

# CORPORATE PARENTING REPORT 2021-23



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*"Thanks to my experiences as a young inspection volunteer, my confidence has grown a lot. I feel that most of my leadership skills have come from working with the Care Inspectorate and being part of inspections.*

*I have participated in a wide range of training and developed many new skills. These skills have helped me with college and more recently work, as I feel much more confident when presenting my ideas, working in a group and talking to different people. I have found my voice."*



# FOREWORD

**I am delighted to share the Care Inspectorate's triennial Corporate Parenting report. We are proud to be a corporate parent and recognise the importance of the role and the responsibilities we hold in that regard.**

We regulate and report on the quality of care and support experienced by children and young people. In the work that we do, through our scrutiny and quality improvement activities, we contribute to our vision for world class social care and social work in Scotland.

Our Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2023, details our progress and will provide a level of assurance to the Scottish Government, the wider public but most importantly, our care experienced community, that we are meeting our responsibilities as a corporate parent.

This report is aligned with our three-year 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child report', our commitment to 'Keeping the Promise' for Scotland's children and young people and 'Getting It Right for Every Child'. We have worked collaboratively as an organisation with local and national stakeholders to learn, reflect and improve in our role as a corporate parent.



**Jackie Irvine**  
Chief Executive



**Keeping The Promise at  
the heart of what we do**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Care Inspectorate

- Young inspection volunteers
- Scrutiny and assurance colleagues:
  - children and young people's teams, complaints teams, regulatory care early learning and childcare services teams, Registration and Promise Lead
- Quality improvement and participation colleagues
  - Participation and Equalities Team, Quality Improvement Support Team, and Development Worker: Keeping the Promise Workstream 2 (to July 2023)
- Organisational workforce development colleagues
  - Organisational Workforce Development team and Professional Standards and Practice team

## External partners and stakeholders

- Each and Every Child Initiative
- Our Hearings Our Voice collaborative
- The Promise Scotland team
- Learning to Understand Needs and Abilities (LUNA) group
- Who Cares? Scotland
- Centre for Excellence for Looked after Children (CELCIS)
- Improvement Service
- National trauma development colleagues, including the National Resilience Partnership
- Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)
- Disclosure Scotland
- Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS)
- Aberlour
- Electoral Commission
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Qualifications Authority
- Education Scotland
- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS)

## Using the terms 'Corporate Parenting' and 'our children and young people'

The care system uses the term 'corporate parent'. The Independent Care Review heard that this term feels demeaning and is an example of cold, process-driven relationships and avoided using this term. This report has made every attempt not to use the term 'Corporate Parenting'. Instead, where possible throughout this report, we use trauma-informed and compassionate language. The Care Inspectorate is working with Each and Every Child, to reflect on the language used to support care experienced individuals across all our work.

# INTRODUCTION

We want the best outcomes for all infants, babies, children and young people who are care experienced and accept responsibility to make their needs a priority. This high-level report reflects how, over the last three years (2021 – 2023), we have fulfilled our duties to complement and support the actions of parents, families, and carers to deliver positive change for 'our' children and young people.

The [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) requires a Corporate Parent to publish a report every three years. This report covers our progress during the period January 2021 to December 2023, highlighting a range of activities in relation to our corporate parenting responsibilities.

It is our job to help try and improve outcomes for children and young people who are care experienced. [Part 9 of the Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act, 2014](#) relates to corporate parenting. This applies to every child who is looked after by a local authority, and every young person under the age of 26, who was looked after on their 16th birthday.

We are expected to carry out many of the roles a parent would. Section 60 of the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act, 2014](#) sets out our duty to collaborate with other corporate parents to best meet our collective responsibilities to promote the wellbeing of our young people and to help keep them safe from harm. It is important that in fulfilling our role as a good corporate parent, we enable our young people to have as much of a say and control in their lives as possible.

This report will outline the progress under each of the six commitments, which were set in the [Corporate Parenting Plan \(2021 – 2023\)](#) stating what was done and how it was delivered. Where there is still improvements or further work required, this will be recognised and where appropriate, taken forward in the next plan (2024 – 2026).

## National data

The Scottish Government Children's Social Work Statistics 2021-2022 provide the most recent data on the number of young people who are looked after . On 31 July 2022:



**12,596**

children were  
looked after



**5%**

decrease from 2021  
and the lowest this  
figure has been  
since 2005

**90%**

of children were  
placed in  
community  
settings



**34%**

of children were  
in kinship care

**33%**

of children were  
in foster care

**21%**

of children were  
at home with  
parents

**10%**

of children were  
looked after in  
residential  
settings

# KEEPING EVERYTHING CONNECTED

**We have continued to ensure our Corporate Parenting responsibilities connect across the organisation. Our [Corporate Plan 2022–2025](#), demonstrates how the organisation takes its role seriously in working with care experienced young inspection volunteers and creating opportunities that can lead to further study, training and paid employment.**

In April 2023, the organisational structures for our UNCRC group and corporate parenting were combined to form one overarching group. This was in recognition that it would be helpful to further strengthen the connections between UNCRC, corporate parenting and Keeping the Promise. This reflected similar moves by other national partners. As part of commitment five of our 2021 – 2023 Corporate Parenting Plan, the process to embedding the [Family Firm](#) approach in December 2022 was started.

All this work is informed by the [Health and Social Care Standards: My Support, My Life](#). These are applied in every element of our work and are the standards of care any person can expect, based around five main outcomes:

1. I experience high quality care and support that is right for me.
2. I am fully involved in all decisions about my care and support.
3. I have confidence in the people who support and care for me.
4. I have confidence in the organisation providing my care and support.
5. I experience a high-quality environment if the organisation provides the premises.

We want children and young people to feel loved and secure to have meaningful connections. We carry out joint inspections with other scrutiny bodies to examine how well different organisations in local areas are working to support children and young people, improve their wellbeing and keep them safe from harm.

We developed and launched a corporate parenting area on our internal news site. This helps our workforce to keep up to date with children's rights and corporate parenting work.

Our strategic inspection teams support children's service partnerships and child protection committees learning and improvement through our quality assurance work.

# OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PROMISE

The [Independent Care Review](#) helped Scotland make a promise. The Promise call to action, is a national strategy and action plan, which contributes to the implementation of the UNCRC and our responsibilities as a corporate parent.

Delivering on [The Promise](#) by 2030 is an important part of everything we do, and we refer to it throughout this report, including our next steps.

The Promise intends to make Scotland's care system one that is more caring and united. To achieve this, it needs children's services across Scotland to be flexible and able to adapt, to better suit the needs of everyone in and around them. The views and voice of children and young people must influence the change. We are proud of the progress we are making. Highlights of our Promise work so far include:

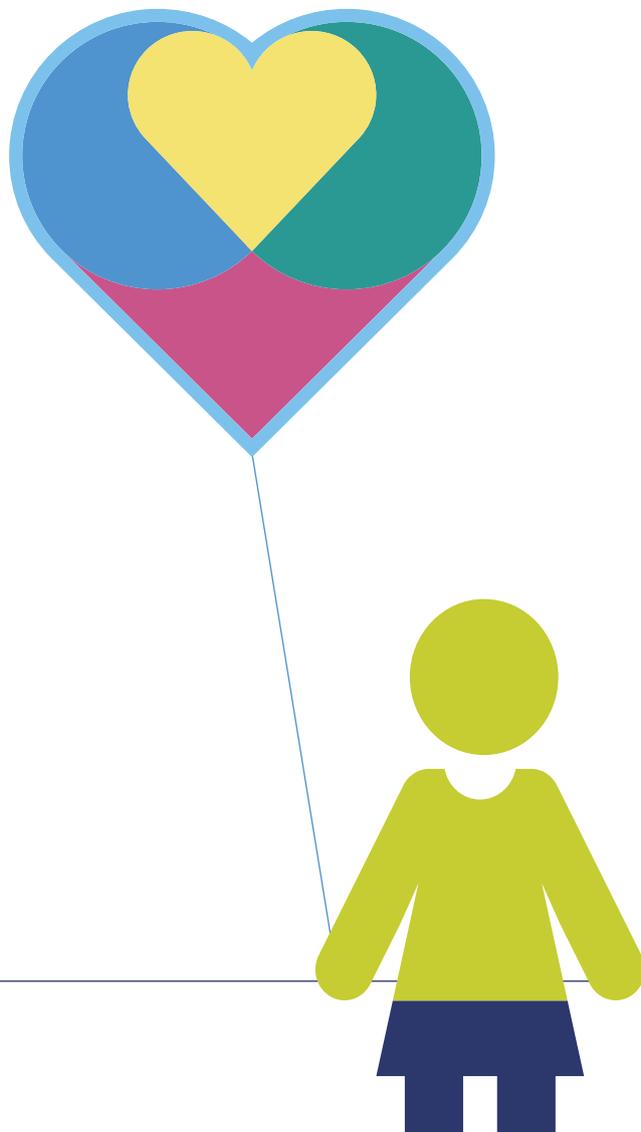
- implementing an internal participation review, recommendations and action plan
- committing to the national leadership pledge to work towards becoming a fully trauma-informed and responsive organisation
- launching our Promise learning and development framework
- contributing to the development and delivery of our Professional Development Award for regulated inspectors
- cross-directorate collaboration to nurture and enable a workforce community of passionate and determined Promise Keepers.



Our staff are Keeping the Promise by building Promise thinking and practical approaches into everyday work, which is helping to embed children's rights further into everyday business. The Promise understands the importance of early and sustained support for families to keep children living with their families, where this is possible.

As expressed in our Corporate Plan (2022–2025), our vision is that babies, children and young people, and their families, with experience of care will:

- experience high quality compassionate care and support
- have improved outcomes (enabled by the services which support them)
- feel that their rights have been protected, respected and realised.



# BAIRNS' HOOSE - THE WORK TO PRODUCE NATIONAL STANDARDS



The Barnahus or 'Children's House' originated in Scandinavia and is commonplace across Europe and North America.

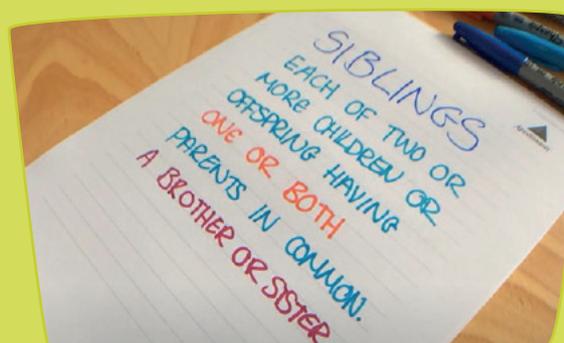
It is a radically different way of supporting children who have experienced or witnessed abuse from what we currently do in Scotland. In the Barnahus, all professionals supporting children work together 'under one roof', with its 'four rooms' of protection, health, recovery and justice. This means that children can tell the public authorities what happened to them in a child-friendly and supportive place, with consistent therapeutic support available throughout to them and their family members including siblings.

The Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland were commissioned by Scottish Government to develop Bairns' Hoose Standards for Scotland. We were pleased these were published in May 2023. The Bairns' Hoose will be the key vehicle for upholding the rights of children and families to compassionate and effective intervention and support in line with the UNCRC and Promise principles.



## Case study: Stand Up for Siblings

We are a proud member of the Stand Up for Siblings partnership, a Scotland-wide initiative to improve and change legislation, policy, and practice. It is about making sure children and young people live with their siblings, where it is appropriate to do so, and sustain strong and positive lifelong relationships with them. We were involved in the development of **Staying together and connected: getting it right for sisters and brothers: national practice guidance** (2021). Our young inspection volunteers made a big contribution to this award-winning work and made a film about promoting and supporting sibling relationships for children and young people who experience care.



# YOUNG INSPECTION VOLUNTEERS - WE CANNOT DO WHAT WE DO, WITHOUT THEM!

There are currently 13 young inspection volunteers, who are aged between 18-28 years and some might be care experienced. We aim to involve more of our young people in a range of work. This was a key feature of the [Corporate Parenting Plan \(2021–2023\)](#).

The young inspection volunteers visit children and young people's services when we inspect and they support a range of our strategic scrutiny activities, including speaking with senior managers in partnerships. They support many other areas in the everyday work of the organisation. This includes staff recruitment, resource and policy development, national consultations, organisational workforce development and facilitation of development workshops.

Young inspection volunteers are highly valued by the Care Inspectorate and are recognised by other scrutiny bodies across the United Kingdom. They consistently receive excellent feedback from services, third sector organisations and our staff.

On joining the Care Inspectorate, the young inspection volunteers spend five days together learning what happens during an inspection and take part in training before going out to a service. Four times a year, they come back together to share their learning and develop their skills further, such as preparing for inspection, communication, and interviewing. This has helped to build the confidence of the young inspection volunteers to listen effectively to children and young people, helping to improve the services that support them.

During the last three years the young inspection volunteers have participated in a total of eight strategic inspections and 17 regulatory inspections. They have informed improvements in the methodology of many areas including scrutiny and regulation, complaints and communications.

Young inspection volunteers have co-designed multiple resources and films including ['Welcome to your vote'](#), ['Text to Complain'](#) and ['Young Inspectors'](#). They have fully participated in staff recruitment at all levels and co-designed and facilitated training for peers, sharing their knowledge and experiences while building their skills in presenting to others.

They also participate in staff provider development days and webinars such as Welcome to your vote (Electoral Commission and Aberlour), Professional Development Award event with inspectors on the Promise and Participation, Children and Young People Annual General Meeting (AGM), and the webinar for children and young people care providers. Throughout 2022 and 2023, they participated in the organisational review of its participation practice, providing clear recommendations. In the last

12 months, the young inspection volunteers have been part of outreach to other young people, co-facilitating a presentation to the Guardianships Service's Young People's Voices group.

The young inspection volunteers are involved in many different development opportunities including:

- participating in the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (STAF) Summit, LGBTQI Training, Wellbeing Awareness, disability information session with LUNA, a children's charity, the Community Achievement Award, and the Promise Development Day; and
- one of our most experienced volunteers attending the Kings Garden party at Holyrood Palace in 2023, recognising her outstanding commitment to our work.

The young inspection volunteers regularly speak about their experiences of volunteering with us.

*"It's so important to ensure care experienced young people know their rights and get the support they need to use their voice."  
Raysa*

*"I am glad that we went to meet them, they were so welcoming...they are such wonderful advocates for unaccompanied young people."  
Shannon*

*"I really enjoyed being part of the animation group and voiceover work especially as this is the first time my son has been involved in a piece of work I have done."  
Toni*

# OUR PROGRESS

## Case study: Professional Development Award: young inspection volunteers supporting the learning and development of Care Inspectorate staff

In December 2022, three of our young inspection volunteers attended the in-person Professional Development Accreditation (PDA) event which focused on the importance of applying the Lundy model framework to ensure good participation practice. They presented their knowledge from the perspective of inspection work to a range of professionals working on their PDA from early learning and childcare, adults, children and young people and justice.

This event provided the opportunity for our young people to share their experiences, build confidence and to learn about various challenges and opportunities to good participation in many different settings further developing their knowledge and expertise.

"I felt proud to share our work and skills with inspectors, and I feel I learned lots too. It was a great event."

*Bronny, young inspection volunteer*

"Although I was nervous with so many inspectors in one room, I am glad I took part, not all professionals know how to help young people to open up."

*Rosa, young inspection volunteer*



# THE CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN (2021-2023) SET SIX COMMITMENTS

1

We will strive to meet the needs of our children and young people and promote their rights.

2

We will listen to our care experienced young people and we will learn how their experiences of the “care system” can best shape our approach to scrutiny, engagement and improvement to help improve the lives of others.

3

We will continue to inspect different services and partnerships and report on how well they work together. We will help services share what works well and learn from what needs to improve, to help make sure that our young people get the right support at the right time.

4

When care experienced young people make a complaint about the care they receive, we will take that complaint seriously and we will respond in a timely, thorough and proportionate way. We will always provide feedback to the person who made the complaint in a way that they will understand.

5

We will improve opportunities for care experienced young people to develop skills, experience, and confidence to achieve their employment and career ambitions.

6

We will work with other corporate parents to make sure that together we can do our best for our young people.

## Commitment 1: We will strive to meet the needs of our children and young people and promote their rights.

As a scrutiny and improvement organisation, we have supported care services across Scotland to embed a rights-based approach which reflects the Health and Social Care Standards. We have worked with colleagues in our involvement, registration, methodology teams and those working on our corporate parenting activities to make sure that children's rights and participation are included in current and new practices.

In May 2023, the organisation created one overarching group for children's rights and corporate parenting. This was done to ensure all work is closely aligned and protecting and upholding children's rights.

New inspection frameworks that are based on the experiences of our children and young people have been produced. These frameworks help care services to identify good practice and areas for improvement. Our [Children's Rights report 2020-2023](#) showcases the progress to respecting, protecting and upholding children's rights as a scrutiny and quality improvement organisation.

As we express in [our corporate plan](#), we want children and young people, and their families, with experience of care to:

- experience high quality compassionate care and support
- have improved outcomes (from the services which support them)
- feel that their rights have been respected and realised.

During 2022, we developed a Promise learning and development framework to further strengthen our children's workforce to feel Promise skilled and confident in their practice. The framework includes contemporary learning on topics such as:

- child development
- participation and engagement
- [trauma informed and responsive practice](#)
- children's rights
- the language of care
- permanence (providing stability, including secure and nurturing relationships)
- equalities
- corporate parenting.

This framework was launched to our workforce in June 2023 working with external organisations to ensure the design included children’s rights-based approaches. This includes working with groups such as:

- Promise Scotland team
- Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)
- National corporate parenting network led by Who Cares? Scotland
- UNCRC Implementation Board.

As part of our Promise contribution we worked with the SSSC to review our joint [Safer Recruitment](#) guidance to:

- better reflect young people’s rights
- reduce discrimination towards people with care experience and people with convictions
- increase the take up of positive action to recruit more young people.

As part of Promise Change Programme One, we are also contributing to the SSSC’s review of the Codes of Practice and the Scottish Government’s Common Core principles so that they align with the:

- UNCRC
- Health and Social Care Standards
- The Promise.

We worked with Scottish Government and the Scottish Human Rights Commission to ensure that the rights of children and young people with care experience are reflected across the [Scottish National Action Plan](#) (SNAP). This is reflected in specific actions for duty bearers. In August 2023, an involvement coordinator ran a development session for the young inspection volunteers to inform them of the Scottish Government’s consultation on the new Human Rights bill, supporting them as rights holders to participate in society and shape decision making.

The principle of SNAP is reflected through our work in the following ways:

- reduce the levels of restraint experienced by children and young people
- enhance support for young carers
- improve children and young people’s experience of the justice system.



## Case study: Welcome to your vote webinar and social media

Working alongside the Electoral Commission, Aberlour and the Children's and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland, we held a webinar for providers on understanding the challenges around voting faced by care experienced young people. During the process of preparing the content for the webinar we highlighted to the Electoral Commission the importance of providing specific support and guidance to care experienced young people. Working with Aberlour and the Children's Commissioner we identified the main ways in which providers could bridge the gaps in support that might prevent some care experienced young people from voting. The webinar was attended by many care service providers, Care Inspectorate inspectors, and partner organisations.

Following the webinar, we worked with Aberlour's care experienced participation workers and our young inspection volunteers over three online meetings to identify some of the myths around the upcoming local council elections.

The young people then co-produced a [short animation](#) which provided key messages to the care community about their right to vote and how to connect to support through the electoral commission's online guide to voting. We were able to involve all the young people who identified the key messages in the voice work this helped to keep the messages authentic and engaging. The animation was shared widely over social media channels.



*"It's so important to ensure care experienced young people know their rights and get the support they need to use their voice."  
Raysa, young inspection volunteer*

## Commitment 2 - We will listen to our care experienced young people and we will learn how their experiences of the “care system” can best shape our approach to scrutiny, engagement and improvement to help improve the lives of others.

During 2022 and 2023, Who Cares? Scotland, delivered a programme of corporate parenting training, attended by 142 attendees at four separate sessions for our staff. This forms an integrated part of our Promise learning and development framework.

In March 2023, young people from the Learning to Understand Needs and Abilities (LUNA) project, led webinars for our staff on the needs and experiences of children with disabilities.

We continue to revise our methodology for both our strategic and regulated inspections of services for children and young people, to increase the focus on their experiences and outcomes, with new quality frameworks published for:

- [Care homes for children and young people and school care accommodation \(special residential schools\)](#)
- [Fostering, adoption and adult placement services](#)
- [Mainstream boarding school and school hostels](#)
- [Secure accommodation services](#)
- [A Quality Framework for day care of children, childminding and school-aged childcare](#)
- [Quality Framework for Children in need of Care and Protection](#)

All the Care Inspectorate’s quality frameworks are built around key questions. Key Question 7: How well do we support children’s wellbeing, was developed for some services to put more focus and emphasis on the quality of relationships experienced by children, not the processes surrounding their care, making it Promise focused. Since April 2022, we have only been inspecting using Key Question 7 for these services:

- care homes for children and young people and school care accommodation (special residential schools)
- mainstream boarding schools and school hostels
- secure accommodation services.

These key questions help to:

- produce a more proportionate regulatory footprint, allowing services space to focus on recovery and development as we transition out of the pandemic
- prioritise the quality of relationships experienced by children, not the “process surrounding their care” as advised by The Promise
- support engagement with more children and young people, through visiting more services.

*"We really valued the inspection team's focus on safety and the relationships we have with young people. Creating safety and building trusting relationships are defining principles of therapeutic trauma informed practice. The use of Key Question 7 meant that these were thoroughly explored, and both our staff and young people welcomed this. The inspection managed to balance scrutiny with an acknowledgement of the real-life challenges faced when creating safety, relationships, and upholding children's rights."*

Kibble, specialist centre, that provides a range of integrated services to support children and young people

**Commitment 3 - We will continue to inspect different services and partnerships and report on how well they work together. We will help services share what works well and learn from what needs to improve, to help make sure that our young people get the right support at the right time.**

## The Promise

The Promise messages highlight attention to children living in poverty, those with protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act (2010) and marginalised communities who are often not heard. In our Promise development work, we promote this aspect.

The Promise work weaves across the work of several Care Inspectorate directorates, teams and groups, promoting rights and enabling practice development in our work. Examples include children's inspection teams in early years and childcare, children's regulated care settings and strategic inspections of local authority children's services, our children's rights and corporate parenting group and subgroups and our policy review group.

The young inspection volunteers have been supported by our communications team to record videos of key findings from strategic inspections, which are shared on our [You Tube channel](#) with children, young people and their families. This makes it easier for children, young people, and their families to learn about and understand the findings from joint strategic inspections.

In 2022, young inspection volunteers met over several online meetings and worked together to write a script for the Key Question 7 animation. By using their own voices, young inspection volunteers ensured the messages were warm and relatable, encouraging those who were unhappy about the quality of care they received to get in touch by sending a text message. The [animation](#) was shared throughout our providers and social media networks. This video demonstrates The Promise in action – by making sure that our young people's voices authentically influence our work. [Posters](#) are also displayed in services.



## Case study: social workers feedback during inspections

The children and young people's inspection team undertook research on the response rates from social workers during inspections of care homes. We currently send out questionnaires to social workers prior to an inspection taking place and found that the level of response was very poor. Over the last three years we have spent time talking to social workers and their managers about their role with us. As corporate parents, inspectors and social workers have a common aim and focus. This common aim has not always been understood and what we have learned is that we need to do more to tell social workers about our role and how we can jointly contribute to improving outcomes for their young people.

As well as improving our links with social workers, we also want them to have a clear understanding of how to communicate with us. By telling them more about what we do, and what is helpful for us, we aim to bring in more information out with inspections about the outcomes for young people and the performance of services. This intelligence will be critical to us being more targeted in the way we work. Overall, there is a commitment to better joined up working and better alliances being built with our corporate parent partners. Those that work with us don't always have a good understanding of our critical role, but it is imperative that they understand this as a corporate parent.

## **Commitment 4 - When one of our young people makes a complaint about the care they receive, we will take that complaint seriously and we will respond in a timely, thorough and proportionate way. We will always provide feedback to the person who made the complaint in a way that they will understand.**

### **A more accessible complaints process**

If children and young people feel they are not receiving good care, it is important we provide easy ways for them to tell us. The 'Text to Complain' service was launched in early 2021. This resulted in a service where children and young people can now text if they are not happy about their care. The young inspection volunteers co-produced a short [video](#) about the text to complain service and designed a [poster](#) that is available to print. All complaints received through the 'text to complain' service were logged and passed to the triage team. This is not the only way children and young people can raise a complaint. There is also an online form, email address and telephone number.

### **Ensuring inspection reports are more accessible**

During the last three years, young inspection volunteers have worked with strategic inspectors to produce questions and activities to involve children and young people in our inspection work.

Pre-pandemic, our young inspection volunteers were central to the review of the existing complaints system and the subsequent identification of a text to complain service for children and young people. They worked alongside staff within the complaints team to consider what was not working well for children and young people. The young inspection volunteers considered the following three areas as important to children and young people:

- accessibility
- confidentiality
- rapid response.

## Commitment 5 - We will improve opportunities for our young people to develop skills, experience, and confidence to achieve their employment and career ambitions.

We have made significant progress to enhance the opportunities for care experienced individuals (including the young inspection volunteers, current Care Inspectorate staff who are care experienced and those seeking employment with the organisation) to develop skills, experience, and confidence to achieve their employment and career ambitions.

### Family firm

In December 2022, the process to develop a '[family firm](#)' concept was started. This is supporting children and young people up to age 18 and can extend to age 26 and beyond for individuals who are care experienced. This will enable more access to employment, education, experiences, and volunteering opportunities across the organisation.

### Recruitment and retention

The young inspection volunteers have continued to take an active part in interview panels for senior roles. They support our staff induction and ensures that the voices of our people are heard from the very start of everyone's career with the Care Inspectorate.

- In 2022, two new board members were recruited; both individuals are care experienced and respectively have extensive professional experience of local/national practice and policy delivery in this area.
- In Autumn 2023, we put in place a guaranteed interview for care experienced individuals and trauma informed interview processes.
- In Autumn 2023, we started an organisational staff group for employees who are care experienced.

### Age

The young inspection volunteers stated that they do not wish to relinquish their roles at the age of 26 as that they still have a lot to give to the Care Inspectorate.

- We took action to support our young inspection volunteers who transition from their current roles to access other opportunities and make use of services and supports by removing the 26-age barrier for them to volunteer with the Care Inspectorate.

## Commitment 6 - We will work with other corporate parents to make sure that together we can do our best for our young people.



### Case study: Young People's Voices Group: The Scottish Guardianship Service (2022)

We visited the Young People's Voice's Group to talk about what we do and shared the opportunity for their members to apply to volunteer with us.

Our involvement advisor and Shannon, a young inspection volunteer, co-presented the group and they learned about how they, as a collective, are working to have their voices heard about the care unaccompanied children. (Unaccompanied children are children who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.)

*"I am glad that we went to meet them, they were so welcoming...they are such wonderful advocates for unaccompanied young people."*

Shannon, young inspection volunteer

The group shared their recent report on their own experiences of care and individually talked about the support they had received from the guardianship, social workers, and key workers.

Shannon was able to talk about her experiences of care and her passion for working to ensure children's and young people's voices are heard on inspection. Shannon also explained the role of young inspection volunteers and described some of the practicalities and training involved. This meeting was an important first step in involving unaccompanied young people in our work.

We are an active member of:

- Scotland's Collaborative Corporate Parenting network, led by Who Cares? Scotland
- the Continuing Care Implementation collaborative, led by the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS)
- National Implementation Group for (Brothers and Sisters) Staying Together and Connected
- the [Scottish Care Leavers Covenant](#). The Covenant supports corporate parents to bridge the gap between policy and practice, create consistency across Scotland and to help deliver the changes to address the disadvantages that often result from our young people's care experiences.

The Care Inspectorate also signed the pledge to become a [Friend of Who Cares? Scotland](#). This means that we have made a commitment to work with others to raise awareness and to be involved in ending discrimination that our young people face.

Over the last three years we have continued to:

- undertake our joint strategic inspections of services for children in need of care and protection, along with scrutiny partners, who are also corporate parents
- meet with other corporate parent lead officers, such as the Scottish Social Services Council and Disclosure Scotland to learn, reflect and share good practice.

Through our involvement in these forums and memberships, we can share learning and opportunities for our young people; include the young inspection volunteers in delivering presentations and workshop sessions; and support the planning, content, and delivery of events.

## Next steps 2024–2026

We are proud of what has been achieved over the last three years and will never be complacent to support 'our' children and young people. These next steps are informing the consultation process and development of the 2024–2026 Corporate Parenting Plan.

## The Promise

Continue:

- to prioritise and resource the implementation of the recommendations from an internal participation review
- working with the National Trauma Training Programme
- to enhance our staff Promise learning and development framework
- to learn from our scrutiny and regulation work about risks for children in relation to discrimination, survival, and development. We will achieve this by listening carefully to the views of children, their families, and carers
- to increase our collaboration with partners and with other corporate parents.

## Early learning and childcare

Continue:

- to prioritise protection and trauma responsive practice.

# NEXT STEPS

## Children and young people (regulated services)

- Review our joint guidance for inspectors on the use of restraint with Education Scotland.
- Launch a revised version of the restrictive practices' notification.
- Develop reporting from the restrictive practices' notification, to offer improved comparative data, which will be carried out with support from our intelligence team
- Continue to engage with the 'reimagining secure care' work being undertaken by Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ), around the development of the Children (Care and Justice) Bill.
- Develop more visual and accessible ways of both giving and seeking young people's feedback.
- Plan to use inspection reports to demonstrate strong areas of Promise practice in services.
- Increase (gradually) the involvement of young inspection volunteers across our inspections in 2024 onwards.
- Improving children and young people's involvement in inspection feedback and incorporate that into inspection methodology.

## Childrens services (strategic)

- To develop methods to engage with children and young people through the use of direct engagement, surveys, and the inclusion of young inspection volunteers.
- To ensure we are doing all that we can to hear the voices of children and young people including 'seldom heard voices'.

## Quality improvement, participation and equalities

- To ensure the participation of children and young people is meaningful and purposeful.
- To deliver the organisational Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion strategy (2022 – 2025).

## Want to know more?

We hope you have found this report about our corporate parenting progress useful. If you would like to find out more about what the group does, or about our young inspection volunteers, please email us at [getinvolved@careinspectorate.com](mailto:getinvolved@careinspectorate.com) or visit our [website](#).

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