

Cared 4 and Care Leavers Committee Update – Key Takeaways & Messages from the Corporate Parenting Executive Board

Overview

The most recent Corporate Parenting Executive Board meeting took place on 5th February 2025, with a refreshed terms of reference and updated attendee list. These meetings will now occur every two months to track progress and guide future initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for cared-for children and care leavers in Cheshire East.

The meeting covered key performance data, emerging challenges, and next steps for improvement. Discussions focused on education, placement stability, and support for care leavers, highlighting both progress and areas requiring further attention. There was a particular focus on increasing opportunities for young people, ensuring stability in placements, and improving access to key services. A series of three workstreams and associated action plans are being established to address these priorities, with Care Leaver Ambassadors playing a crucial role in shaping and delivering these action plans.

Ahead of the next Corporate Parenting Executive Board, work will continue to develop the newly established workstreams, refine performance monitoring scorecards, and strengthen our understanding of key issues highlighted at the Board.

Workstreams Overview

Following feedback from young people, care leavers, and Care Leaver Ambassadors, three key areas have been identified, leading to the creation of dedicated workstreams. Each workstream has a specific focus, a budget for development and implementation, and an assigned Care Leaver Ambassador to ensure young people's perspectives remain at the heart of decision-making.

1. **Good Homes for All** – Chaired by CEC Head of Housing, Karen Carsberg. Focused on improving housing support for care leavers, ensuring they have access to appropriate services, including emergency support for urgent issues such as problems with utilities.
2. **Good Health and Well-being** – Chaired by Designated Nurse Safeguarding and Children in Care - Cheshire East Place NHS, Nicola Wycherly. Addressing concerns such as increased drug and alcohol use among care leavers, with a focus on prevention, early intervention, and access to health services.
3. **Good Education and Skills** – chaired by CEC Director of Education, Strong Start and Integration - Claire Williamson. Aiming to improve educational outcomes, create more training and work experience opportunities, and expand accessible pathways into employment, including apprenticeships within local organisations.

Key Data Exceptions & Next Steps

The meeting reviewed two key scorecards – the Virtual School Scorecard and the Corporate Parenting Scorecard – to assess service performance and outcomes for children and young people.

Scorecard	Key Highlights / Risks	Next Steps
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Virtual School Scorecard	PEP Completion: 86% of PEPs rated as good or outstanding, with a successful pilot improving child feedback.	Continue monitoring PEP quality and ensure consistency across all cases.
	NEET Data: Increase in care leavers classified as NEET, rising from 14 to 18, highlighting the need for more support.	Link with the Good Education and Skills workstream to develop more opportunities outside mainstream education.
	Attendance: Primary school attendance remains higher than secondary, but attendance below 50% is a concern.	A detailed report on low attendance reasons will be provided at the next meeting.
	Early Years Provision: 60% of children are not accessing early years provision, impacting school readiness.	Further analysis on barriers to early years provision will be presented at the next update.
Corporate Parenting Scorecard	Placement with Parents: 37 children placed with parents in Q3 24/25, identified as a significant risk.	Review the Placement with Parents policy to assess associated risks and long-term impact.
	Children Living Out of Borough: Out-of-borough placements continue to be a challenge.	A geographic map will be created to understand the extent of out-of-borough placements.
	Placement Moves: 107 placement moves for 91 individuals in a quarter, highlighting instability for some children.	Conduct a deep dive into multiple placement moves to assess impacts and identify solutions.
	Long-Term Matched Placements: Need to confirm if Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) and adoption placements improve education.	Investigate whether these placements positively impact educational outcomes and report findings.
	Reviews for Children in Care: 3.14% of children in care for over one month have not had a review in the last six months.	Investigate why the 10% target for reviews was not met and explore solutions to improve oversight.
	Secure/Remand Placements: Concerns raised over children in secure/remand placements.	Future reports will include data on secure/remand placements to improve tracking and oversight.

Key Next Steps for the next Corporate Parenting Executive Board (1st April)

1. Initial scoping meetings for each workstream to define membership, set priorities, and align actions with ongoing work.
2. Refinement of scorecards to ensure they capture relevant data and track progress against priority areas.
3. Further data analysis to better understand the needs and experiences of cared-for children, particularly regarding placement stability and educational outcomes.