

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
YOUNG PEOPLES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 September 2018

Looked After Children Strategy 2018-2021

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the Looked after Children's Strategy 2018-2021 entitled "*We care because you matter*".
- 1.2 The document sets out the Local Authorities Strategy as to how it will support and care for looked after children and care leavers and how we will know how well we are doing. The ethos at the centre of this strategy is that as corporate parents we are aspirational for our looked after children and care leavers.
- 1.3 The Looked after Children's Strategy and the "promise" to young people are attached.
- 1.4 The Scrutiny Committee has been asked to review the contents of Looked after Children's Strategy 2018-2021 before it is considered at the Executive meeting on Tuesday 25 September 2018. Full council will be asked to agree to the strategy on the 14th November 2018.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The existing Looked after Children Strategy was refreshed on an interim basis in May 2018, prior to the anticipated Local Authority Children's Services inspection, to ensure that it reflected the changes to legislation that were introduced through the Children and Social Work Act 2017 (CSWA 2017). However it was always recognised that the document required significant revision as did the pledge to North Yorkshire's looked after children and care leavers.
- 2.2 The corporate parenting principles introduced through the legislation, focus on seven key areas for the local authority which extend beyond children's services functions to that of the district councils. These principles are at the heart of the looked after children strategy. There is a local authority officer and a County Councillor lead in respect of each of the principles, ensuring steps to improve the outcomes for this group of young people are being progressed.
- 2.3 The corporate parenting principles are intended to secure a better approach to fulfilling existing functions in relation to looked after children and care leavers and for the local authority to facilitate as far as possible secure, nurturing and positive experiences for these young people. The seven corporate parenting principles are:

- To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people.
- To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
- To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.
- To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
- To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people.
- For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
- To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

- 2.4 A looked after children strategy group consisting of the local authority and key agencies have met for a number of years in order to drive improvements for looked after children and care leavers through a joined up strategy. This group has recently extended its membership and currently, one of the seven district councils is represented from Harrogate Borough Council operating under the new title of Multi Agency looked after children partnership (MALAP) with the likelihood being that the partnership will become a corporate parenting partnership group. The MALAP has had oversight of the revision of the document and have approved the content of the new strategy.
- 2.5 These partners meet on a quarterly basis where progress against the corporate parenting responsibilities is provided. This feedback is also provided at the Looked after children's members group. The MALAP has invited members of the Young People's Council (YPC) to attend future meetings which will be convened on an evening.
- 2.6 The district councils have been briefed with regard to the contents of the CSWA 2017, and are aware that the role of corporate parenting is a shared one. It is anticipated that in moving the MALAP to localities on a rotational basis will enable the district councils to be fully involved.
- 2.7 A discussion has taken place with colleagues from Ryedale District Council where there was a commitment to offer leisure passes to the cohort of looked after children and care leavers. Ryedale colleagues were briefed on the lac strategy, the promise and showed a clear aspiration to support the local authority. Ongoing discussion with all of the districts is planned with an opportunity to discuss what can be offered within their role of corporate parenting responsibilities.
- 2.8 The looked after children strategy describes who our children in care, what children and young people told us as the strategy was developed, a copy of our "promise" to young people, an explanation as to the role of corporate parenting, and sets out how support will be provided. The governance arrangements for

corporate parenting are described setting out what we will do to support looked after children and care leavers. The strategy then goes on to describe how well we are doing and what success will look like. The voice of the child is at the forefront of this strategy which has been built on what young people have told us.

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Young people have been heavily involved in the redesign of the new strategy and for the first time we have been able to secure images of our own young people within the strategy. Their voice has been a critical part of the development of the strategy and the Young People's Council (YPC) , looked after children and care leavers have been pivotal to its development alongside the support of the head teacher for the virtual school for looked after children. The YPC has been fully briefed on the Strategy and are in full support of the approach taken.
- 3.2 "Our Promise to young people" has been developed and is contained within the body of the document. This was built following consultation using a snap survey and through the C Day in Scarborough. This will replace the previous "pledge" to looked after children and care leavers and captures their views and wishes well.
- 3.3 Following council approval four launch events will take place with colleagues from the districts of both the Looked after children strategy, the core offer and the "promise" with young people who live in the local area. It is planned that four events will take place in Harrogate, Selby, Scarborough Whitby and Ryedale and in Hambleton and Richmond. These events will be coordinated by children's services and the District Councils.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The committee is invited to convey its views on the refreshed strategy to the Executive so that these can be taken into account when the Executive meets on Tuesday 25 September.

STUART CARLTON
CORPORATE DIRECTOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICE

County Hall,
NORTHALLERTON

Report compiled by: Vicky Metheringham

Head of looked after children, permanence and leaving care

13 September 2018
Background documents – Nil



North Yorkshire
County Council

'We Care Because You Matter'

Looked after Children
and Care Leavers Strategy
2018 – 2021

Enter



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1. Foreword

As set out in our Children and Young People's Plan (Young and Yorkshire 2) in North Yorkshire we want all children to live happy, healthy lives and achieve the best possible outcomes they can. Whilst most children and young people are able to do this, we know that at times families require support to overcome difficulties and challenging circumstances. When this happens we work with families, offering targeted interventions to support them to stay together. Looking after and protecting children and young people is one of the most important jobs we do, if it is not safe for a child to stay at home the local authority will step in to give them the care, support and stability that they deserve.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 defines in law our responsibility as corporate parents to secure nurturing and positive experiences for the children we look after, whilst extending the support we offer to our care leavers. As corporate parents, we take our duties toward Looked after Children and care leavers very seriously and are committed to providing the best possible support to meet their individual needs. Depending on the needs of the child and taking their views and opinions into account we offer this through a range of different settings including in family arrangements, foster care placements and children's homes.

We understand that each child in our care is an individual and our approach reflects this. We track and support a child's progress through school, look after their health and wellbeing and strive to make sure they have the same opportunities as their friends and peers. To do this, we listen to the voice of the child, for example, children in our care have told us that stability is very important to them. We therefore work to ensure that moves are kept to a minimum and, when they are necessary decisions about the placement will be made in the best interests of the child. We want children and young people to establish trust based relationships with their social worker, we therefore strive to keep changes in worker to a minimum. We are ambitious for every child in our care and will encourage them to achieve their full potential, from overcoming challenges to progress well in education, learning and training.

We are delighted that our strategy has been developed with contributions from both Looked after Children and Care Leavers. Care leavers can face a wide variety of challenges, they need to know that support is available while they make the transition from being in our care to independent living. This strategy is not just about informing Looked after Children and Care Leavers on how we will support them, but also informs our partners on our ambitions for the children and young people.

This underpins collaborative working as we continue to achieve the best possible outcomes for our children and young people. With this strategy providing the foundations, we will continue to be aspirational as a corporate parent, encouraging our children and young people to achieve the best they can and their achievements will continue to be celebrated.



County Councillor Janet Sanderson
Executive Member for Children's Services



Stuart Carlton
Corporate Director of Children
and Young People's Service

2.0 Who are 'Looked after Children & Care leavers?'

A child (under 18 years old) is legally 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she:

'Is provided with accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 from the local authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours; is subject to a care order; or is subject to a placement order. This also includes disabled children who are provided with accommodation under Section 20. Looked after children (LAC) can be placed with foster carers, in residential homes, with parents or other relatives (under certain circumstances).'

(Full legal definition attached as appendix a)

Definition of a Care Leaver:

'A care leaver is broadly defined as a person aged between 16 and 25, who has been looked after by a local authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, is either currently in care or has left care and has been looked after for a period of time after their 16th birthday.'



3.0 What Children and Young People told us

To ensure that this strategy reflects the needs of our looked after children and care leavers, a series of consultation events took place with them which has developed into our 2018 “promise”.

I want you to trust me and I want to trust you

To cheer me on

To treat me as an individual

Support me in the same way as you would if I was your child

I want you to believe in me

I want you to feel comfortable and confident being my corporate parent

To have high aspirations for me and push me to be the best that I can

I want you to give me away on my wedding day and stay in touch with me forever

4.0 Promise to Young People

We are committed and dedicated to ensuring that our Looked after Children and Care Leavers can rely on us to provide the same stability, life chances and opportunities that all good parents provide for their children. To do this, it is important they know what they can expect from us and our Promise to Young People makes this clear. As part of our commitment to Children and Young People we will support children in our care to:

- Make sure they have the health appointments they need and supported to attend
- Have access to information needed so they can make decisions about their health
- Share information on foster carers and introduce them before they move in
- Pursue hobbies and interests
- Share quality time with adults
- Be listened to by adults and copies of any notes taken shared with them

- To see people who are important to them
- Help them to achieve their goals
- Have the information needed to make a decision about college, university or work
- Have a safe and secure home
- Explore who is important to them, and the extent of the child's support networks through the use of the lifelong links programme.

The page below sets out clearly our promise to all children & young people in North Yorkshire, or who live outside of North Yorkshire but receive a service from us. This helps inform children, young people and their families of the support they can expect to receive and helps us ensure service delivery meets the standards that we would expect. It is important to remember that these are our promises to Looked after Children are in addition to these, and not instead of.

Our promise to you



We will...

- Aim to support you in the same way as if you were our own child
- Be there when you need us
- Work with you to help you achieve your goals and overcome any difficulties
- Work with you to be successful if you choose an apprenticeship role
- Listen to you
- Help you manage your physical and mental well being
- Help you to be safe
- Help you to be involved in activities you are interested in
- Help you to believe in yourself
- Provide adults in your lives who inspire you
- Reduce the possibility of being bullied
- Communicate with you in the best way for you (i.e. text, facebook etc)
- Support you in education, careers and apprenticeships
- Aim to respect your wishes
- Help you enjoy leisure activities
- Try to make sure there is always someone to talk to
- Teach you independent living skills and provide practical support if you need it
- Support you when you live independently and keep in touch when you need us
- Be approachable
- Help you get good accommodation
- Have high aspirations for you
- Push you to be the best you can be.

And...

- We won't use your personal information without your permission
- You can decide who you want to talk to
- We will tell you what is happening
- We will be patient and understanding and cheer you on!
- We will try not to ask too many questions and make you have too many meetings with different people.

5.0 About the Strategy

This strategy has been developed with help from young people and is for all children and young people in our care and care leavers setting out how we plan to further improve the support we offer and is underpinned by our vision that:

'All children and young people in our care will have a stable and loving home, with the same life chances as their friends. We will give them the support they need to help them achieve the best they possibly can. When they leave care, they will have the support and skills they need to be able to live independently.'

Alongside our corporate parenting principles, there are a number of priorities that underpin this strategy and the services that both ourselves and our partners provide and offer to the children and young people in our care. These are core to how we operate as a partnership, providing the level of care and support that we would expect for our own children.

- **Children and young people are best cared for wherever possible with their birth or extended family.** We know that if a child can be cared for by natural or extended family they have a network of support that will last their entire lives, at a level which any authority would struggle to achieve.
- **Aim high and have high expectations.** We recognise that children who are looked after by a local authority can fall behind their peers in terms of education and future outcomes. We believe that if we can support and encourage children in our care to aim high and have high expectations of themselves then they will be more likely to have the same life chances as their peers.
- **Retaining our parenting responsibility extends beyond when a young person leaves care.** We recognise that we need to aim high in helping children and young people overcome gaps in their early care and support their transition to adulthood and independence.
- **All partner agency planning, service delivery, and evaluation will start with the needs of the children and young people, rather than the services available.**

We recognise that children enter the care system for different reasons and with different needs. We will therefore ensure that provision is bespoke, builds upon universal and preventative services, challenges traditional assumptions, and is differentiated according to the child's individual needs regardless of organisational structures and boundaries to ensure positive outcomes for all Looked after Children.

- **The views, opinions, needs and priorities of Looked after Children and carers inform everything we do.** We will work with Looked after Children, along with their parents and carers to assist us in shaping how we manage and organise the assessment, planning, resources and services that support and care for them while ensuring that this would not compromise the safeguarding of children.
- **We deliver high quality, innovative services and will work in a transformational way to ensure they become even better.** We will identify what we need to do to make a real and lasting change for all children and young people who are in care. We will draw upon national research and best practice whilst responding effectively to changes in national guidelines and statutory duties.
- **Children and young people develop positive and stable relationships with those who support them.** We do this through our commitment to the recruitment and retention of a knowledgeable, solution focused workforce, using targeted training to grow a multiple disciplinary skill base.

We know all children are unique and have individual needs and circumstances. We work closely with children in our care to understand individual needs and ensure that their 'Voice' is truly heard. This strategy reflects our priorities for children and young people as set out in Young and Yorkshire 2 against 3 key areas as outlined below which help to inform how we plan service delivery as corporate parents, both alone and with partners:

Our Priorities:

1. Empower families to be resilient and economically secure
2. Protect those at risk of harm
3. Encourage fun, happiness and enjoyment of life

Happy

4. Promote health and wellbeing through positive choices
5. Improve social, emotional and mental health and resilience
6. Reduce health inequalities

Healthy

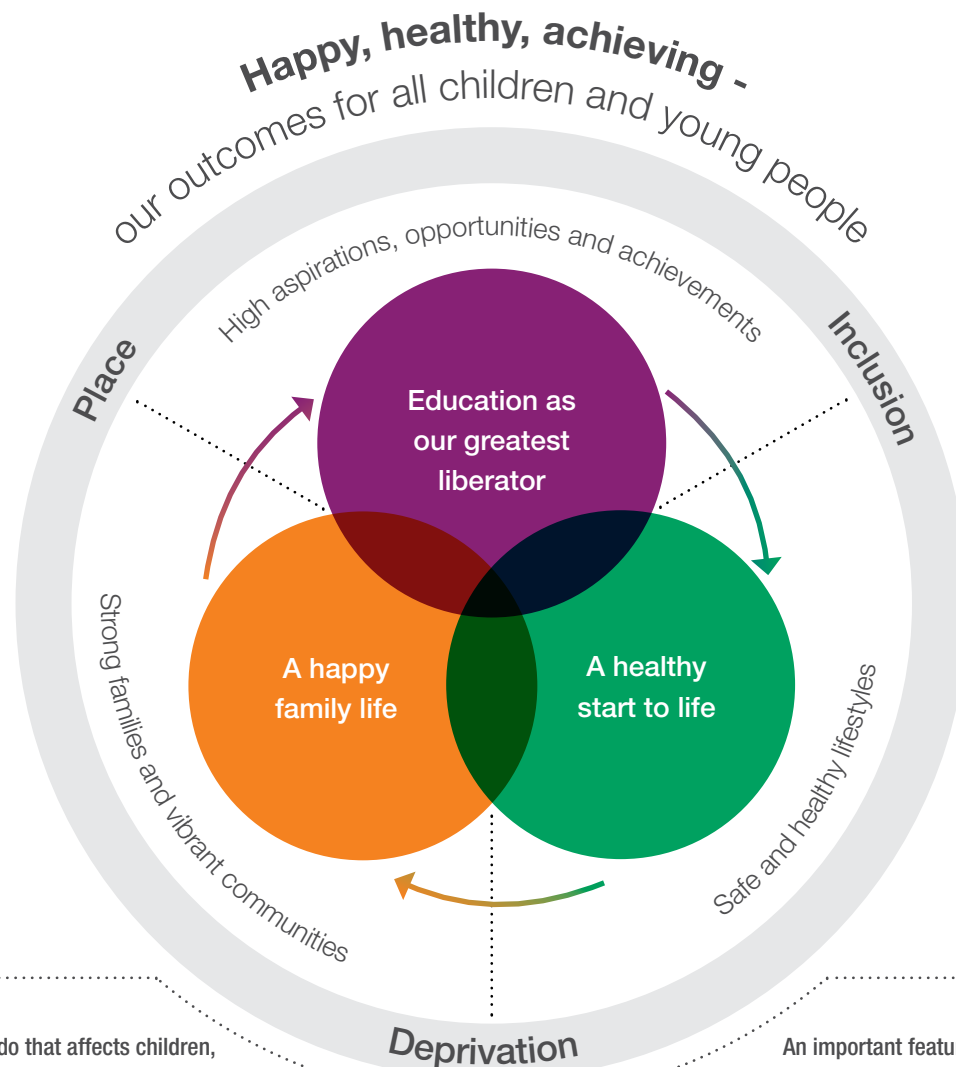
7. Ensure children have great early years
8. Raise achievement and progress for all
9. Equip young people for life and work in a strong North Yorkshire economy

Achieving

Our key considerations

We have agreed that our overall approach to everything we do that affects children, young people, their carers and their families will be guided by the following principles:

- Celebrate diversity
- Listen and involve
- Think family and community
- Work creatively and innovatively in close partnership
- Prevent problems beginning or escalating



How we'll know if we've made a difference:

Happy

- Fewer children in need of help and protection by social care services
- Higher average household income with fewer children living in poverty

Healthy

- More children and young people with high resilience scores
- More young people making healthy behaviour choices

Achieving

- More children achieve a good level of development in their early years
- More young people in education, employment or training
- Increase in progress 8 and attainment 8 at KS4

Our approach in all that we do...

An important feature of Young and Yorkshire 2 is that we will challenge ourselves to take into account the following three key considerations at all times, especially where they raise uncomfortable questions or issues that we must work together to address:

Place - We will tackle differences based on where people grow up

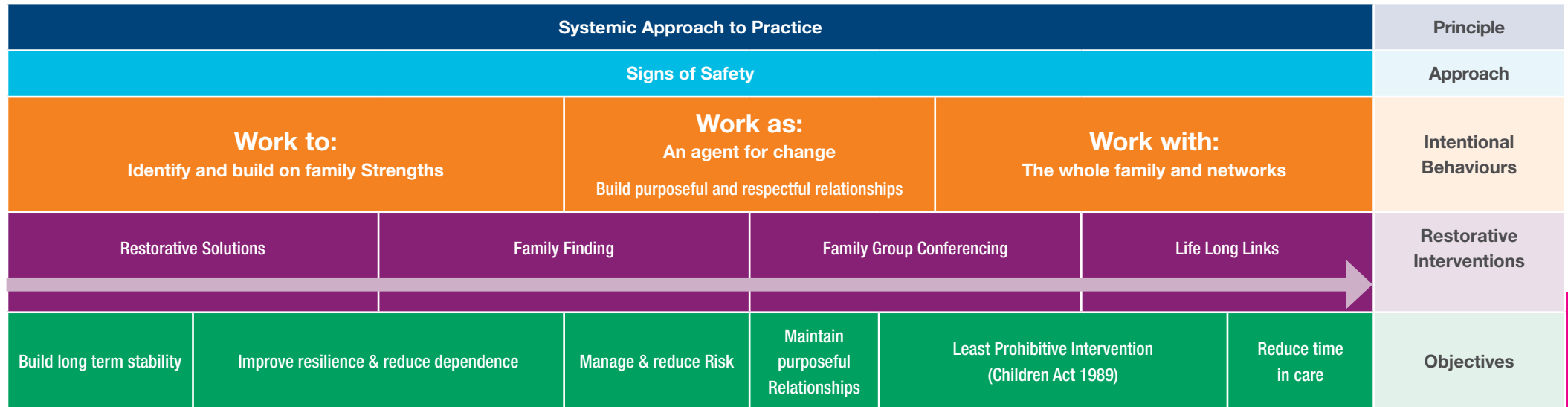
Inclusion - We will recognise and meet the needs of diverse groups of children and young people

Deprivation - We will confront material deprivation to improve life chances

6.0 How will we provide support?

The diagram below lays out the model of practice we follow in North Yorkshire when providing the support children, young people and their families need to overcome challenging and difficult circumstances. We believe that stable relationships should be established between workers, children, young people and their families, working alongside them and always look for strengths within the work that is done.

This model of practice acts as the foundation upon which we develop individual plans to ensure the children and young people we support achieve the best possible outcomes.



7.0 Children and Social Work Act 2017 - Corporate Parenting Principles

When a child becomes looked after, North Yorkshire County Council becomes the 'Corporate Parent'. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out 7 Corporate Parenting Principles to achieve the best possible outcomes for Looked after Children and Care Leavers. When our children move to adulthood, we follow the principles to ensure we provide our care leavers with the support and stability that any child would expect as they prepare to leave the family home.

To act in the best interest, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people.

To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.

To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.

To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the Local Authority and its relevant partners.

To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people.

For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships, and education or work

To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

'We Care Because You Matter'

As an authority and corporate parent, we realise we cannot secure the best for Looked after Children and care leavers alone. In order to secure the best possible outcomes for our young people, and to encourage them to 'aim high', we need the support of other agencies. This includes working in partnership with colleagues from the National Health Service, Police, voluntary sector and our 7 district councils. The district councils operating within North Yorkshire provide key services that, as a corporate parent, are invaluable to NYCC. These services are detailed in the diagram below, and the council will continue to work closely with the districts to ensure children in our care continue to benefit from these local level services.



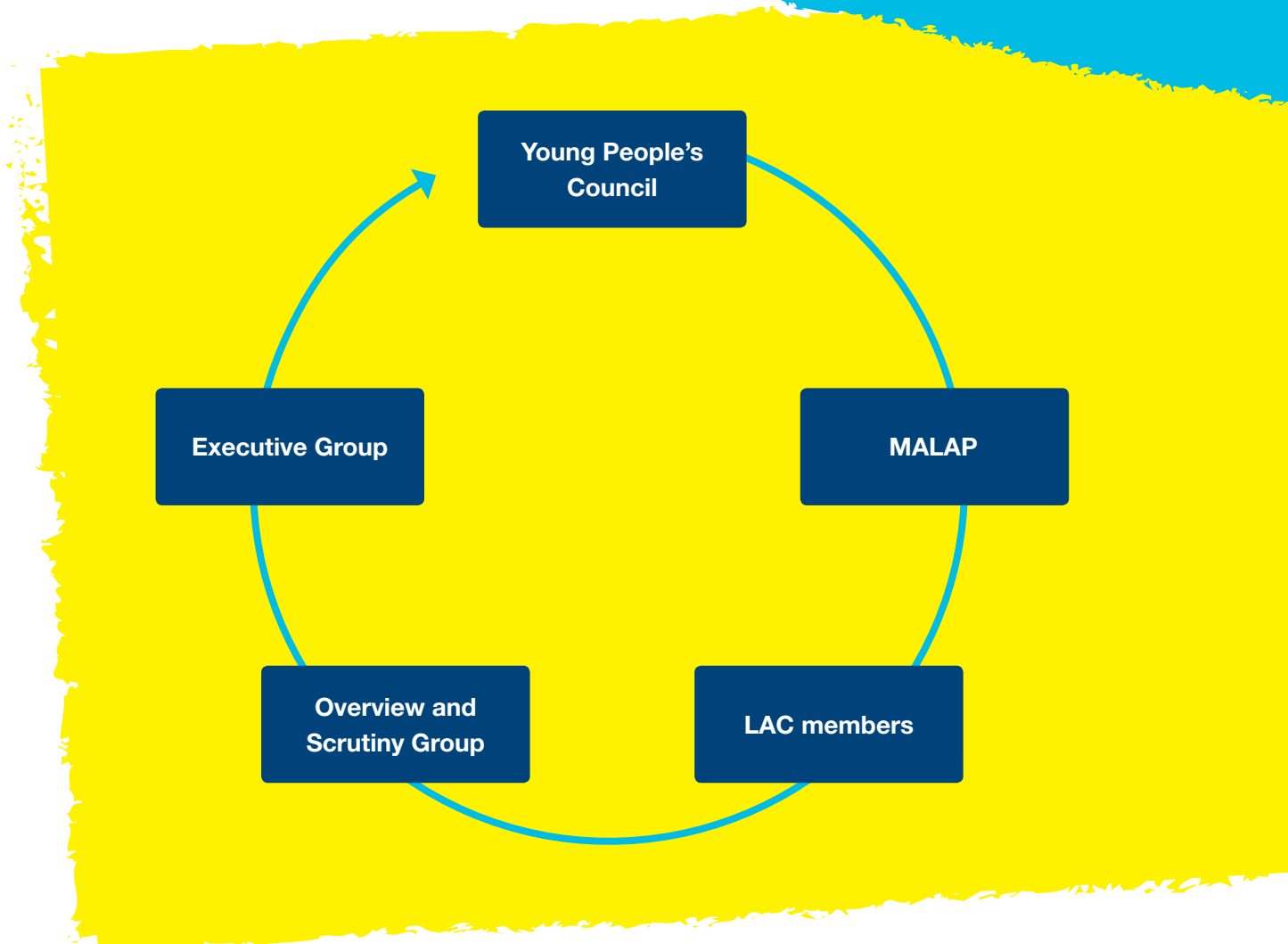
In North Yorkshire we embrace the Corporate Parenting principles as a culture. We encourage children to express their views and demonstrate that we have heard them when we are developing their plans and individual outcomes to help them reach their goals. We recognise that all children and young people are very different, this diversity is embraced to help shape them for their future. We have high aspirations for our children and young people to lead, happy healthy and full lives and achieve the best they can.

Putting the child/young person at the centre of everything we do ensures that decision are made in their best interests, with long-term outcomes at the heart, based directly on the unique and individual needs of the child. Our child-centred approach means all agencies involved have high-aspirations for every child and provide the support they would want their own children to receive.



8.0 Governance Arrangements for Corporate Parenting

Our governance arrangements underpinning Corporate Parenting have a clear focus on the voice of 'care experienced' young people through the Young People's Council, with effective scrutiny from the 'Overview and Scrutiny Group' and 'Executive Group'. We can be confident that the decisions made by the 'Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership' (MALAP) and our 'Corporate Parenting Board' (also known as our 'LAC members group') have the child's best interests at heart, adhere to our corporate parenting principles and represent the vision we have for children and young people in our care and our care leavers.



8.1 Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP) & our 'Corporate Parenting Board'

North Yorkshire has well established governance arrangements in place to ensure our Looked after Children and Care Leavers receive the best support for their individual needs. The review of progress in delivering this strategy will be managed through our Multi Agency Looked after Partnership (MALAP) who meet on a quarterly basis as a forum where lead agencies update on progress and issues and keep the strategy live and up to date. If any issues cannot be resolved by the MALAP, they will be escalated to LAC members. This group is our 'Corporate Parenting Board' and have clear oversight of all of the work undertaken with our Looked after Children and Care Leavers. The group receives quarterly reports and updates on performance and outcomes achieved and will make decisions on action to be taken to improve practice outcomes. Each Quarter the activity against the Corporate Parenting Principles will be updated to ensure we have oversight and continue to meet our responsibilities as a partnership. LAC members will escalate any areas of concern up to the Executive Group or the Overview and Scrutiny Group to allow them to be fully considered and inform action planning to improve performance.

The elected members who make up our LAC members group undertake this key role, acting as a critical friend on behalf of the children we care for to ensure that the support provided effectively meets their needs. Having a separate board to challenge us on behalf of our Looked after Children ensures that we set high standards, ambitions and goals for them. We know that the children in our care face huge challenges if they are to overcome their disadvantages; therefore services need to go over and above to help and promote them.

To ensure our 'Corporate Parenting Principles' run through our governance arrangements and under-pin the decisions that we make, each of our 7 principles have a MALAP lead and a lead member (from our Corporate Parenting Board) who have chief responsibility over ensuring that their portfolio & principle is effectively upheld and continues to improve the support we provide to our children and care leavers.



The role of the Corporate parenting board

'The critical friend is a powerful idea, perhaps because it contains an inherent tension. Friends bring a high degree of unconditional positive regard. Critics are, at first sight at least, conditional, negative and intolerant of failure. Perhaps the critical friend comes closest to what might be regarded as true friendship – a successful marrying of unconditional support and unconditional critique' (John McBeath, Cambridge University)

'Is it good enough for my child?'

As a corporate parent we take an interest in the wellbeing, safety, and experience of looked after children, as if they were our own child. This critical question can be asked of all services, all interventions and all decisions made for the children and young people of North Yorkshire.

Looked after children should aspire to have the same life experiences, rewards and ambitions as anyone would want for their own child or own family member. This means that every looked after child should be listened to, cared for appropriately, and ensuring that their life chances are maximised to succeed to each child's potential and beyond. Asking this critical question sets the standard for our ambitions and goals for looked after children. For many reasons looked after children face huge challenges if they are to overcome their disadvantages; therefore services need to go over and above to help and promote them.

If we are able to walk in the shoes of children and families who use our services, we can truly empathise and get a better understanding of their experiences. This enables us to have greater clarity on their needs and on service provision to meet those needs. This is the vital role of the corporate parent. Cllr Sanderson

8.2 Virtual School

North Yorkshire's Virtual School has high expectations and helps the children in our care and leaving our care to achieve the very best. Although the pupils attend many different schools and settings, we operate as if they all attend one school. We have high aspirations for their education, employment and training and we expect schools and settings to provide a quality learning environment which meets their needs and encourages and develops their ambition. We encourage, support and stick with children through thick and thin and work to provide stability in all areas. Virtual School North Yorkshire monitor, support and challenge academic achievements and attainment in partnership with schools, carers and social workers. We hold schools to account for the impact of the provision on pupil's progress through the education system using Personal Education Plans and monitoring the use of Pupil Premium plus.

The Virtual School is committed to ensure that the Voice of the child will be reflected in our planning to effectively support all pupils and their views are sought at every Personal Education Plan meeting. Virtual School hold many extra-curricular activities throughout the year and encourage pupils to attend the YPC events.

The Virtual School Resource Panel encourages and supports positive activities and celebrates achievements. Some examples of the positive activities fund include surfing, horse riding, musical instruments and sports equipment. Celebrating achievements includes vouchers for educational and non-educational achievements, including Year 11 awards and the annual Graduation Ceremony for young people completing Year 11, post 16 and degree courses. Educational projects include, Rainbow Readers, Imagination Library and online learning. We provide 1-1 tuition when needed and other bespoke education packages. We have a Governing body called the Management Committee and, like any school, we provide reports on the work of the school and the progress and achievements of the children.

8.3 The Young People's Council (YPC)

As Corporate Parents, we know that we cannot make effective decisions for young people and provide the support they need without their help, thoughts and views. The Young People's Council (YPC) is a youth voice group for care experienced young people in North Yorkshire. The YPC meets every month to discuss what improvements need to be made to the support young people receive, particularly those in care or are care leavers.

The YPC meets and invites the Director of Children's Services, senior managers and County Councillors to let them know what the YPC is doing. In collaboration with the LAC members groups, the YPC ensures that young people are consulted on matters which affect their lives.

The Young People's Council (YPC) meet with all the members of the LAC members group every six months. The purpose of the meeting is to maintain positive relationships, update on work plans and agree how they can support each other on delivering their outcomes. In addition to meeting all the LAC members, the YPC will have more frequent contact with the members who are taking on additional responsibilities looking at the seven corporate parenting principles, ensuring that the YPC and other care experienced young people have a voice to influence the planning in these areas. The YPC also invite members of the group to the Consultation Days they organise, this enables the LAC members to meet with more care experienced young people.

The Young People's Council is regularly involved in decision making at various levels and hold decision makers to account. With the direct purpose of representing North Yorkshire's 'care experienced' children and young people, the YPC has had a clear and effective impact on the support that our children receive. The below outlines some of the areas where the Young People's Council has had a direct impact/influence:

YPC Activities	Outcomes
Create & manage a 'You Said We Did' document to get updates from decision makers on progress made on issues raised	Hold's decision makers to account and ensures that action is taken on issues raised by YPC
Raised issues around young people having too many changes of workers	The service changed to ensure that young people keep the same worker
Designed a young person's profile to be completed by young people for their new foster carer	Profile is now used by the service to enable young people to describe themselves, in their own words.
Told the Corporate Director of Children & Young People's Services what they wanted to be included in the Young & Yorkshire Plan	The views of the YPC were incorporated in the Y&Y plan, which will influence strategies and policies over the coming years.
A younger YPC has been established that meets weekly and are consulted on issues every month	Ensure the views of younger Looked after Children are reflected in the views expressed by the YPC
Consulted with the DfE to write a training programme for trainee Social Workers & worked with department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of York to develop a training package to help social workers and Personal Advisers increase their understanding of young people's mental health and wellbeing	The voice & influence of young people is impacting practice and policy at a wide regional and national level.
Since 2017, the YPC have run consultation activities with the children who come with their carers to the fostering conference	More looked after children are able to have a voice, and their issues are fed into the YPC.
The YPC meet with LAC members twice a year to inform them what they have been doing and how the service Looked after Children receive can be improved	The YPC and LAC members will work together on priority areas
A member of the YPC sat on the No Wrong Door project Board	Care experienced young people's perspective influenced the direction of the new and innovative No Wrong Door service.
The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service consulted the YPC on what makes a good IRO	The IRO service took on-board what young people said and changed their support accordingly

9.0 What we will do

To ensure we, as corporate parents, continue to provide the best possible support we can for the children and young people that we care for, it is important that this strategy fully addresses the needs of our children and young people. In order to ensure we continue to deliver, we have selected a Council Member who will each take responsibility for delivering 1 of the 7 Corporate Parenting principles. The below outlines what we will deliver against each principle:

Health and well being To act in the best interest, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people.	Youth voice To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings	Youth participation To take into account of the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people	Working together To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care planning will consider physical and mental health issues • All children and young people will be registered with a GP • We will support children and young people to understand the importance of a health assessment. • Initial and review health assessments will be completed in a timely way • All children and young people will be offered the opportunity to have the recommended immunisations • We will ensure all children and young people know how to access their health records • We will promote access to mental health services • We will ensure appropriate and timely psychological and therapeutic support is provided to those children and young people who need it • We will use health evidence to inform our commissioned services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You said (We did); To act as a conduit between the Children and Young Peoples Council and LAC members/scrutiny • We will strive to seek the views of hard to reach young people • We will ensure that children and young people participate in their LAC reviews • We will ensure interpreters are available • We will ensure care leavers are engaged in their pathway planning and reviews • We will ensure we consider the work of the Young People's Council • Our independent reviewing officers will meet our children and young people • We will enable access to advocacy • Children and young people will have a copy of their care plan through the My plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will consider children's views on their placement • The homes where children are placed will be friendly and welcoming • We will review evidence that we are acting on the voice of children and young people • We will ensure that service user feedback feeds in to the Young People's Council and track how this is used • Children and young people will be engaged in the commissioning of services • We will ensure we learn from complaints received from young people • We will meet on a regular basis with children in residential units to ensure we understand their views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster carers will be supported and have access to the services they need • We will work in collaboration with the 7 District Councils & partners including Police, Health and CAMHS • The local offer will include relevant services • Transitions across the service will be in the best interests of the child • Partner agencies will be involved in the care planning and reviews • We will track social work caseloads to ensure they are manageable so they can spend the time needed with the child • Unaccompanied asylum seekers will be provided with service to meet their health, well being and cultural needs

Ambition for children To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people	Safeguarding and permanence For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work	Transitions To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure that our interventions achieve the best possible outcome for children and young people • We will support children to achieve their aspirations • We will understand the rate of school exclusions for looked after children and what alternative provision is provided • All children will have a timely, quality Personal Education Plan • All children with additional needs will have an Education and Health Care plan (EHCP) • We will review performance to understand how the educational results of looked after children compare with Looked After Children Nationally and all children. • We will work to keep young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) low • We will celebrate young people's achievements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people will be kept safe in their placement • Contact arrangements will be made to maintain relationships with family members • We will ensure there is sufficient placement numbers • We will keep placement moves to a minimum • Children on the edge of care will be supported to stay at home if it is safe to do so • Children and young people will return home when it is safe to do so • Sibling groups will be reviewed as individuals to ensure their needs are met when being placed • Permanence Planning will be timely and plans will be in place by the 2nd LAC review • Children will move into SGO, CAO and adoptive placements in a timely way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have an effective staying put framework • Young people will only move to independence when they are ready and have essential life skills, budgeting, benefits awareness and cooking • We will ensure that individual needs are taken into account and the needs of young parents are supported through transitions. • We will ensure young people know what their entitlements are • We will ensure young people know what to do/ who to contact in an emergency situation • The leaving care caseworkers will keep in touch with young people when they are no longer on our care • We will empower looked after children and care leavers to make positive choices by tackling risky behaviours that may be associated with the transition to adulthood. • We will ensure all care leavers understand and have sight of our offer to them.

10. What success will look like

For us to be effective in improving both the support we provide and the outcomes for our young people, it is important to know how what success will look like. Below provides the foundation for how we will measure our success in the delivery of outcomes and outlines the outcomes we want to achieve for our looked after children. It is against these outcomes that we will measure how we perform in delivering against our pledges

Outcome 1 Improved Physical Health More Children will : Have an up to date health assessment Be registered with a GP Be registered with a dentist Will be up to date with all of their immunisations Have improved timeliness of Health Assessments	Outcome 2 Improved Mental Health Children will : Be supported through evidence based interventions to maximise their emotional and mental well being Have improved Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire results Where appropriate children and young people will be referred to specialist mental health services and receive treatment in a timely manner Joined up multui agency working will drive relationship based approaches.	Outcome 3 Placement stability and safe homes We will: Where appropriate seek to place children and young people within 20 miles of their home address Where appropriate seek to place children and young people within long term in house provision Ensure children have improved placement stability Our discharge planning will secure improved outcomes for care leavers Make timely decisions regarding permanence and the use of SGO and CAO to be used where appropriate	Outcome 4 Attainment Children will: Be supported to achieve their full potential Have a Personal Education plan which will be aspirational and ambitious Have their progress at school monitored and every child will receive tailored support from a specialist advisor	Outcome 5 Care Leavers We will: Support care leavers to find safe, stable and suitable places to live, making sure they are as well prepared as they can we will keep in touch with them until they are 25 and have high aspirations for them Support care leavers to remain with their long term foster families after they have left the care of the Local Authority if that is in the best interests of the young person Support care leavers to become independent adults by helping to secure high quality education, training or employment opportunities
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Best Possible Outcome for Children and Young People

11.0 How well are we supporting the children in our care?

As part of our commitment as Corporate Parents, we are committed to working with our partners to improving outcomes for the children we care for. Examples of our success in supporting improved outcomes includes:

- All our Looked after Children have an allocated Social Worker and all our Care Leavers have an allocated Leaving Care Case Worker. Our Care Leavers are being supported through the innovative 'No Wrong Door' approach that provides systemic and therapeutic support to Care Leavers.
- Over 60% of children in our care are placed within 20 miles of the family home, allowing them to maintain relationships with friends and relatives, providing stability and a sense of community.
- Over 70% of children who have been in our care for longer than two and a half years have remained in the same placement for two years or more. This is better than national and our statistical neighbour's performance.

- Our performance relating to Adoption compares well with the other authorities in our new Regional Adoption Agency, One Adoption North & Humber, and we provide more post-adoption support than any of the other authorities within this group.
- A lower proportion of Looked after Children are excluded from schools in North Yorkshire (10.7%) than nationally (11.4%).
- Almost all Care Leavers in North Yorkshire stay in-touch with the local authority and are living in 'suitable' accommodation
- Care Leavers in North Yorkshire are more likely to be in Education, Employment or Training than Care Leavers national average or our in statistical neighbour authorities.

To further improve outcomes for the children we look after, there are some obstacles we need to overcome:

- The educational outcomes of some of the children in our care are not as good as we would hope.
- We are seeing a higher proportion of children than we would like having 3 or more placements in a 12 month period and some child have unplanned placement endings.
- Although virtually every child has a completed Health Assessment, to ensure we understand the health needs of the children in our care, we need to ensure that they are completed in a timely manner.
- We know a high number of adolescents are entering care, and ensuring effective placement and discharge planning will be key to securing improved outcomes for these young people.
- The average Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire score in North Yorkshire is higher than national, indicating challenging, emotional and mental health needs amongst the children in our care.

12. How well are we doing?

Below we have set out some of the key measures we will use to monitor progress and performance against the key outcomes listed above. This information will be fed into our MALAP and Corporate Parenting Board on a quarterly basis in the performance reports they receive. This will, in-turn, help inform decisions that are being made and help us focus our efforts where they are needed whilst providing an opportunity for the critical questions to be asked.

Outcome	Measure	2017/18 Out-turn	18/19 Target	Latest National Average	Latest Statistical Neighbour Average	
Outcome 1 - Improved Physical Health	% of eligible children with an up-to-date Health Assessment	84.1%	90%	90.0%	87.7%	
	% of eligible children with an up-to-date Dental Check	87.5%	90%	87.5%	73.1%	
	% of LAC with up-to-date Immunisations	89.3%	90%	-	-	
Outcome 2 - Improved Mental Health	% of LAC with up-to-date Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaires	88.4%	90%	68.0%	76.5%	
	Average Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire Score	15	-	14	15	
Outcome 3 - Placements	% of LAC placed within 20 miles of the family home	60.2%	65%	-	-	
	% of LAC with 3 or more placements in the past 12 months	12.1%	8.6%	10.0%	12.4%	
	% of LAC in care for two and a half years or more remaining in the same placement for more than 2 years	71.5%	78%	70.0%	70.4%	
Outcome 4 - Attainment*	% of eligible LAC pupils with an up-to-date PEP	83.1%	-	-	-	
	% of KS1 LAC pupils achieving expected standard in:	Reading	14%	-	51%	-
		Writing	14%	-	39%	-
		Maths	14%	-	46%	-
		Reading, Writing & Maths	14%	-	34%	-
	% of KS2 LAC pupils achieving the expected standard in:	Reading	43%	-	45%	42.6%
		Writing	31.2%	-	47%	50.9%
		Maths	31.2%	-	32%	41.7%
		Reading, Writing & Maths	31.2%	37.5%	32%	35.2%
	% of KS4 LAC pupils (GSCE) who achieve:	5 A*-C (grade 4-9) including English & Maths	18.8%	-	15%	-
		A*-C (grade 5-9) in English & Maths	12.5%	25%	7.40%	-
		Average Key Stage 4 Progress 8 Score	-1.3	-	-1.2	-
Average Key Stage 4 Attainment 8 Score		15	-	19.3	-	
Outcome 5 - Care Leavers	% of Care Leavers in Employment, Training, or Education	64.8%	70%	50%	53%	
	% of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation	94.2%	90%	84%	86.5%	
	% of Care Leavers in Staying Put Placements	17%	-	-	-	
	% of Care Leavers 'in-touch' with the local authority	98.9%	100%	92%	94.5%	

13. Appendix A

A child (under 18 years old) is legally ‘looked after’ by a local authority if he or she:

‘Is provided with accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 from the local authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours; is subject to a care order; or is subject to a placement order. This also includes disabled children who are provided with accommodation under Section 20. Looked after children (LAC) can be placed with foster carers, in residential homes, with parents or other relatives (under certain circumstances)’.

Children (under 18) may be ‘looked after’ by local authorities under a number of legal arrangements:

- All children who are subject to a care order (Children Act 1989, section 31), interim care order (Children Act 1989, section 38) or emergency protection order (Children Act 1989, section 44);
 - Children who are subject to a criminal Youth Rehabilitation Order with a Local Authority Residence Requirement or Intensive Fostering Requirement (S1 Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008);
 - Children who have appeared in court and have been bailed to reside where the local authority directs - and are being provided with a local authority funded placement;
 - Children who have been bailed by a criminal court with a Condition to Reside where directed by the local authority, but only where the local authority then directs the child to reside in a funded placement;
 - Children who have been refused bail by a criminal court and remanded to local authority accommodation;
 - Children who have been refused bail by a criminal court and remanded to Youth Detention Accommodation;
- s102 Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012;
 - Children who are subject to a secure accommodation order;
 - Children who are subject to a secure accommodation order made under s25 Children Act 1989;
 - If the child was Looked After at the time of sentence under s20 Children Act 1989 or s92 Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, this LAC episode will usually close upon entry to custody; However if the child was already subject to a Care Order at the time of sentence, then they will remain Looked After through their period of detention;
 - Where a child is charged with an offence by the Police but refused bail the police must transfer the child to Local Authority Accommodation until their appearance in court. The local authority must accept the transfer and arrange suitable accommodation and care.

Contact us

W: www.northyorks.gov.uk E: customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk

T: **01609 780 780** (Monday to Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm closed weekends and bank holidays)

North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD

You can request this information in another language or format at

www.northyorks.gov.uk/accessibility



Our promise to you

We will...

- Aim to support you in the same way as if you were our own child
- Be there when you need us
- Work with you to help you achieve your goals and overcome any difficulties
- Listen to you
- Help you keep healthy
- Help you to be safe
- Help you to be involved in activities you are interested in
- Help you to believe in yourself
- Provide adults in your lives who inspire you
- Make sure you know what to do if you are being bullied and make sure it doesn't keep happening
- Communicate with you in the best way for you (i.e. text, facebook etc)
- Support you in education, careers and apprenticeships
- Aim to respect your wishes
- Help you enjoy leisure activities
- Have high aspirations for you
- Try to make sure there is always someone to talk to
- Teach you independent living skills and provide practical support if you need it
- Support you to live more independently and keep in touch when you need us
- Be approachable
- Help you get good accommodation
- Push you to be the best you can be.

And...

- We won't use your personal information without your permission
- You can decide who you want to talk to
- We will tell you what is happening
- We will be patient and understanding and cheer you on!
- We will try not to ask too many questions and make you have too many meetings with different people.