secure care setting for a period of time.

But many care experienced young people have less positive outcomes than their peers. Their needs are often complex. They may have trauma and loss and have had lots of different people caring for them. These things may make it harder for them to take advantage of opportunities. They may face stigma because of difficulties in their families and feel judged for being 'different'. Young people have sometimes found themselves leaving care without the support that their peers benefit from. They have not had the security of knowing that there are people who care for

them, understand them and will continue to be there to help them as they start out on their adult lives.

A corporate parent is an organisation or individual with particular responsibilities for care experienced children and young people. When the Scottish Parliament passed a new law about children and young people in 2014 (the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014), it included a section which aims to make sure that public bodies do whatever they can to support care experienced young people and promote their needs and interests so that they can have the positive futures they deserve. Part 9 of the Act sets out the duties of corporate parents which extend to children and young people who are living in any of the settings described above, and also to young people who have left care, from the age of 16 years until their 26th birthday. The Act lists the organisations to which these duties apply. Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (The Care Inspectorate) is one of those organisations.

Our duties as corporate parents

Being a good corporate parent means we need to listen to the needs, fears and wishes of care experienced young people and be proactive and determined in our efforts to meet them. Our work in the Care Inspectorate should complement and support the actions of parents, families and carers to deliver positive change for vulnerable children and young people.

The Act says we must:

Be **alert** to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the **wellbeing** of care experienced young people,

Assess the needs of care experienced young people or any service or support provided,

Promote the interests of care experienced young people,

Seek to provide care experience young people with **opportunities** to promote their wellbeing,

Take appropriate action to help care experienced young people **access** those opportunities,

Take any action to **improve** the way in which we exercise our functions in relation to care experienced children and young people

The Act also says that we should **collaborate** with other corporate parents to safeguard or promote the wellbeing of children and young people.

Wellbeing

Section 96 (2) of the Act helps us understand what is meant by children or young people's wellbeing. It means the extent to which a child or young person is:

Safe: protected from abuse, neglect or harm.

Healthy: having the best possible standards of physical and mental health, supported to make healthy and safe choices.

Achieving: accomplishing goals and boosting skills, confidence and self-esteem.

Nurtured: having a nurturing and stimulating place to live and grow.

Active: having opportunities to take part in activities.

Respected: being given a voice, being listened to, and being involved in decisions which affect their wellbeing.

Responsible: taking an active role within their home, school and community.

Included: being a full member of the communities in which they live and learn, receiving help and guidance to overcome inequalities.

The Care Inspectorate's commitments to care experienced young people

We safeguard and promote the wellbeing of care experienced young people by:

- regulating and inspecting all care services which care experienced young people may make use of, to make sure they are of high quality and effective in delivering on national care and health standards, and supporting them to improve where needed.
- inspecting and reporting on how well staff from different services work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for care experienced young people, and helping them work better together where needed
- investigating complaints made by young people about care services to make sure problems are addressed and, where needed, the quality of care improves
- providing information which helps care experienced young people make decisions about their care and informs them about their rights and possible sources of support
- gathering the views of care experienced young people about the quality and accessibility of care services and using this understanding to plan where, when and how to inspect

- ensuring the voice of care experienced young people is reflected in the advice we give to service providers, Scottish Ministers, Scottish Government officials and other bodies
- publishing information about issues affecting care experienced young people, highlighting barriers to good outcomes and identifying, sharing and promoting good practice
- providing opportunities for care experienced young people to develop skills, experience and confidence to help them find employment and develop their careers
- working effectively with other corporate parents to promote the rights of care experienced young people, challenge negative and discriminatory stereotypes and celebrate their achievements

What do we plan to do now?

	Outcome	What we will do	Accountability	Duty
1	The strategic direction and priorities of the Care Inspectorate are influenced by sound understanding of the needs and ambitions of care experienced young people.	<p>We will:</p> <p>1.1 arrange training for Board members on corporate parenting.</p> <p>1.2 build an ongoing relationship between the corporate parenting group, the Board and senior officers.</p> <p>1.3 ensure we have systems in place to keep the Board and Executive Team informed about issues impacting on care experienced young people.</p> <p>1.4 develop a corporate parenting impact assessment to help us consider the impact of all new/revised policies and strategies.</p> <p>1.5 represent our commitment to corporate parenting in the Care</p>	<p>Head of Organisation & Workforce Development</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Chief Inspector (Strategic Scrutiny – SW advisor to Board)</p> <p>Senior Equalities and Involvement Advisor</p> <p>Communications Lead</p>	ALERT, PROMOTE, IMPROVE

		<p>Inspectorate's corporate plan.</p> <p>1.6 strengthen further our links with organisations representing care experienced young people and working to improved their lives.</p>	Executive Director of Strategy and Improvement	
2	All Care Inspectorate staff and volunteers are aware of the needs of care experienced young people, alert to factors that may adversely affect their wellbeing and understand what is required of them as corporate parents.	<p>We will:</p> <p>2.1 develop and disseminate briefing for all staff on our corporate parenting responsibilities and ensure the corporate parenting plan is disseminated and progress reports shared routinely.</p> <p>2.2 develop and implement a graduated training programme for staff, dependent on role, with all staff to have awareness-raising as a minimum and corporate parenting responsibilities to be included in induction. We will involve care experienced young people in developing this training.</p> <p>2.3 create a 'community of interest' in the Care Inspectorate to support staff to share learning and ideas about improving experiences and outcomes for care experienced young people.</p>	<p>Executive Director of Strategy and Improvement</p> <p>Head of Organisation and Workforce Development</p> <p>Corporate parenting group</p>	ALERT
3	Our approach to registration inspection and complaints, supports the achievement of good experiences and outcomes for care experienced young people.	<p>We will:</p> <p>3.1 involve care experienced young people from all settings in disseminating the new health and care standards.</p> <p>3.2 ensure that our inspection and improvement approaches include appropriate enquiry and challenge about how care</p>	<p>Development lead for care and health standards</p> <p>Service manager responsible for business transformation</p>	ALERT, PROMOTE, IMPROVE

		<p>services and those who commission services are improving outcomes for looked after children and young people and care leavers.</p> <p>3.3 seek the views of care experienced young people when developing our methodology for joint inspections of services for children and young people.</p> <p>3.4 take into account evidence about needs, risks and outcomes for care experienced young people, and their views, when deciding on inspection priorities and scheduling.</p> <p>3.5 further develop our intelligence processes to improve how we collate and analyse complaints made by care experienced young people, findings of inspections of care services and joint inspections and other evidence to identify support more targeted, risk-based and proportionate scrutiny and improvement activity.</p>	<p>Service manager (strategic scrutiny, children & young people)</p> <p>Executive Director of Scrutiny and Assurance</p> <p>Head of Risk, Intelligence and Professional Standards</p>	
4	We communicate effectively with, and about, care experienced young people.	<p>We will:</p> <p>4.1 develop and publish accessible, young person-friendly information about children's rights and about how to complain about a care service.</p> <p>4.2 develop more effective methods of communicating the findings of relevant inspections to children and young people.</p>	<p>Executive Director of Strategy and Improvement and Service Manager (complaints)</p> <p>Service managers and Communications Lead</p>	<p>ACCESS, IMPROVE, COLLABORATE</p>

		<p>4.3 involve care experienced young people in disseminating the new care and health standards to raise expectations of improved experiences and outcomes.</p> <p>4.4 support staff with the best knowledge and experience of services for care experienced young people to contribute to local and national groups where decisions are made about policy and practice affecting care experienced young people.</p>	<p>Strategic Lead – National Care Standards</p> <p>Chief inspectors</p>	
5	<p>The voice of care experienced young people is appropriately reflected in our advice to service providers, Scottish Ministers, policy colleagues and other bodies</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>5.1 amplify the voice of young people in our inspections by increasing the number of inspections that young inspection volunteers contribute to and the breadth of their contribution.</p> <p>5.2 use the information we gain from inspections and other activity about what is working well for care experienced young people and what still needs to change, to inform national improvement priorities.</p>	<p>Team managers and involvement team</p> <p>Executive Director of Strategy and Improvement</p>	PROMOTE
6	<p>Care experienced young people have opportunities to develop skills, experience and confidence to help them find employment and develop their careers</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>6.1 strengthen the training and support we provide to young inspection volunteers.</p> <p>6.2 ensure care experienced young people can take advantage of work opportunities through modern apprenticeships in the Care Inspectorate.</p>	<p>Involvement team</p> <p>Head of Human Resources</p>	OPPORTUNITIES

		6.3 review our recruitment and selection processes to check that they do not present unnecessary barriers to employment for care experienced young people.	Head of Human Resources	
7	We work effectively with other corporate parents	<p>We will:</p> <p>7.1 become an active participant in the Corporate Parents Collaboration Group to explore opportunities for collaboration and partnership.</p> <p>7.2 use our influence and work with other bodies to challenge negative and discriminatory stereotypes and celebrate the achievements of looked after children and young people</p>	<p>Corporate Parenting Group</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	COLLABORATE

Governance, accountability and review

We have established a corporate parenting group (CPG) to help us develop and implement our corporate parenting plan. We will report routinely on how we are meeting our corporate parenting responsibilities in the Care Inspectorate's annual report. We will report specifically on progress against the commitments in this corporate parenting plan in 2018 and outline further actions for 2018-21, as required by Section 61 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.