



# EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2021-2023

**Created By The East Lothian Champions Board**



**WHO  
CARES?**  
SCOTLAND

**EQUALITY | RESPECT | LOVE**





## **EAST Lothian COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2021-2023**

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# **Introduction**

**The East Lothian Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2023 was created in partnership with the East Lothian Champions Board. The East Lothian Champions Board is a group of care experienced young people that come together to speak up about their experiences of care and what changes need to be made to make the care system better for everyone.**

**The East Lothian Champions Board wanted to create a plan that is easy to read and understand. This is so all care experienced children and young people know the important changes East Lothian corporate parents are about to deliver.**

**East Lothian Champions Board, 2021**

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**“We will unite together to look at the priorities for change. We will invest time and resources to produce results and deliver on promises. We will listen to each other when things go wrong and accept no excuses for lack of progression towards our goals.”**

**Corporate Parenting Board Pledge ,2021**



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## EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2021-2023



# The What?

This page looks at what we mean by care experience, what a corporate parent is and what they must do.

## WHAT IS CARE?

There are different ways a child or young person can be care experienced and there are different settings in which care is delivered these are shown below.



## WHAT IS A CORPORATE PARENT?

Corporate parents have many of the same roles as parents do. They must give every looked after child and young person the same opportunities that those who aren't care experienced receive.

A corporate parent is an individual or organisation that has special responsibilities for looked after children and care experienced young people. Corporate parenting responsibilities extend to all looked after children and care experienced young people from birth until they turn 26.

## WHAT ARE CORPORATE PARENTING DUTIES?

Corporate parents legally have to make sure that all care experienced children and young people are offered a chance to be involved in activities that make them feel happy and fulfilled.

This means all corporate parents have to prepare a report (called a corporate parenting plan), every 3 years on how they will improve the lives of care experienced children and young people to the big decision makers, the Scottish government.



## EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2021-2023

# The Why?

This page looks at why corporate parenting plans are so important. The plan set out actions corporate parents will make over the next few years.

## WHY DO WE NEED A CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN?

We know care experienced children and young people can achieve brilliant successes but some care experienced children and young people face real challenges. These challenges means it can impact all areas of their lives, compared to their non care experienced peers.

## The Numbers

Almost half of 5-17 year old's in care were diagnosed with a mental health disorder  
( Office of national statistics, 2004)

33% of young people in prison and 31% of adult prisoners self reported as having been  
previously in care (Scottish prison service, 2016)

73% of care experienced young people leave school aged 16 or under ( Scottish  
government, 2016)

35% of care experienced young people received 1 or more qualifications at SCQF level  
5 compared to 85% of the rest of the school population ( Scottish government, 2016)

Care experienced young people are 8 times more likely to be excluded from school ( Scottish  
government, 2016)

However, with the right support from corporate parents more care experienced children and young people can achieve their full potential.





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# The Who?

This page looks at who all the corporate parents are.

## WHO WAS INVOLVED?

The corporate parenting plan was shaped by the East Lothian Champions board. The champions board (champs) is a group of young people who have experience of care. The champs have used their voice to help shape important areas of the corporate parenting plan. These important areas are called priorities and also been shaped by local and Scotland wide information (research and evidence).

The corporate parenting board is made up of people who are involved in the lives of care experienced children and young people. They work for the police, health, education, social work and other areas too.



# The Vision

Corporate parents have heard that care experienced children, young people and their families can feel judged because they have been involved with the care system. Over the next few years the corporate parents will try to stop children and their families feeling this way by challenging this negative view. We will ensure we will celebrate the successes and achievements of our care experienced children and young people.

This plan is ambitious and we want to ensure we keep The Promise. The Promise was the result of the Independent Care Review which ran a listening project from 2017 - 2020 and listened to people who experienced the care system including young people, families and carers as well as professionals who work in the care system. The Promise is a report with recommendations to change the system for the better and East Lothian council will do everything we can to accept the recommendations and make change.



## EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2021-2023

### Health and Wellbeing

This area looks at how we can improve the physical health and wellbeing of our care experienced children and young people.

#### Aspiration

Care experienced children and young people to be able to access wellbeing services when they need it, at the right time. This should be a needs led, rather than age led approach.

Care experienced children and young people should enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle.

### The Plan

Continue to develop our mental wellbeing services for children and young people this includes: One person in school you can contact for mental health support.



Look at earlier services to promote good mental health and wellbeing. Increase understanding of mental health and wellbeing that lead to an improvement with support.

Develop a forum for 18-26 year old care experienced young people which promotes health and wellbeing.



We will reduce the impact of further trauma as we support young people recovering from adverse events.

Develop a service that will support children and young people with caring responsibilities including those who are also care experienced.



Support care experienced young people to engage in and increase activity levels to support physical and mental health and wellbeing.

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### Keeping Loved Ones Together

This areas focus is on the importance of relationship and giving families the right support at the right time.

#### Aspiration

Children and young people will remain in regular contact with their family they consider important, in particular their brothers and sisters and parents, where this is safe. All decisions should be fully explained to children and young people so that they know if they cannot see people regularly, why not.

Family time should be flexible and individualised. Focus should be on shared experiences.

### The Plan

We will redesign family support within East Lothian, help families earlier and when needed to keep families together, wherever possible. This involves a more family-based approach - working with families to identify the right support needed.

Continue to grow both the numbers of kinship carers and the support offered to them.

Continue to increase the number of foster carers, with a focus on foster carers who can care for brothers and sisters together and understand the importance of these relationships, including the focus on the importance of family time.

Embed the principles of The Promise into the workforce.



We will make sure the principles from The Promise are clearly understood and practiced by everyone who works with children and young people, including foster carers.

Ensure brothers and sisters are placed together unless it is not safe to do so.

Ensure the voice of brothers and sisters are listened to at Children's Hearing.





## EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2021-2023

### Housing and Accommodation

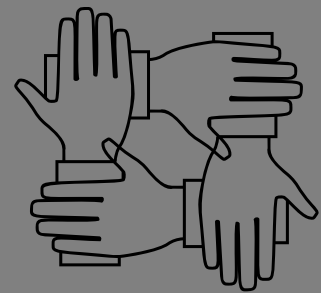
This area looks at improving housing options for care experienced young people.

#### Aspiration

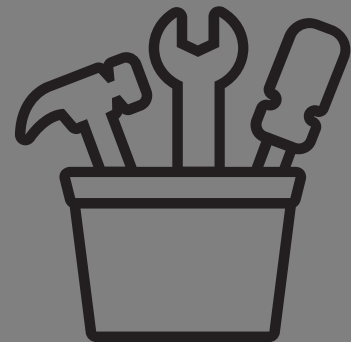
All care experienced young people to have appropriate accommodation – no young person will be placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation. All care experienced children and young people feel safe where they live, and have a sense of home and belonging.

### The Plan

Corporate parents will work together to ensure care experienced young people have access to a safe home, and to ensure no care experienced young person finds themselves homeless.



Corporate parents will look at ways to share information after care about their rights and choices within housing.



Corporate parents will look at ways to help young people stay in their homes by creating and sharing helpful videos around things like reporting repairs or changing a lightbulb.

Explore different housing examples for care experienced young people with complex needs including emergency housing and small shared living housing options.



All care leavers will be offered the chance to complete the tenancy award to help young people feel ready to live in their own home.

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### Education and Training

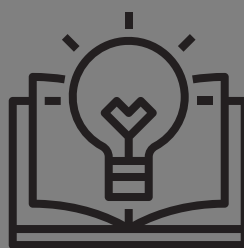
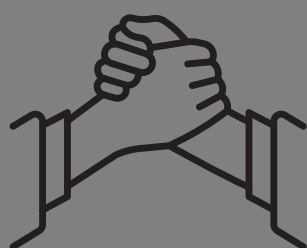
This area looks at how we can improve education experiences so care experienced young people can get the jobs they want in the future.

### Aspiration

All care experienced children will achieve their potential in school. All care experienced young people will leave school and have a positive destination. All care experienced children and young people have skills and talents and as corporate parents we will assist young people to use these.

As a Local Authority we will strive for all children to live and learn in East Lothian.

### The Plan



We will redesign services for children in East Lothian, including education. We will work with people with experience of the care system to shape the redesign.

We will create a hub which includes children's services and education which will offer support earlier within schools.

We will promote and develop other achievements and recognitions for our care experienced children and young people.

We will look at and develop a range of learning pathways for care experienced children and young people, to make sure these young people reach their full potential.

All care experienced young people will have a positive destination.

We want more young people doing foundation apprenticeships in East Lothian.

All care experienced children and young people will reach their positive destinations. They will be supported from school, which includes the preparation and support to apply for jobs.



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### Rights and Participation

This part looks at the importance of sharing your voice and knowing your rights when it matters to you.

### Aspiration

All children, young people and their families are aware of their rights and are supported to have their rights upheld. Young people to feel listened to and their views heard.

### The Plan

We will work in partnership with other to make sure we have a participation approach.

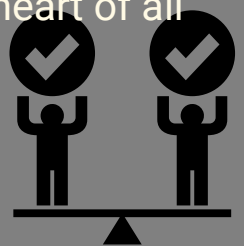
Children, young people and their families voices are really important and we want to hear what is important to them and why. There will be lots of different services looking at this and working together to try and make positive changes to make life better.

We will challenge the use of unhelpful language. We have already started doing this and have replaced contact with family time.

Young people will be offered a mentor/ trusted adult/ befriender.

Young people will be offered support/independent advocacy to give their views at Children's Hearings.

East Lothian corporate parents will ensure children's rights are at the heart of all we do.



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# Finance

This part of plan is looking at how to improve the financial situations of families and care experienced young people.

## Aspiration

All children and young people will be raised in families not affected by poverty. All children and young people will learn appropriate financial management skills within a context of sufficient funds.

## The Plan



Reduce personal debt.

Help families, children and young people to understand and use personal budgets and help them to make decisions around money.

Work with all services in East Lothian to reduce families living in poverty.

Work with families with help to ensuring they know about the different benefits and allowances they may be able to claim.

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