



Corporate Parenting Panel

1 Background

A Panel established to assist the Council in fulfilling its legal corporate parenting duties to ensure the Council and partner agencies act as effective corporate parents. The Panel will invite members of the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Partnership Board, the Foster Carers Liaison Group and the No Labels Group (Children in Care Council) to attend meetings and input.

The Department for Education publishes [statutory guidance](#) for local authorities on “Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers”. This includes principles of good parenting that need to be applied for children to thrive. These 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; and
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

2 The purpose of the Corporate Parenting Panel will be:

1. To provide an oversight of the safety and quality of care of all places where our children who are looked after by Nottinghamshire County Council live. This would include those children’s homes, foster placements and supported accommodation directly provided by the Local Authority and those commissioned from external providers including the Youth Custody Service.
2. To consider reports from No Labels (Children in Care Council), the Foster Carers Liaison Group (FLAG) and the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Partnership Board, and to make recommendations as a result.
3. To scrutinise information relating to children in care who are alleged victims of physical abuse, sexual abuse, at risk of sexual exploitation or who commit sexually harmful acts whilst in a care setting, and to make recommendations for any improvements.
4. To scrutinise information on children in care’s physical, emotional and mental health, educational attainment and the quality of services they receive, and to make recommendations for any improvements.

5. To consider issues relating to the criminalisation of children in care.
6. To ensure that the views of children and young people receiving care and, where relevant, their parents or carers, foster carers and residential staff, are considered in the development of safe and effective services.
7. To make recommendations to and support the decision making of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

3 Accountability and Challenge

The Chair of the Panel will be responsible for:

- ensuring that the Panel meets its responsibilities;
- ensuring that the Panel remains focused, that it is clear on its authority, and that its work is actively managed; and
- ensuring that recommendations regarding decisions that require formal agreement are made to the relevant decision-maker, in line with the Council's Constitution.

4 Core Membership

The core members will include:

- 2 members of the Conservative Group (to include the Deputy Cabinet Member with the remit for Children and Young People, who shall Chair the meetings of the Panel), 1 member of the Labour Group and 1 member of the Independent Alliance. The number of Members appointed to the Panel is determined by Full Council. There is no conflict with these Members also being part of the Children and Young People's Select Committee.
- Service Director – Care, Help and Protection
- Service Director – Commissioning and Resources
- Group Manager – Regulated Services
- Group Manager – Looked After Children
- Group Manager – Safeguarding, Assurance and Improvement
- Group Manager – Commissioning
- Head of the Virtual School

The Panel shall have a quorum of one-third of its membership, to a minimum of 3.

5 Scope & Responsibilities

1. Considering relevant observations and recommendations from Ofsted inspection and Regulation 44 reports.
2. Considering key local and national reports that make recommendations about practice and strategy in relation to the safety of looked after children.

3. Receiving data reports that can be used to formulate questions and investigations into different aspects of the safety, wellbeing, progress and quality of care for looked after children.
4. Taking an active interest in the services delivered by health, justice and school/education partners to children in care.

6 Frequency and Format of Meetings

The Corporate Parenting Panel will be held on a quarterly basis. Meetings will be open to the public.

The final agenda and papers will be available for inspection at County Hall and on its website at least five clear working days before the meeting. Agreed action points will be provided to members within a week of each meeting.

Members of the Panel will meet in private as the 'Looked After Children's Safeguarding Group' following each meeting to discuss any new allegations, investigation progress and outcomes in relation to allegations of physical, emotional and sexual abuse involving children in the care of the local authority, foster carers and residential care staff.

7 Ways of Working

Members should endeavour to read agenda papers in advance of meetings to allow for informed discussion.

Members will identify a suitable deputy to attend in their absence as an exception.

Members will be expected to lead regular visits to care settings in line with local guidance accompanying as appropriate other Elected Members beyond membership of this Panel. Guidance and training will be made available.

Members should upon invitation attend the Children in Care Council meeting to gain views directly from children and young people.