



for Care-Experienced
Children and Young People

BECOME.

THE CHARITY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE
AND YOUNG CARE LEAVERS

Inquiry on Extending Corporate Parenting Responsibilities across the Public Sector

Final Report

March 2024

About Become

[Become](#) is the national charity for care-experienced children and young people. We put young people at the heart of everything we do, supporting them to get the help they need now and empowering them to bring about change in their own lives, the care system and society.

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Foreword

In February 2023, the Government's *Stable Homes, Built on Love* strategy included a commitment to strengthen and extend corporate parenting responsibilities to a range of public bodies and organisations. This commitment builds on a recommendation from the *Independent Review of Children's Social Care* and the example of Scotland, where similar reforms have already been introduced.



Care-experienced children and young people engage and interact with a range of public services in many different ways. These services can provide vital support and assistance, helping young people to develop, heal and fulfil their hopes and aspirations. However, in my work as a social worker, MP and Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Care-Experienced Children and Young People, I have consistently heard how public services are not always equipped to provide the right support. There can be a lack of understanding amongst frontline professionals about what it means to be care-experienced and the impact of childhood trauma. Moreover, public services and systems are not always flexible enough to recognise or respond to the specific barriers that care-experienced young people can face.

As an APPG, we wanted to examine these proposals. We wanted to understand which bodies these reforms should apply to, how they should be implemented and what impact they could have. Most significantly, we wanted to hear what care-experienced young people thought about these proposals – their views should ultimately be the most important factor in policy decisions that impact on their lives.

I'm extremely grateful to all the care-experienced young people, professionals and organisations who kindly shared their views, insights and experiences through our regional online evidence sessions, workshops, call to evidence and survey for public bodies. Throughout the inquiry, we also heard some really interesting examples of how some public bodies already adapt their policies and services to meet the needs and views of care-experienced young people. I'm also grateful to Become – the national charity for children in care and young care leavers – who as Secretariat to the APPG led on the coordination and delivery of this Inquiry.

The breadth and depth of insight that we received throughout the Inquiry has helped the APPG to develop a strong set of recommendations, which we hope will be able to influence the Government's thinking as they continue to develop these proposals.

It is our view that extending corporate parenting responsibilities has the potential to act as a framework for how public services can improve the scaffolding of support around care-experienced young people. This is not about undermining or diluting local authorities responsibilities: local authorities must remain ultimately responsible for providing safety, housing, care and support. But these proposals have the potential to drive a culture change in how public services support and interact with care-experienced young people. We want these reforms to be bold, robust and deliver concrete change to improve support, services and outcomes for care-experienced young people.

Steve McCabe MP

Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Care-Experienced Children and Young People
MP for Birmingham, Selly Oak

Executive Summary

Introduction

There is currently not a level playing field for care-experienced children and young people. Children in care have often faced high levels of adversity, complexity and trauma before entering the care system and this can be compounded by the instability that they experience whilst in care. When leaving the care system, young people can face a care cliff: expected to become independent overnight, often well before they are ready and with no safety net or support network to fall back on.

Care-experienced children and young people currently have contact with a broad range of public services, which can range from health, education and transport services to the welfare, criminal justice and immigration systems. Public services can provide crucial support, but this can also be inconsistent, inadequate or even at times harmful. We have heard how public services and professionals can be stigmatising, or inflexible; how care-experienced young people can face barriers to accessing services, or can fall through the cracks between different services; and how some services are not adequately equipped to identify or respond to their needs.

Care-experienced young people continue to experience disproportionately poor outcomes across a range of areas. This has a significant human cost, impacting on their lives and life chances; as well as a significant financial cost.

There is a real need for concerted action to improve support for care-experienced children and young people across society to enable them to have happy and healthy lives, and to be able to fulfil their potential and aspirations. As this report will show, whilst their role is critical, this should not be solely the responsibility of local authorities—

we all have a role to play.

“A collaborative approach with other organisations rather than just the council is really important because it does take a village raise a child.”

Care-experienced young person

Our Inquiry

Under current legislation, local authorities in England are required to have regard to corporate parenting principles, which are a set of high-level aspirations such as to act in the best interests of care-experienced children and young people, promote their health and wellbeing, and to listen to their wishes and preferences.

In its *Stable Homes, Built on Love* strategy, published last year, the Government committed to strengthen and extend corporate parenting responsibilities across the public sector, accepting a recommendation from the *Independent Review of Children’s Social Care* and building on reforms in Scotland where 26 different types of public body are currently named as corporate parents.

As the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Care-Experienced Children and Young People, we think these reforms have the potential to positively transform the scaffolding of support around care-experienced young people. We want these reforms to be ambitious, robust and deliver concrete change to improve the lives and life chances of care-experienced children and young people. Most importantly, we want the views, insights and experiences of care-experienced young people to be at the heart of these reforms.

Over the past six months Become, as the secretariat to the APPG, have supported us to carry out an inquiry to gather and collate the views of care-experienced children and young people, organisations and professionals about these reforms. In total, we have heard from over 200 people and organisations, including 160 care-experienced children and young people. This report sets out our main findings and recommendations for the effective development and implementation of reforms to corporate parenting.

Corporate parenting tree



Throughout our inquiry, we have heard numerous examples of how care-experienced children and young people have been or felt let down by public services and professionals. Young people have reported facing stigma from professionals, such as police officers, teachers and health professionals, on the basis of prejudicial negative stereotypes of children who have been in care. Others have highlighted the specific barriers that they have faced in accessing services or support, or how they have fallen through the cracks between services, such as university students being left without anywhere to live outside of term-time. Public services are often not adequately trauma-informed; and young people have reported that interactions with professionals, systems and services have negatively impacted on their wellbeing.

On the other hand, we have heard brilliant examples of public services providing vital support or taking targeted action to identify or respond to the views and needs of care-experienced young people. This includes surveying care-experienced young people about how services could be improved for

them, providing ring-fenced training and employment opportunities to address under-representation in certain professions, involving them on recruitment panels for key roles, and the promotion of resources to upskill professionals' awareness and understanding about the impact of being care-experienced.

When organisations proactively or strategically consider how they can adapt their services or policies to better meet the needs of care-experienced young people, this can lead to a real improvement in young people's opportunities, experiences and outcomes.

Throughout our inquiry, we have found widespread support for strengthening corporate parenting responsibilities and extending these to a broad range of public sector organisations.

Care-experienced young people want to see a range of public organisations being better equipped to provide support that works for them. They want to see corporate parenting responsibilities being threaded through the values, ethos and fabric of organisations: with professionals having a better understanding of care-experience; targeted offers of support; and the views and insights of care-experienced young people being at the heart of service development and improvement.

Most of all, young people have told us that they want corporate parenting responsibilities to be taken seriously and deliver real positive change, not seen as tokenistic or a tick box exercise. Being a corporate parent should be seen as a privileged responsibility and organisations should be held to account for the extent to which they are fulfilling their responsibilities as a corporate parent.

“‘Would this be appropriate for my own child?’ should be the litmus test. It is about making decisions in our best interests.”

**Care-experienced young person,
aged 21, Midlands**

Recommendations

We recommend that:

- 1) The Government legislates to introduce a new set of more action-focused corporate parenting responsibilities, with a stronger legal weighting¹, to replace the existing corporate parenting principles.²
- 2) The Department for Education develops and publishes statutory guidance setting out the requirements for new corporate parenting organisations and ways in which these can be fulfilled, the support available to them, how they will be held to account, and examples of best practice.
- 3) The Government legislates to confer corporate parenting responsibilities onto a broad range of public sector bodies and organisations.³
- 4) The Secretary of State for Education be given the power to confer corporate parenting responsibilities onto other public sector organisations in the future, in line with agreed criteria.
- 5) The Department for Education appoints and funds an independent organisation to provide training, advice, guidance and support to corporate parenting organisations to enable them to effectively fulfil their responsibilities and promote best practice.
- 6) Corporate parenting organisations be required to develop and publish corporate parenting plans every three years, and progress reports annually, and submit these to their relevant Government Department.
 - a. Corporate parenting plans should set out SMART objectives for how organisations will fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities over this period, an action plan for delivery and how plans have been informed by the views of care-experienced young people.
- 7) The Department for Education should oversee and enforce the failure of any corporate parenting organisations to submit corporate parenting plans or progress reports using a range of enforcement measures.
- 8) The Government be required to develop and publish a cross-Government corporate parenting plan every three years, co-ordinated by the Department for Education, which brings together strategic objectives and plans from across Government Departments; as well as publishing an annual progress report.
 - a. The Secretary of State for Education should be required to make an annual statement to Parliament upon publication of the progress report to enable Parliamentary scrutiny of the Government's plans and progress.
- 9) An independent body such as the Children's Commissioner's Office be funded to develop and publish a shadow corporate parenting report every three years based on consultation with care-experienced young people about progress to date and areas for improvement.
- 10) Relevant regulators, inspectorates and ombuds-organisations ensure that assessments of how well corporate parenting organisations are complying with corporate parenting responsibilities are adequately reflected in relevant regulatory frameworks.

¹ Requiring new corporate parenting organisations to comply with new corporate parenting responsibilities, so far as this is consistent with the exercise of their other functions, instead of just having regard to principles.

² We have set out our recommendations for the proposed wording of new corporate parenting responsibilities in Box A below.

³ We have set out a list of the organisations that we recommend become corporate parenting organisations in Box B below.

- 11) An independent body such as the Children's Commissioner's Office be given additional powers to hold corporate parents to account, including powers to:
- receive complaints about flagrant or systemic breaches of corporate parenting responsibilities;
 - compel information from corporate parenting organisations as part of investigations into complaints;
 - write to a corporate parenting organisation setting out remedial action that they must take to ensure compliance with corporate parenting responsibilities; and
 - undertake enforcement action or penalties if requested remedial action is not taken.
- 12) The Department for Education consult further with care-experienced children and young people about renaming 'corporate parenting' and potential alternative options.
- 13) The Government funds and implements a workforce development programme to upskill frontline professionals who work with care-experienced children and young people, including building their understanding of the impact of childhood trauma.
- 14) The Government improves and increases the collection of data relating to children and young people's outcomes, which is disaggregated by care experience.



Box A: Proposed corporate parenting responsibilities

It is the duty of every corporate parent, in so far as consistent with the proper exercise of its other functions:

- 1) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health, well-being and safety, of care-experienced children and young people;
- 2) to proactively identify and respond to the views, wishes and feelings of care-experienced children and young people, including about service improvement;
- 3) to assess the needs of care-experienced children and young people for services and support it provides, and any barriers, stigma or discrimination they may face;
- 4) to take a trauma-informed approach, and to adapt or introduce policies, services or opportunities to meet the needs of care-experienced children and young people and address any barriers, stigma or discrimination they face;
- 5) to promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for care-experienced children and young people, and prepare them for adulthood;
- 6) to promote, protect and fulfil the full rights of care-experienced children and young people, including those contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- 7) to act in ways that promote and protect the stability and security of care-experienced children and young people in their home lives, relationships, education, employment or finances;
- 8) to take such other action as it considers appropriate for the purposes of improving the way in which it exercises its functions in relation to care-experienced children and young people.

Box B: List of public sector organisations that we recommend are appointed as corporate parents under new legislation

- All tier-one local authorities in England and district councils
- Metro Mayors
- Department for Health and Social Care, NHS England, the Care Quality Commission, all Integrated Care Boards, and all NHS Trusts (including Foundation Trusts, Mental Health Trusts, Ambulance Service Trusts and others)
- Department for Education, Ofsted, the Office for Students, schools (including maintained schools, academies, free schools and alternative provision), further education providers, and higher education institutes and providers
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and housing associations
- Department for Work and Pensions, and Job Centre Plus
- Ministry of Justice, police forces, Youth Justice Board, His Majesty's Prisons and Probation Service, and Police and Crime Commissioners
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Arts Council, and Sport England
- Department for Transport and regional transport authorities
- The Home Office
- His Majesty's Treasury, and the Cabinet Office

Part 1: Strengthening corporate parenting responsibilities

a) Establishing a consistent set of strong corporate parenting responsibilities

The existing corporate parenting principles that apply to local authorities in England are a set of high-level aspirations that reflect the type of support that local authorities are expected to provide to children in care and young care leavers.⁴ This requirement applies to all staff employed by the local authority and its partners, when carrying out functions in relation to care-experienced children and young people.⁵

The care-experienced young people who participated in our inquiry generally appreciated the breadth of the current principles, which cover several different areas of their lives—from health and wellbeing, to education, housing, relationships, employment and their own wishes, feelings

and preferences. Young people also generally welcomed the aspirational element of the current principles.

However, the current principles were seen as too vague, and not specific or measurable enough, so it is not immediately clear what action corporate parents are required to take to meet the principles. Moreover, under current legislation local authorities are only required to ‘have regard to’ the corporate parenting principles: many felt that this could effectively be seen as a tick-box exercise, with corporate parents being required to mark their own homework rather than deliver real change. Throughout the inquiry, we heard there is considerable variation in how local authorities approach being a corporate

Corporate parenting principles - Section 1(1) of the Children and Social Work Act 2017

A local authority in England must, in carrying out functions in relation to the children in care and care leavers, have regard to the need:

- (a) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
- (b) to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- (c) to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
- (d) 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;
- (e) to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
- (f) for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- (g) to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

⁴ [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#), c. 16. All online sources throughout the report were accessed on 15th February 2024.

⁵ Department for Education (2018) [Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers: Statutory guidance for local authorities](#)

parent and several young people reported that their local authority was not adequately fulfilling the existing corporate parenting principles.

“The council may do some of these things but not everyone or to the best of their ability. For instance they ensure the safety of children... but create instability.”

Care-experienced young person,
Yorkshire

Making corporate parenting responsibilities clearer and more action-focused would provide clarity to corporate parents about exactly what they are required and expected to do. This would also help to improve accountability and transparency, by ensuring that care-experienced young people have a better understanding of what they can expect from corporate parents.

“They also should be more specific to be measurable and, therefore, accountable. These are too abstract to really be accountable.”

Care-experienced young person,
aged 24, East of England

Throughout our inquiry, there was also a strong consensus that the legal weighting of corporate parenting responsibilities should be strengthened in legislation, so that corporate parents have a duty to comply with a set of corporate parenting responsibilities, rather than having regard to a set of principles.

“Get rid of ‘have regard to’ and replace with a mandatory duty / obligation”

Care-experienced young person

The current corporate parenting principles, which only apply to local authorities in England, were originally drafted specifically to reflect the breadth and types of support that local authorities are expected to provide to children in care and care leavers. For example, the fourth principle is about helping young people to gain access to services provided by the local authority and its partners. If corporate parenting is to be extended across the public sector, corporate parenting responsibilities need to be re-written to reflect more generally the ways in which a range of public bodies can positively impact on the lives and life chances of care-experienced young people.

“Care can be a very stressful and challenging time for young people so show them that you are there for them and on their side.”

Care-experienced young person,
South East

The young people that we heard from generally wanted corporate parents to be ambitious about their future and potential, and for them to be ‘pushy parents’—trying their hardest to improve care-experienced young people’s opportunities, experiences and outcomes. Young people wanted the ethos of being a corporate parent to be acting in a way that you would deem to be good enough for your own child.

“‘Would this be appropriate for my own child?’ should be the litmus test. It is about making decisions in our best interests.”

Care-experienced young person,
aged 21, Midlands

Recommendation – We recommend that the Government legislates to introduce a new set of more action-focused corporate parenting responsibilities, with a stronger legal weighting, to replace the existing corporate parenting principles.*

* N.B. We have set out our recommendations for the proposed wording of new corporate parenting responsibilities in Box A, below.

b) Ensuring that corporate parenting responsibilities reflect the ways in which public bodies can positively support care-experienced young people

It is important that any amendments to corporate parenting responsibilities reflect the different ways that public sector organisations can provide support and services to positively improve the lives and life chances of care-experienced young people, recognising the adversity, instability and specific challenges that they may have experienced.

Based on what we heard throughout our inquiry, there are some additional requirements that we think need to be included within a revised set of corporate parenting responsibilities to meaningfully improve the scaffolding of support for care-experienced young people.

i) Reducing the stigma, prejudice and discrimination that care-experienced young people face

One strong recurrent theme throughout our evidence sessions was the persistent stigma, prejudice and discrimination that care-experienced children and young people face in different areas of their lives.

Throughout our inquiry, we heard examples of how care-experienced young people have encountered widespread negative stereotypes about children in care; and how they have been treated differently by professionals and services—including teachers, the police and mental health services—because of prejudicial assumptions about them based on their care experience.

“In Norfolk we have a narrative that being in care is actually your superpower.”

Care-experienced person,
aged 30, East of England

Young people reported being treated as a label, rather than an individual.

Experiencing stigma, prejudice and discrimination can negatively impact on care-experienced young people in different ways. It can lead to poorer outcomes and reduced opportunities, compared to their non care-experienced peers, for example through being over-criminalised or misdiagnosed, or missing out on important social, emotional or

educational opportunities. It can reduce young people’s engagement with services or lead to a distrust of professionals. Additionally, it can have a negative and long-term impact on their mental health, wellbeing, self-esteem and sense of identity.

“You are seen as ‘being naughty’ or you are in care because you are naughty. They assume that you have a criminal record or are not able to hold a job down.”

Care-experienced young person,
aged 25, North West

“[I experienced] loads of discrimination with the midwifery service... The whole part of my pregnancy I wasn’t able to enjoy it, I was scared I was going to get my child taken off me. They think you aren’t going to be a good mum. ... They should be treating you as an individual: they should do an assessment based on you, not a title.”

Care-experienced young person

We think public services can play an important role in preventing the stigma, prejudice and discrimination that care-experienced young people face, such as by training professionals about care-experience

and trauma; tackling negative stereotypes; increasing the representation of care-experienced staff; promoting positive representations of care-experienced young people; and adopting a trauma-informed

approach to their services, and this should be reflected in any revised corporate parenting responsibilities.⁶

“A public sector equality duty towards care-experienced people should exist within the corporate parenting duties rather than in the Equality Act (2010)”

Barnardo’s,
in response to our call for evidence

“Making sure the organisations don't treat young people differently and that they actively listen to what care experienced young people have to say. ... They should train all staff on stigma around care and the unfairness of this.”

Care-experienced young person,
Yorkshire

ii) Taking a trauma-informed approach to service delivery

Many care-experienced children and young people will have experienced trauma, adversity and complexity before entering the care system, and potentially during their time in care. For example, the main category of need when entering care was abuse or neglect for two-thirds of the 83, 840 children in care on 31st March 2023.⁷ Trauma can significantly impact on care-experienced young people’s mental health and wellbeing, their sense of safety and security, and their relationships with others. The impacts of trauma can be long-term, and trauma can recur or be triggered throughout childhood, adolescence or adulthood.

about policies or eligibility criteria; and being unaware of the widespread impact of trauma on care-experienced young people.

“Understanding trauma and it’s different forms and how to address it lovingly”

Care-experienced young person,
London

“There needs to be more trauma-informed training and approaches from professionals working with care-experienced children and young people, especially within the police”

Care-experienced young person,
London

“Although it should be a given, all services should mandatory work by a trauma informed guideline when working with care experience people”

Care-experienced young person,
London

Throughout our inquiry, we heard examples of where professionals or public services acted in ways that have made care-experienced young people feel unsafe or have re-triggered their feelings or experience of trauma. This included breaking confidentiality about a young person’s care-experience; using stigmatising language or prejudicial treatment; a lack of transparency

To improve care-experienced young people’s interactions with public services, and to prevent the risk that these interactions are harmful or traumatic, we think it is essential that corporate parents be required to adopt a trauma-informed approach and for all relevant frontline professionals to have training on care-experience and the impact of trauma.

⁶ Throughout the inquiry, several respondents also pointed to the voluntary adoption of care-experience as a protected characteristic by numerous local authorities across Great Britain as a positive example.

⁷ Department for Education (2023) [Children looked after in England, including adoptions: reporting year 2023](#)

iii) Increasing co-production and ensuring that services are designed, delivered and evaluated in collaboration with care-experienced young people

Care-experienced young people are experts in their own lives. More than anybody else, they are best placed to identify the barriers or disadvantages that they face, or how policies or services can be improved for them.

Care-experienced young people want to be involved in decisions that affect their lives, including decisions about the type of support available to them and how this is provided. Young people told us they want public bodies to proactively seek their views about how services can be improved and to be kept informed about how their feedback is being used.

“Need to be answerable to people with lived experience... [Services] have to listen to us and be accountable”

Care-experienced young person

Throughout our inquiry, we heard examples of how some public bodies ensure that their work is actively and meaningfully informed by the views of care-experienced young people. Ofsted uses the findings from its annual point-in-time surveys with care-experienced young people to shape its inspection frameworks and to inform decisions about the scheduling of inspections.⁸ Similarly, Social Work England engages with people with lived experience of children’s social care, including those with experience of the care system, through its National Advisory Forum. The forum provides expert advice, support and challenge to the work of Social Work England, by acting as a critical friend, and making recommendations to the senior and executive leadership teams.⁹ NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board (ICB) has involved care-experienced young people in the recruitment process for lead nurses for children in care.¹⁰

From Frontline, we heard that, as part of the delivery of its three-year training programme for social workers, it works with Care-Experienced Assessors, who take part in the recruitment of programme participants, including by sitting on interview panels. Frontline also said that it works with care-experienced young people as members of its Steering Group, which influences the design and delivery of the programme.¹¹

Co-production can have many benefits: it can lead to better services; it can mitigate or eradicate barriers; it can create opportunities and improve young people’s experiences and outcomes; and significantly, it can empower young people by providing more agency, control and choice. We think it is important that, as part of revised corporate parenting responsibilities, corporate parents be required to proactively and meaningfully listen and respond to the views of care-experienced young people, and work collaboratively with young people to improve services and policies.

“[Services should be] “including care experienced young people in co-production ... from the start, not just bringing them in right at the end”

**Care-experienced young person,
North East**

“[Organisations should provide] feedback—if something can’t be done, ‘explain why’”

**Care-experienced young person,
South West**

⁸ Ofsted (2020) [Ofsted launches point-in-time surveys](#)

⁹ Social Work England (2023) [Our National Advisory Forum](#)

¹⁰ NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB, response to survey for public bodies

¹¹ Frontline, response to call for evidence

iv) Promoting and upholding the rights and entitlements of care-experienced children and young people

One of the consistent themes that we heard throughout the inquiry is that care-experienced children and young people face numerous barriers to the fulfilment of their existing legal rights and entitlements. Many care-experienced young people reported not being made aware of their rights and entitlements, or not being informed about them at an appropriate time and in an appropriate manner. Others reported facing barriers in their rights being upheld, such as delays in accessing advocacy provision or reduced contact with social care professionals due to busy workloads or high staff churn. We also heard about the postcode lottery, with significant variation in service offers and provisions in different areas, particularly in relation to local authority services.

We think that as part of revised corporate parenting responsibilities, all corporate parent organisations should be required to promote, protect and fulfil the rights and entitlements of care-experienced young people, including their human rights, as contained within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.¹² Professionals working in those organisations should be aware of relevant rights and entitlements, and support care-experienced young people to understand and access them.

“40% of young care leavers said they don’t have a pathway plan or don’t know if they have one or not, despite it being statutory requirement.”

MyBnk,
in response to our call for evidence

“Workers should explain to young people what they are entitled to as children in care and care leavers”

Care-experienced young person,
East of England

“UNCRC should become UK law and form foundations of any set of CP principles”

The Rees Centre,
in response to our call for evidence

¹² The UK ratified, or agreed to follow, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991. This means that public bodies should already protect, respect and fulfil the human rights contained in the Convention. The UN CRC, like other international human rights treaties, have not been incorporated into domestic law, however, meaning there is not currently any domestic legal redress when these rights are breached. For further information, see Equality and Human Rights Commission (2023) [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Box A: Proposed corporate parenting responsibilities

It is the duty of every corporate parent, in so far as consistent with the proper exercise of its other functions:

- 1) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health, well-being and safety, of care-experienced children and young people;
- 2) to proactively identify and respond to the views, wishes and feelings of care-experienced children and young people, including about service improvement;
- 3) to assess the needs of care-experienced children and young people for services and support it provides, and any barriers, stigma or discrimination they may face;
- 4) to take a trauma-informed approach, and to adapt or introduce policies, services or opportunities to meet the needs of care-experienced children and young people and address any barriers, stigma or discrimination they face;
- 5) to promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for care-experienced children and young people, and prepare them for adulthood;
- 6) to promote, protect and fulfil the full rights of care-experienced children and young people, including those contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- 7) to act in ways that promote and protect the stability and security of care-experienced children and young people in their home lives, relationships, education, employment or finances;
- 8) to take such other action as it considers appropriate for the purposes of improving the way in which it exercises its functions in relation to care-experienced children and young people.

c) What corporate parents should do to improve opportunities, experiences and outcomes for care-experienced young people

Throughout our inquiry we heard examples of measures or actions that care-experienced young people would like to see corporate parents take to level the playing field and improve their opportunities, experiences and outcomes, including:

- Providing high quality and mandatory training to professionals that work with care-experienced young people about care-experience and childhood trauma;
- Proactively and meaningfully engage with care-experienced young people about how services could be improved;
- Identifying the needs of care-experienced young people and any specific barriers or challenges they face in or when accessing services;
- Adapting services or policies to meet the needs of care-experienced young people, or to address the barriers or challenges they face;
- Providing bespoke, free or discounted services and opportunities for care-experienced young people, including training and employment opportunities;
- Improving the collection and recording of data about care-experienced young people's access to services and outcomes, to inform policy and practice interventions;
- Increasing the representation of care-experienced staff; and
- Collaborating with other public organisations to ensure smoother transitions and greater continuity of support.

For any reforms to be successful, new corporate parenting organisations must be provided with clarity about what they are required to do to ensure that they are fulfilling their responsibilities as corporate parents. Statutory guidance should be developed for corporate parenting organisations to set out these requirements in detail. This guidance should strike the right balance between having clear, measurable requirements and allowing flexibility for corporate parents to determine what measures they should take based on an understanding of their organisation's overall aims, function and remit, and the views of care-experienced young people.

We think that statutory guidance should provide illustrative examples to help corporate parents to understand the different types of interventions or adaptations they could introduce and the potential impact of these. Throughout this report, we highlight positive examples of how some public organisations are already adapting their services or policies to respond to the needs and views of care-experienced young people. We also suggest some specific changes that individual public bodies could make to positively impact on these young people.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Department for Education develops and publishes statutory guidance setting out the requirements for new corporate parenting organisations and ways in which these can be fulfilled, the support available to them, how they will be held to account, and examples of best practice.

i) Key enablers

Throughout our inquiry, we have identified two specific enablers that are essential to ensuring that extending corporate parenting responsibilities to a range of public bodies delivers real positive change for care-experienced young people.

Enabler 1: Upskilling the workforce of professionals who work with care-experienced children and young people, including building their understanding of the impact of childhood trauma.

Enabler 2: Improving the collection and recording of data, disaggregated by care experience, to better understand care-experienced young people’s access to services and outcomes.

Enabler 1: Upskilling the workforce of professionals who work with care-experienced young people

One consistent theme that we have heard throughout our inquiry is that all frontline professionals who work with care-experienced children and young people, and leaders, should receive professional training to ensure they have a fundamental understanding of care-experience and the impact of childhood trauma.

Many respondents felt that this is essential to ensuring that services and professionals have positive interactions and engagement with care-experienced young people, and that they are equipped to understand, identify and respond to the specific challenges and barriers that they face. More consistent professional development could play a role in reducing stigma, as well as improving young people’s relationships with professionals and experience of using services. It could also lead to improvements in trauma-informed practice in key services such as the police, health, justice and education.

Reflecting its importance, we think that statutory guidance should make clear that providing training and professional development to wider staff workforces about care-experience is a fundamental way of fulfilling corporate parenting responsibilities.

This could be provided as separate training modules or included within existing mandatory training and development. Where possible, training could be co-developed or delivered by care-experienced young people.

“[There should be training] to understand what it actually means to be a care leaver”

Care-experienced young person,
South East

Given the centrality of professional development to the success of these reforms, we recommend that the Government also develop and implement a workforce development programme to provide a baseline understanding of the care system across all relevant frontline professionals.

“Better understanding of experiences through training delivered by young people with lived experience”

Care-experienced young person,
Yorkshire

Recommendation – We recommend that the Government funds and implements a workforce development programme to upskill frontline professionals who work with care-experienced children and young people, including building their understanding of the impact of childhood trauma.

Enabler 2: Improving data collection about care-experienced young people's outcomes

There remains a lack of robust data about the outcomes of care-experienced children and young people and their access to or participation in services. For example, there is no national data available about the number of care-experienced young people in receipt of universal credit¹³, and there is no consistent data about the prevalence of mental ill health amongst care-experienced children and young people.¹⁴ This lack of robust data can create significant barriers to evidence-based policy-making, and can make it difficult for organisations to monitor the impact of strategies to improve support for care-experienced young people.

Corporate parents should be encouraged to improve and increase the collection of disaggregated data to better understand care-experienced young people's access to services and outcomes, and the barriers they face. This data should be used to inform

planning and prioritisation, so that corporate parents can focus their efforts on measures that are most likely to positively impact on care-experienced young's lives, deliver the biggest impact, or address persistent barriers. It should also be used to benchmark and track progress, and be used in progress reports to demonstrate the impact of different strategies.

To support corporate parents, statutory guidance should include advice on best practice for data collection including the need to respect confidentiality and allowing young people to self-identify as care-experienced. Moreover, we recommend that alongside reforms to corporate parenting, the Government takes action to improve and increase the collection of data relating to care-experienced young people's outcomes and experiences.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Government improves and increases the collection of data relating to children and young people's outcomes, which is disaggregated by care experience.

¹³ See [Parliamentary Question UjN 67](#), answered on 15th November 2023.

¹⁴ See NHS Digital (2022) [Mental health of children and young people in England 2022 – wave 3 follow-up to the 2017 survey](#)

ii) Principles of best practice

Additionally, there are some specific principles of best practice that we think should be reflected in statutory guidance for corporate parents.

Principle 1: Providing ongoing support beyond the age of 25

Principle 2: Communicating consistently, clearly and appropriately with care-experienced young people

Principle 3: Understanding the impact of intersectionality

Principle 4: Collaborating with other corporate parents to identify and address barriers

Principle 1: Providing ongoing support beyond the age of 25

One consistent theme raised throughout our inquiry was that all support for care-experienced people should not end at the arbitrary age of 25. Several people highlighted that the support provided by parents and families is lifelong and not conditional on age; the support provided to care-experienced children and young people should mirror this.

“Life-long support, because that’s what parenting involves”

CoramBAAF,
in response to our call for evidence

Many care-experienced young people will have experienced trauma and adversity before entering into care or during their time in care and the impact of this trauma may last beyond the age of 25. Furthermore, some care-experienced people face may face additional barriers compared to their non-care-experienced peers later in life, through an absence of familial support, such as when buying their first home or raising children.

“Care doesn’t end. As corporate parents, you should be with us for longer than 25.”

Care-experienced young person,
East of England

In Scotland, although the legislation requires relevant organisations to fulfil the corporate parenting responsibilities for care-experienced children and young people to the age of 25, there have been some examples of corporate parents voluntarily choosing to extend support offers to care-experienced people of all ages. For instance, in 2020, the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) removed the upper age limit of 26 for their Care Experienced Bursary, “allowing those with care experience to enter further or higher education when they are ready, regardless of age”.¹⁵ Similarly, in England, North Lincolnshire Council has extended its offer of lifelong advice and support to all care leavers, irrespective of age.¹⁶

“Unless new CP responsibilities apply to care-experienced adults of all ages, the extension of corporate parenting will have the effect of changing the age that the care cliff exists at”

Care-experienced person, in response to our call for evidence

We recognise that existing legal rights and entitlements only apply to care-experienced young people aged 25 and under. However, at a minimum, statutory guidance should encourage corporate parents to consider extending support offers for care-experienced people beyond the age of 25.

¹⁵ SAAS (2021) [Corporate Parenting Plan 2021](#), p. 5.

¹⁶ North Lincolnshire Council (2022), [Lifelong promise to Care Leavers](#)

Principle 2: Communicating consistently, clearly and appropriately with care-experienced young people

Throughout the inquiry, we heard from care-experienced young people about the way that they would want corporate parents to communicate with them. Positive, consistent and appropriate communication can help to build trust and improve young people’s experiences of working with services or professionals.

understand information, and are able to communicate their views, wishes and feelings. Furthermore, care-experienced children and young people should be told how services and professionals will communicate with them; and they should be supported to understand who to contact, and how to contact them, if they have any issues or questions.

“Strong communication for our young people to keep them updated and listen to. Instead of them feeling forgotten and not heard”
Care-experienced young person

“Corporate parents shouldn’t just be available 9am-5pm Monday to Friday”
Care-experienced young person

Young people told us that it is important that professionals communicate with them proactively and regularly so they are kept informed and updated. Communication should always be age-appropriate and meet any communication needs, so that all children and young people can receive and

“Take account of the fact that many care-experienced young people aren’t able to fully give voice to the issues they’re experiencing”
Care-experienced young person, in response to our call for evidence

Principle 3: Understanding the impact of intersectionality

We all have a variety of intersectional identities, characteristics and experiences. Throughout our inquiry, we heard examples of how care-experienced young people have experienced multiple or compound disadvantages, barriers or prejudice related to their intersectional identities.

heritage; how care-experienced young parents have faced prejudice from professionals on the basis of negative stereotypes of how they will parent; and the barriers that care-experienced young people subject to immigration controls face in accessing public support.

“[Corporate parents should] really celebrate young people’s achievements, difference, cultural and diverse needs and backgrounds”
Care-experienced young person

“To find homes where young people are able to be 100% themselves—including LGBTQIA+ affirmative care”
Care-experienced young person

For example, we heard that children in care have experienced racism or loneliness after being moved to homes or communities that do not reflect their cultural, ethnic or religious

It is important that corporate parents don’t view or treat care-experienced young people as a homogenous group. They should ensure that their plans and strategies are informed by an understanding of the impact of

intersectionality on care-experienced young people’s needs; and take action to identify and address any specific barriers that groups or individuals may face.

“To respect individuals in care regardless of their gender, pronouns, identities, trauma and experiences”

Care-experienced young person

Principle 4: Collaborating with other corporate parents to identify and address barriers

To improve the infrastructure of appropriate and tailored support for care-experienced young people, it is important that corporate parents don’t work in silos. Corporate parents should be encouraged to share best practice and learning with each other; and, importantly, to work collaboratively to identify and address the barriers that care-experienced young people face, and ensure that they don’t fall through gaps between different public services.

“[Corporate parents should] act in a joined up way across organisations and between organisations”

Care-experienced young person

Who Cares Scotland? highlighted that some of the most impactful measures taken by corporate parents in Scotland have been collaborative approaches by two or more corporate parenting organisations.¹⁷

Throughout our inquiry we also heard a number of positive examples of organisations working together to improve support or remove barriers for care-experienced young people.

Barnardo’s highlighted how Metro Bank has developed a process to help care-experienced young people to open bank accounts, which instead of requiring photo identification and proof of address involves communication between the banking team and the local authority’s leaving care team to verify the identity of a care leaver.¹⁸

In Cheshire, youth justice services have worked closely with local partners to develop a protocol which aims to reduce the over-representation of care experienced children in the youth justice system.¹⁹ Within this, there is a recognition and duty placed on all partners to prioritise the welfare of care experienced children.

¹⁷ Who Cares Scotland? evidence provided to inquiry

¹⁸ Metro Bank (2021) [Metro Bank Helps Care Leavers Become Financially Independent](#)

¹⁹ Youth Justice Resource Hub (2021) [Pan Cheshire Protocol: Reducing the Unnecessary Criminalisation of Children in Care](#)

d) Delivering real change: developing corporate parenting plans and reporting on progress

The aim of extending corporate parenting responsibilities across the public sector should be to significantly strengthen the scaffolding of support around care-experienced young people. To achieve this, it is integral that corporate parenting organisations strategically and proactively consider how they can introduce or adopt policies and services to meaningfully improve the lives, opportunities, experiences or outcomes for care-experienced children and young people.

Building on the approach adopted in Scotland, we recommend that corporate parents be required to develop and publish corporate parenting plans every three years, setting out the actions they will take to fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities and improve the lives and life-chances of care-experienced young people. Statutory guidance should provide a framework for how corporate parenting plans should be developed and what they should include; the focus should be on delivering impact as opposed to developing tokenistic plans that continue business as usual.

Corporate parents should be encouraged to be ambitious in their plans; and plans should be actively and meaningfully informed by the views of care-experienced young people, or co-produced with them. The plans should include specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound objectives for fulfilling the different corporate parenting responsibilities, as well as an action plan for how these objectives will be achieved. A corporate parenting plan should be the blueprint for an organisation's role as a corporate parent and consequently should reflect the breadth of its remit, functions and workforce: corporate parenting responsibilities should be threaded through the fabric of the organisations wider work.

“When developing plans, children and young people should be involved and be at the heart of plans”

Care-experienced young person

Recommendation – We recommend that corporate parenting organisations be required to develop and publish corporate parenting plans every three years, and progress reports annually, and submit these to their relevant Government Department.

Corporate parenting plans should set out SMART objectives for how organisations will fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities over this period, an action plan for delivery and how plans have been informed by the views of care-experienced young people.

To measure and track progress in delivering plans, and to provide greater accountability and transparency, we also recommend that corporate parents be required to develop and publish annual progress reports to update on the progress in implementing plans or any significant changes. Annual progress reports should also include any relevant data relating to the outcomes of care-experienced young people, or their access to and experience of services, to benchmark and monitor progress

over time. We recommend that corporate parenting plans and progress reports are submitted to the relevant Government Departments and are used by relevant regulators as evidence when assessing the extent to which organisations are complying with their corporate parenting responsibilities.

The process of corporate parenting organisations strategically considering what

action they can take to improve support or services for care-experienced young people, or how they can better respond to their needs and views, is the cornerstone of effective corporate parenting. Consequently, we think it is important that the development and publication of plans and progress reports be mandatory for all corporate parents. There should be a range of enforcement measures or penalties for corporate parenting organisations that fail to submit plans or reports²⁰, akin to the enforcement action for organisations that fail to report their gender pay gap information.²¹

“Children want age appropriate, accessible, bite sized and child-friendly information about how they will be supporting children in care and care leavers”

Care-experienced young person

Recommendation – The Department for Education should oversee and enforce the failure of any corporate parenting organisations to submit corporate parenting plans or progress reports using a range of enforcement measures.

²⁰ To reduce the bureaucratic burden for the Department for Education of enforcing the submission of corporate parenting plans or reports, it may be necessary to exempt schools from the enforcement action for failure to report. In 2022/23 there were over 24,000 schools in England. See Department for Education (2023) [Education and training statistics for the UK](#). Schools should still be required to develop and publish corporate parenting plans and progress reports, and this should be considered as vital evidence in assessments as part of school Ofsted inspections about the extent to which they are fulfilling their corporate parenting responsibilities.

²¹ See Equality and Human Rights Commission (2023) [Gender pay gap: our enforcement action](#)

Part 2: Who should be corporate parents?

One of the strongest recurring themes we heard from care-experienced young people throughout our inquiry was that they wanted corporate parenting to be meaningful and deliver real change that positively impacts on their lives; rather than being tokenistic or abstract. Consequently, we have used the following criteria when assessing which public bodies should be named as corporate parents:

- organisations which regularly interact or engage with care-experienced children or young people;²² and
- organisations which have the capacity to introduce or adapt policies or services, which could have a meaningful positive impact on the lives or life chances of care-experienced children and young people.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Government legislates to confer corporate parenting responsibilities onto a broad range of public sector bodies and organisations.

Throughout our inquiry, several care-experienced young people expressed a strong view that organisations should not make a profit from being corporate parents, and that enabling profit-making organisations to become corporate parents could provide a conflict of interest and undermine young people’s trust in the system.

We recommend that corporate parenting responsibilities should only be extended to public sector bodies or organisations to reflect the responsibility that the state has to providing care and support to care-experienced young people. Private and voluntary sector organisations can, of course, play an integral role in providing valuable care or support to care-experienced children and young people. Many private and voluntary sector organisations are already signed up to the Care Leaver Covenant²³ and we would encourage the extension of this scheme and other voluntary schemes to enable organisations to commit to provide support for care-experienced children and young people.

In this section, we set out the public bodies and organisations that we recommend are appointed as corporate parents. These assessments are made with reference to the remit, aims and functions of each organisation, and with reference to the evidence we received of existing good practice within these organisations in relation to care-experienced children and young people.

The following sectors are all considered in turn:

- National and local government
- Health
- Education
- The criminal justice system
- The immigration system
- Housing
- Transport
- Arts and Culture
- The Benefits System
- Providers of children’s social care

²² Either organisations that engage or interact with a broad range of care-experienced children and young people, or those that engage or interact frequently with a smaller representation of care-experienced children and young people.

²³ See Care Leaver Covenant (2024) [Care Leaver Covenant Overview](#)

Importantly, it should be noted that the list of organisations recommended for appointment as corporate parents in this section is not exhaustive. We recommend that the Secretary of State for Education be given the power to appoint other corporate parents in the future by statutory instrument, including public bodies who have expressed an interest in becoming corporate parents, in line with agreed criteria. This criterion should include the extent to which care-experienced children and young people are supportive of the organisation becoming a corporate parent.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Secretary of State for Education be given the power to confer corporate parenting responsibilities onto other public sector organisations in the future, in line with agreed criteria.

Care-experienced children and young people told us that being appointed as a corporate parent should be seen as a privilege, not as a legal tick-box exercise or bureaucratic requirement. We hope that all corporate parents embrace and nurture this view of corporate parenting. To serve care-experienced children and young people is, indeed, a privilege.

“A collaborative approach with other organisations rather than just the council is really important because it does take a village raise a child, and if we had housing organisations, the NHS, the police, similar to what Scotland has, young people would feel so much more supported and they would receive the help they need without jumping through hoops.”

Care-experienced young person

Box B: List of public sector organisations that we recommend are appointed as corporate parents under new legislation

- All tier-one local authorities in England and district councils
- Metro Mayors
- Department for Health and Social Care, NHS England, the Care Quality Commission, all Integrated Care Boards, and all NHS Trusts (including Foundation Trusts, Mental Health Trusts, Ambulance Service Trusts and others)
- Department for Education, Ofsted, the Office for Students, schools (including maintained schools, academies, free schools and alternative provision), further education providers, and higher education institutes and providers
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and housing associations
- Department for Work and Pensions, and Job Centre Plus
- Ministry of Justice, police forces, Youth Justice Board, His Majesty’s Prisons and Probation Service, and Police and Crime Commissioners
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Arts Council, and Sport England
- Department for Transport and regional transport authorities
- The Home Office
- His Majesty’s Treasury, and the Cabinet Office

National and Local Government

As well as providing children’s social care services, local authorities provide a range of targeted and universal services that can benefit care-experienced children and young people from housing services, to leisure centres, participation networks, advocacy services and local welfare assistance schemes.

Under existing legislation, all tier-one local authorities and district councils are corporate parents. Throughout our inquiry, we heard many examples of how local authorities, as corporate parents, have adapted or introduced policies or services to positively impact care-experienced children and young people in their areas. These included: a number of local authorities offering council tax discounts or exemptions to care leavers;²⁴ a pilot to address digital poverty in Salford;²⁵ a service run by Suffolk County Council to provide apprenticeships, employment and work experience opportunities to care leavers within the Council;²⁶ and a leaving care hub run by the London Borough of Waltham Forest, which includes drop-in support, cooking sessions, coaching and the option to book an appointment with a therapist.²⁷

On the other hand, several respondents to our inquiry highlighted ways in which they felt local authorities were not adequately fulfilling their corporate parenting responsibilities. We recommend that local authorities remain as corporate parents under any new legislation. However, it is important that local authorities are adequately held to account about the extent to which they are fulfilling their corporate parenting responsibilities, and this should be strongly reflected within Ofsted’s inspections of local authority children’s services.

“The council may do some of these things but not everyone or to the best of their ability. For instance they ensure the safety of children by keeping them alive but creates instability”

Care-experienced young person,
North East

Given the remit of their powers and functions in improving housing, skills, transport and other local services, we also recommend that Metro Mayors and combined authorities in areas that have been granted some level of devolution are named as corporate parents.

National government as the executive body of the state has a responsibility for ensuring the safety of care-experienced children and young people, and promoting their health, wellbeing and best interests. As we have heard throughout this inquiry and in our previous work, care-experienced children and young people face persistent and structural barriers, adversity and disadvantages across a range of areas of life. To drive transformative and joined up reform there needs to be a cross-Government strategic approach to identifying and addressing the barriers, challenges and disadvantages that care-experienced children and young people face.

We have heard throughout the inquiry that appointing relevant Government Departments as corporate parents could make a significant difference in addressing the inequalities that care-experienced young people face. In line with our suggested principles for appointing corporate parents, we recommend that the Government Departments that have the biggest capacity to make changes that positively impact on the lives and life chances of care-experienced young people should be appointed as

²⁴ Department for Education (2020) [National Implementation Advisor for Care Leavers’ second report: the decade of the care leaver](#)

²⁵ Greater Manchester Combined Authority (2022) [New pilot launched to address digital poverty for care leavers in Salford](#)

²⁶ Staff member from Suffolk County Council, in response to our call for evidence.

²⁷ London Borough of Waltham Forest, in response to our survey for public bodies.

corporate parents. We have listed below the relevant Government Departments that we recommend are named as corporate parents and the rationale for each is explored throughout this chapter.

The prospective role of the Treasury and Cabinet Office is not explored further within

the following chapter. However, they have been included as relevant Government Departments due to their respective strategic roles in overseeing public spending, including funding for children's social care, and ensuring the effective running of Government.

“The Civil Service Care Leaver Internship Scheme is a good example of how public bodies can deliver their corporate parenting responsibilities in practice.

The scheme offers care leavers a 12-month internship in a central Government department and an opportunity for this position to be permanent after 12 months.

Care leavers can develop their skills, confidence and begin successful careers through the scheme, which has already supported over 800 care leavers and 80% of internships have been converted to permanent positions.

... The scheme has no qualification requirements”

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS), in response to call for evidence

Recommendation – We recommend that all tier-one local authorities, district council, Metro Mayors and combined authorities in England are named as corporate parenting organisations, along with the following Government Departments: Department for Education; Department of Health and Social Care; Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; Ministry of Justice; Department for Work and Pensions; Department for Transport; Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport; Home Office; HM Treasury; and the Cabinet Office.

Health

We all rely on the NHS. It supports us to improve our health and wellbeing, to keep mentally and physically well, and to get treatment when we are ill.

Health inequalities mean that care-experienced people are more likely than others to rely on the NHS, both as children and as adults. This is particularly true in the area of mental health, where it is estimated that almost half of all children in care meet the criteria for a mental health diagnosis.²⁸ We know that these health inequalities persist long into adulthood: research has found that care-experienced people are more likely to suffer poor health for decades after leaving care.²⁹

“Mental health is also a key area highlighted by young people we support. We have worked with many young people who have described the challenges they experienced navigating care and poor mental health. There is distrust, a lack of explanation and understanding based on some of the language and jargon used.”

Leicestershire Cares,
in response to call for evidence

At the same time, we have heard from care-experienced young people about the barriers they face in accessing healthcare, such as struggling to register for healthcare services, including GPs, dentists and opticians, and how this can be exacerbated when being moved between different areas. We also heard of care-experienced young people having to go without treatment as they couldn't afford prescriptions, whilst others have struggled to meet clinical thresholds or had long waits for mental health treatment, due to oversubscribed CAMH services.

“There is currently a charge per item on prescription, which is £9.65, and this can make healthcare unaffordable for many young people who have left care. ... A care experienced person from Dorset said that they have missed taking their medication due to this being unaffordable for them”

Care-experienced young person,
aged 19, South West

“Delays and disruptions to diagnoses to care-experienced young people, especially for neurodiversity, who are regularly moving and beginning new relationships with each move with staff and healthcare professionals”

Care-experienced young person

Positively, we also heard examples of health services adapting their policies and services to better meet the needs of care-experienced young people, or collaboration between local authorities and local NHS services. Several Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and local authorities have provided free prescriptions to care leavers.³⁰ NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB has a dedicated health team for children in care, including medical, nursing and support staff; as well as a specific policy and pathway for children in care who may miss appointment or be at risk of not engaging with services, to reflect meet their individual needs and circumstances.³¹

The evidence we collected included widespread support for a wide range of organisations in the healthcare sector becoming corporate parents. Participants highlighted a number of ways that healthcare bodies could improve support, services and

²⁸ NICE (2021) [Guidance: Looked-after children and young people](#)

²⁹ Nuffield Foundation (2021) [Policy Briefing: The lifelong health and well-being of care leavers](#).

³⁰ See, for example, NHS North East London, [Free prescriptions for care leavers in North East London](#), and NHS Black Country Integrated Care Board (2023) [Free prescriptions for care leavers in the Black Country](#)

³¹ NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB, evidence received in response to survey for public bodies

outcomes for care-experienced young people, including mandatory training for frontline professionals about care-experienced and childhood trauma, the collection of more consistent and comprehensive data to better understand health outcomes, and bespoke pathways or targeted support to improve access to high quality, timely and appropriate healthcare support.

The NHS is a large and complex system. No single NHS organisation, acting as a sole corporate parent for healthcare, would be able to fully realise the sector's potential to positively impact the lives of care-

experienced people. Consequently, we recommend that a number of NHS bodies are named as corporate parents, including those that set national and regional policy and practice, and those that commission, provide and regulate services regularly used by care-experienced young people.

“Looked after children and care leavers to have priority when registering for GP, and bypass the waiting lists for therapy etc”

Care-experienced young person,
South East

Recommendation – We recommend that the Department for Health and Social Care, NHS England, the Care Quality Commission, all Integrated Care Boards, and all NHS Trusts (including Foundation Trusts, Mental Health Trusts, Ambulance Service Trusts and others) are named as corporate parenting organisations.

Education

The education system is one of the most vital public services for care-experienced children and young people. Education plays a crucial role in shaping all children’s development and can significantly impact on future life outcomes. As a universal service, it can also play a vital role in safeguarding children and enabling them to explore their identities and develop important relationships and support networks. For children in care, school can be a mainstay at a time when they may be experiencing adversity, complexity or trauma in their home lives.

Care-experienced children and young people face a range of challenges that can negatively impact on their education. Children continue to face high levels of instability within the care system, which can significantly disrupt their education. For example, in 2023, 25,850 children in care experienced multiple placements, almost a third of all children in care in England.³² In 2018/19, the latest year for which data is available, 11% of all children in care in England experienced a mid-year school move.³³ This instability can impact on children’s confidence, motivation and mental health.³⁴ Furthermore, the Education Select Committee has reported concerns that some schools have blocked the admissions of children in care.³⁵ Research by Ofsted has also highlighted that children living in residential children’s homes are much more likely to be in unregulated education or not in education than other children.³⁶

“Activities like family trees, mother’s day cards can be upsetting/difficult”

Care-experienced young person

Care-experienced children and young people continue to experience disproportionately poor outcomes within the education system, including lower attendance at school, higher rates of exclusion and lower attainment.³⁷ Care-experienced young people are also less likely to start or complete university degrees than their non-care-experienced peers.³⁸ In 2021/22, 14% of children who had been in care for at least 12 months had progressed to higher education by the age of 19, compared to 47% of all young people at the same age.³⁹

“Teachers shouldn’t treat us like we are ‘special’ and fragile. Teachers should push us to do better, rather than limiting us due to stigma”

Care-experienced young person

Throughout our inquiry, we have heard about welcome initiatives to improve the provision of tailored support for care-experienced students, particularly at university. For example, the University of York has enabled care leavers to access accommodation all year round and has acted as a rent guarantor to care leavers and estranged students. The National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) launched its Quality Mark in 2021, which is a framework for universities and colleges to demonstrate their support for the inclusion and success of care-experienced students.⁴⁰

We also heard from the BBC about a series the corporation released on BBC Teach—an online platform for teachers—aimed at enabling teachers to provide the best support

³² Department for Education (2023) [Children looked after in England, including adoptions: reporting year 2023](#)

³³ Children’s Commissioner (2020) [Stability Index 2020: Technical report](#)

³⁴ Department for Education (2023) [Children looked after in England including adoptions](#).

³⁵ House of Commons Education Committee (2022) [Educational poverty: how children in residential care have been let down and what to do about it](#)

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Department for Education (2023) [Widening participation in higher education: Academic year 2021/22](#)

³⁸ University of York (2024) [University of York Rent Guarantee Scheme](#)

³⁹ Department for Education (2023) [Widening participation in higher education](#).

⁴⁰ NNECL (2023) [NNECL Quality Mark](#)

possible to care-experienced children.⁴¹ Through a collection of short films, the series provides a suite of information, advice and guidance for teachers supporting care-experienced children.

Improving care-experienced children and young people's access to high quality education that is responsive to their needs and experiences could have a transformative impact on their lives and life chances. There was widespread support for educational providers being appointed as corporate parents to strengthen support at all levels of education for care-experienced students. In addition to adapting services and policies to better meet the needs of care-experienced

young people, and introducing interventions to improve outcomes, several respondents highlighted that educational providers should also do more to raise awareness of the impact of care-experience and to address stigma, such as through mandatory training for teachers and ensuring that students learn about care-experience through the national curriculum.

“We should learn about care experience in school - would fit well in a citizenship or PHSE class. Making it mandatory in curriculum would raise awareness”

Care-experienced young person

Recommendation – We recommend that the following public bodies are all named as corporate parenting organisations: the Department for Education, Ofsted, the Office for Students, schools (including maintained schools, academies, free schools and alternative provision), further education providers, and higher education institutes and providers are all named as corporate parenting organisations.

⁴¹BBC Teach (2023) [Teacher Support: Supporting care-experienced children](#)

Criminal justice system

Care-experienced children and young people interact with the criminal justice system in numerous ways and are disproportionately likely to receive a criminal conviction, for example, evidence shows that care-experienced young people born in 1994 were four times more likely to have received a criminal conviction by the age of 24, compared to their non-care-experienced peers.⁴²

Throughout our inquiry, we heard from care-experienced young people of traumatic experiences with the police, such as when being taken into care, or when in a mental health crisis. Other young people reported being subject to unnecessary violence, or receiving prejudicial or inappropriate treatment from the police or criminal justice institutions. Many respondents thought that care-experienced young people are over-criminalised and we heard examples of the police being called for incidents that wouldn't apply to other young people, such as when they were late home, or smashed a lamp in their children's home.

“Because many care-experienced young people have extremely negative interactions with the police early on in life and have a feeling of distrust and insecurity with the police. This intersects with race”

Care-experienced young person

There are examples of public organisations in the criminal or youth justice sector adapting or introducing tailored policies and interventions to improve support, services and outcomes for care-experienced young people. For example, His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has published a strategy for care-experienced people, which includes the development of a policy framework to provide advice and guidance to staff about how to support care-

experienced people; better liaison and collaboration with partners, including Personal Advisers; and the publication of guidance about how prisons, probation and local authorities can work together to support people with care experience in custody and on probation.

The police helped me when I was in crisis and signposted me to the support I needed. I want them to be a corporate parent and have to do that for all care-experienced young people”

Care-experienced young person, aged 26, East of England

However, much more needs to be done to address the disparities. From the evidence we collected, care-experienced young people expressed more distrust of the police and prison service, than any other public service. Several respondents did not think that the police or prison service should be appointed as corporate parents, due to this lack of trust and concerns about discrimination.

“Having the police as a corporate parent could create more understanding [amongst officers] and enable a more trauma-informed approach in policing generally.”

Care-experienced person, aged 33, North West

It is our view that conferring corporate parenting responsibilities on organisations responsible for the criminal and youth justice systems could have a significant positive impact on care-experienced young people, by requiring these bodies to strategically consider what they can do to better identify and respond to the needs and views of care-experienced young people. One crucial and urgent improvement would be the roll-out of

⁴² Office for National Statistics (2022) [The education background of looked-after children who interact with the criminal justice system: December 2022](#)

mandatory training for all frontline professionals to increase their understanding of the impact that being in care, or

experiencing childhood trauma, has on an individual.

“There needs to be robust support and cohesive service provision in prison to support rehabilitation. This means that care experienced people need to have access to education and health services in prison so that they stand the best chance of not re-offending when they leave.

... Equally, the Ministry of Justice needs to have oversight of why care experienced people are coming into prison and review whether there are other case disposal options available to them.”

Frontline, in response to our call for evidence

Recommendation – We recommend that the Ministry of Justice, police forces, Youth Justice Board, His Majesty’s Prisons and Probation Service, and Police and Crime Commissioners are all named as corporate parenting organisations.

The Immigration System

There are record numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) within the care system: the number of UASC children in care in England increased by 42% between 2019 and 2023; and in 2023, almost a tenth of all children in care were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.⁴³

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have often faced high levels of adversity and trauma⁴⁴, and may experience additional challenges in the care system, including linguistic or cultural barriers.

Research in 2021 found that one in ten children in care and more than 10,000 young care leavers in England had unresolved immigration or citizenship issues.⁴⁵ We know that the uncertainty caused by delays to immigration applications can have significant adverse impacts on children and young people, in the form of:

- mental health impacts, which can also compound recent traumas experienced by these children and young people;⁴⁶ and
- the denial of rights and entitlements to a whole range of support, from housing and education support for children in care, to employment support and student finance for care leavers.

“The Home Office should protect UAS Children, who should not be housed in hotels, who should not be segregated from other children in care, and who should be protected by the provisions of the Children Act.”

**The Rees Centre,
in response to our call for evidence**

“For young people subject to immigration control, there’s also a very abrupt cut off in support after turning 18 years old if they don’t have leave to remain status. There should be continued support systems in place”

Care-experienced young person

In response to our inquiry, some respondents raised concerns about the suitability of the Home Office as a corporate parent due to potential conflicts of interest, and the possibility of immigration decisions not being in the best interests of a child, or to promote their wellbeing, stability or safety.

“... an adverse Home Office decision affecting a child or young person’s safety and stability, fundamentally conflicts with corporate parenting responsibilities.”

**CoramBAAF,
in response to our call for evidence**

It is vital that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have equal right to the protections and safeguards afforded to children under the Children Act 1989, and it is our paramount belief that local authorities should remain solely responsible for the safety, care and wellbeing of these children.

However, it is also our view that the Home Office becoming a corporate parent could lead to improvements in the way that children and young people who are subject to immigration controls are supported. In particular this could be achieved through measures such as: greater collaboration between local authorities and Home Office staff in addressing the barriers faced by this

⁴³ Department for Education (2023) [Children looked after in England including adoptions](#)

⁴⁴ Wood, S. et al. (2020) [Adverse Childhood Experiences in child refugee and asylum seeking populations](#). Public Health Wales NHS Trust, pp. 8-14.

⁴⁵ South London Refugee Association and Coram Children’s Legal Centre (2021) [Taking Care: How local authorities can best address immigration issues of children in care](#)

⁴⁶ The Independent Review of Children’s Social Care (2022) [Final Report](#), p. 172.

group of young people, quicker immigration decisions, trauma-informed practice, mandatory training for Home Office staff about the impact of childhood trauma, and a

review of existing policies to ensure that they are in the best interests of, and safeguard, all children in care facing uncertainty over their immigration status.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Home Office is named as a corporate parenting organisation.

Housing

Young people are often made to leave care before they are ready and much earlier than other young people. In 2023, almost 11% of all children in care were living in independent or semi-independent settings.⁴⁷ Furthermore, only 20% of care leavers aged 19-21 were living with parents, relatives or former foster carers in 2023,⁴⁸ whilst comparatively the average age that young people leave the parental home across England is 23.⁴⁹ This means that, for young people leaving care without the safety net of a parental home, access to safe, affordable and stable housing could not be more crucial.

However, too many care leavers face persistent barriers to accessing appropriate housing. We have heard from young people that there is a lack of affordable housing options available to them, and how they haven't been given adequate support to develop the skills they need to live independently, budget effectively and manage their bills.⁵⁰ We also heard from care-experienced young people how they have struggled to secure social housing, as they were not deemed to have a local connection to an area they had been moved to under local authority or housing association allocation policies.⁵¹

“Care experienced young people often struggle when moving in to independence. There is a lack of dedicated support around managing a tenancy and adapting to life on your own with all of these new responsibilities”

**Leicestershire Cares,
in response to our call for evidence**

The vast majority of young people in England, aged 16-24, who are not living within their family home live in private rented accommodation.⁵² However, we have heard from care-experienced young people that they have been unable to move into the private-rented sector, as they couldn't provide a guarantor or a deposit. Some local authorities do provide guarantor and deposit schemes for young people leaving care, but this is far from universal.

“Safe and stable housing is a key area of need for care-experienced young people, with many living in unsuitable and unsafe accommodation currently. The waiting lists for post-18 housing are often incredibly long and young people face being moved from their areas of safety in order to access a space. This is fundamentally unjust and has a massive impact on the outcomes of care-experienced young people”

**Care-experienced staff at Frontline,
in response to our call for evidence**

Care-experienced young people are at a much greater risk of facing or experiencing homelessness than their non-care-experienced peers, and this risk has been increasing in recent years. In 2022-23, 3,710 care leavers aged 18-20 faced homelessness, an increase of 33% from four years earlier.⁵³ During the inquiry, we heard from a young person who became homeless after not having any accommodation outside of term-time whilst at university.

⁴⁷ On 31st March 2023, 2 300 children in care were living in independent settings, and a further 6, 680 were living in semi-independent settings. Department for Education (2023) [Children looked after in England, including adoptions: reporting year 2023](#)
⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Office for National Statistics (2019) [Milestones: journeying into adulthood](#)

⁵⁰ MyBnk, in response to our call for evidence.

⁵¹ Under current legislation, a care leaver under the age of 21 will have a local connection to an area that they have been moved to, that is different to their responsible local authority, when they have lived there for at least two years, including some time before they turned 16. See Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2018) [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities: Chapter 10 – Local connection and referrals to another housing authority](#)

⁵² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2020) [English housing survey, private rented sector: 2019-20](#)

⁵³ Become (2023) [Press release: 33% increase in homelessness among care leavers](#)

“Councils should have a statutory duty to be a guarantor for young people to secure housing”

Care-experienced young person,
aged 22

Living in adequate housing is a human right⁵⁴, and it is essential that this right is fulfilled for all care-experienced young people to ensure that they are able to live happy, healthy lives and make a positive start to adulthood. We think that extending corporate parenting responsibilities to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and housing associations could

lead to real improvements.⁵⁵ For example, DLUHC could introduce legislative reforms to reduce care leaver homelessness, such as automatically extending priority need to all care leavers under 25, exempting care leavers from homelessness intentionality rules and guaranteeing that all care leavers are deemed to have a local area connection in any area that they live or have close connections.

“When they are fixing your water etc and you can't stay there, there should be temporary accommodation available for care experienced [young people]”

Care-experienced young person

Recommendation – We recommend that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and housing associations are named as corporate parenting organisations.

⁵⁴ See Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which was adopted in 1966 and first ratified by the UK in 1976. See Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#)

⁵⁵ Although housing associations are officially classed as private bodies, we suggest that they are included as prospective corporate parenting organisations, as an exception, given their role in providing a public function: providing social housing on behalf of the state. Their quasi-public role has been recognised in different ways, for example housing associations are required to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998. See EHRC (2011), [Human rights at home: Guidance for social housing providers](#) and Ward Hadaway (2019), [Social Housing Speed Read – Can a housing association be considered a public authority?](#)

Transport

Public transport is vital for accessing education, work and personal support networks, and research confirms its importance for wellbeing.⁵⁶

This is all especially true for care-experienced children and young people, who may have little control over where they live and can end up living further away from the people and places that matter to them as a result. Care-experienced children and young people also face higher-than-average levels of loneliness, meaning that access to public transport—as a key way of reaching important personal connections—is especially crucial.⁵⁷

“... it can be particularly challenging [for care leavers] to afford access to public transport: the average cost of a weekly bus pass for example is £18.”

Barnardo’s,
in response to our call for evidence

Despite this, many care-experienced children and young people face barriers to accessing public transport, with serious impacts on their opportunities and wellbeing.

“... we know that Care experienced youth face a number of barriers to being active, including... transport (63%)...”

Sport England,
in response to our call for evidence

We have already seen examples of relatively simple measures aimed at addressing this, such as schemes that provide free bus travel

to care leavers in Greater Manchester and Greater London. However, the existing support available across the country is inconsistent and, from what we have seen, largely focused on bus travel only.

“A number of local authorities have started to provide schemes which provide access to free bus travel to care-experienced young people including Greater Manchester and Cornwall however, support is sporadic and a Freedom for [sic] information request by Barnardo’s last year revealed that the majority of local authorities don’t provide support for all care leavers.”

Barnardo’s,
in response to our call for evidence

The transport sector can do more to ensure that care-experienced children and young people are able to access public transport irrespective of (a) where in the country they live, and (b) the form(s) of public transport they rely on to get to the things that matter to them.

We think that the Department for Transport and regional transport authorities⁵⁸, such as Transport for London, that set national and regional transport policy, and commission, plan, deliver and oversee local services have a key role to play, in collaboration with local authorities. By taking steps to better identify and address the barriers that care-experienced young people face in accessing public transport, they can positively impact on these young people’s wellbeing, relationships and full participation in society.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Department for Transport and regional transport bodies in England are named as corporate parents.

⁵⁶ Delbosc (2012) [The role of well-being in transport policy](#)

⁵⁷ Baker et al. (2019) [Our Lives Beyond Care: Care leavers' views on their well-being in 2018](#)

⁵⁸ There are eight regional transport bodies in England: England’s Economic Heartland, Midlands Connect, Peninsula Transport, Transport East, Transport for London, Transport for the North, Transport for the South East, Western Gateway. Transport Action Network (2023) [Summary of Regional Transport Bodies](#)

Arts, Culture and Sport

There is broad evidence that accessing regular arts, culture or leisure activities can positively impact on young people’s wellbeing, development and creativity.⁵⁹ For care-experienced young people being part of social or leisure groups – such as playing sports, or attending drama, music or dancing groups – can be a protective factor: it can enable them to pursue their interests, hobbies or creativity; develop their skills and confidence; lead to the development of important peer relationships; and help them to integrate into new communities.

During our inquiry we heard examples of organisations who have introduced policies or programmes to improve care-experienced young people’s access to and participation in creative, cultural or leisure pursuits. These include local authorities providing free or discounted gym or leisure passes⁶⁰, and bespoke programmes like [‘My Creative Track’](#) – a framework developed by The Mighty Creatives to support care-experienced young people to engage with a journey of arts and cultural experiences.⁶¹

“Leisure passes for care leavers should be provided to give young people chances to meet people and support their mental health”

Care-experienced young person,
North East

Unfortunately, however, support is variable across different geographical areas; and care-experienced young people can also face a range of barriers to accessing high quality arts, cultural or leisure activities, including

low self-confidence, transport and money.⁶² We have heard how children in care have had been uprooted and moved out of their communities, disrupting their hobbies or interests, and ending their participation with sports teams or other social groups. Furthermore, some young people highlighted the lack of opportunities they have had to pursue careers in creative industries, such as the media, drama and sports, due to not being able to benefit from familial connections, or not being able to afford to take unpaid internships or work experience.

“[There is a] postcode lottery with access to gyms and creative arts industries”

Care-experienced young person,
South West

All care-experienced young people should have equal opportunities to pursue the hobbies, interests and careers they want to; and have equal access to high quality arts, cultural and sports activities. Local authorities have an integral role to play in improving access to arts, culture and sport at a local level. However, we think there should be a more concerted and strategic approach at a national level to identify and address the barriers that care-experienced young people face in this area. Given their collective roles in setting national policy, providing funding, and undertaking research, development and campaigns, we think that the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Arts Council and Sport England have the potential to transform care-experienced young people’s access to art, culture and sport.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Sport England and the Arts Council are named as corporate parents.

⁵⁹ House of Commons Digital, Media, Culture and Sport Committee (2019) [Changing Lives: the social impact of participation in culture and sport](#)

⁶⁰ For example, Wigan Council provide free entry to care leavers to gyms, swimming and exercise classes. See Wigan Council, [Health and Wellbeing for Care Leavers](#)

⁶¹ The Mighty Creatives (2023) [My Creative Track – A Pathway to Arts and Culture](#)

⁶² MyBnk, in response to our call for evidence

Employment and benefits

On average, care-experienced young people are expected to move into adulthood at a much earlier age than their non-care-experienced peers, and are consequently more likely to have greater financial responsibilities from an earlier age than other young people and without the same familial financial or practical support.

At the same time, care-experienced young people are less likely to be in education, employment or training than their peers. In 2023, 38% of care leavers aged 19-21 were not in education, employment or training⁶³, compared to around 13% of all young people aged 19-21.⁶⁴ Services that support young people to find employment and training can be vital in helping them to develop their skills, confidence and careers. Similarly, welfare benefits can be a lifeline in enabling care-experienced young people to have an adequate standard of living, and to prevent them falling into poverty or debt.⁶⁵

“DWP should employ a ‘Care Specialist’ for every borough / local authority that works specifically with care-leavers”

Care-experienced young person,
aged 22

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has already introduced some tailored measures to adapt policies, support and services for care-experienced young people. One example is the appointment of a Single Point of Contact for care leavers in every Jobcentre, who acts as the main point of liaison with local authority leaving care teams.⁶⁶ Another example is the exemption for all care leavers under the age of 25 from the Shared Accommodation Rate.⁶⁷

However, throughout our inquiry, we have heard that care-experienced young people still face barriers to accessing benefits and employment support, and have had negative experiences of services. Research from The Children’s Society in 2017 highlighted that care leavers were disproportionately likely to receive a benefit sanction: they were three times more likely to be sanctioned compared to non-care-experienced young people, and five times more likely than the average adult claimant.⁶⁸ There is no official data about the number of care leavers who receive sanctions on universal credit to track whether there has been any progress in this respect.

“While some of our practitioners report having a good working relationship with Job Centre staff, some care leavers we support continue to report not feeling their specific needs were understood, for example the fact they lack access to family support which may make it difficult to find someone to take them to interviews or help them to fill out forms.”

Barnardo’s,
in response to our call for evidence

Other respondents highlighted that the under-25 rate of universal credit is not sufficient for care leavers who are living independently and have no other financial support, and that this could lead to them taking out high-interest loans and falling into debt or starting their adult lives in poverty.

“Most of the young people we work with do not have positive experiences of ... job centre plus.”

My Bnk,
in response to our call for evidence

⁶³ Department for Education (2023) [Children looked after in England including adoptions](#).

⁶⁴ Office for National Statistics (2023) [Young people not in education, employment or training \(NEET\), UK: May 2023](#)

⁶⁵ Care-experienced young people are at a greater risk of falling into debt. Smith, N. (2023) [No Bank of Mum and Dad: the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on care-experienced young people](#)

⁶⁶ Department for Work and Pensions (2023) [Department for Work and Pensions: Care Leaver Covenant offer](#)

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Children’s Society (2017) [Claiming after care: Care leavers and the benefits system](#)

There are a number of adaptations that the DWP or Job Centre Plus (JCP+) could take, as prospective corporate parents, to improve support and outcomes for care-experienced young people. For example:

- The DWP could collect and record data about the number of care leavers in receipt of universal credit, or who have received sanctions, to better monitor outcomes;
- Following the precedent of the exemption to the Shared Accommodation Rate, the DWP could exempt care leavers from the under-25 rate of universal credit to reflect the absence of familial financial support.
- Job Centre Plus could roll out mandatory training to any frontline staff to increase their knowledge about care-experience, and to improve trauma-informed practice; and
- There could be more consistent collaboration between JCP+ and local authorities to improve tailored employment opportunities or skills development for care-experienced young people, such as through targeted jobs fairs.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Department for Work and Pensions, and Job Centre Plus are named as corporate parents.

Providers of Children’s Social Care

Foster carers, residential workers and other providers of children’s social care can develop strong, nurturing and loving relationships with children in care. They can provide vital care, love and dedication: going the extra mile to fight for the opportunities and support that make all the difference. The relationships that they form with children in care can be a lifeline and last a lifetime.

There are existing regulations, such as the children’s homes regulations and quality standards⁶⁹ and the national minimum standards for fostering services⁷⁰, which set out the minimum standards or requirements for providers of different care settings. Many of the requirements of corporate parenting responsibilities are already reflected in some form within these regulations and providers are already inspected and held to account on the extent to which they are fulfilling these as part of Ofsted inspections.⁷¹ For example, the children’s homes quality standards includes requirements for staff to help children to express their views, wishes and feelings, and to take these into account in relation to decisions affecting them; to promote their health and wellbeing; to protect them from harm and keep them safe.⁷²

Although it is clear that children’s social care providers have significant capacity to introduce measures that could positively impact on the lives and life chances of care-experienced young people, it is our view that conferring corporate parenting responsibilities on care providers would not materially improve the support that they provide or drive behaviour change, given their existing regulatory frameworks.

Additionally, some of the young people that we heard from throughout the inquiry expressed concern or unease about the potential for care providers to become their corporate parents. For example, this could have a harmful impact if a care placement breaks down, a child is moved to another home or distant location, or if a trusted relationship breaks down following the end of a placement.

We do not recommend that providers of children’s social care be named as corporate parenting organisations.

⁶⁹ Department for Education (2015) [Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards](#)

⁷⁰ Department for Education (2011) [Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards](#)

⁷¹ See Ofsted (2021) [Social Care Common Inspection Framework \(SCCIF\)](#)

⁷² [The Children’s Homes \(England\) Regulations 2015](#), ch. 1, reg. 4.

Part 3: How should corporate parents be supported?

If the full potential of corporate parenting is to be realised for care-experienced children and young people, a range of support measures should be put in place to capacity-build new corporate parenting organisations and to ensure that they are equipped to fulfil their new corporate parenting responsibilities.

Care-experienced young people want to see corporate parents being better equipped to provide support that works for them. They want to see corporate parenting responsibilities being threaded through the values, ethos and fabric of organisations, and being acted on at every level; with the views and insights of care-experienced young people at the heart of service development and improvement. To be an effective corporate parent, an organisation and its workforce must develop an understanding of the needs and experiences of care-experienced children and young people, including the impacts of past trauma. For many public bodies the transition to become corporate parents will require a period of learning, development and culture change.

“All new Corporate Parents should receive training designed and delivered by care experienced young people so that they know what being a Corporate Parent really means and to raise awareness of care experienced children and young people's lives”

**A children's social care professional,
in response to our call for evidence**

In addition to the development and publication of statutory guidance for corporate parents, we recommend that an independent organisation be appointed by the Government to provide collective and tailored advice, guidance and support to corporate parenting organisations similar to the role currently carried out by Who Cares Scotland? in Scotland. The support of an expert organisation could help to drive and support the implementation of these reforms by building a forum for corporate parents to learn from each other and those with lived experience, and to establish a collaborative culture of learning, improvement and innovation.

“The appointment of a body who would support public bodies in developing their services for care leavers. When corporate parenting principles were extended to public bodies in Scotland Who Cares Scotland worked with public bodies to develop plans and a similar arrangement would be beneficial in England.”

**Barnardo's,
in response to our call for evidence**

Recommendation – We recommend that the Department for Education appoints and funds an independent organisation to provide training, advice, guidance and support to corporate parenting organisations to enable them to effectively fulfil their responsibilities and promote best practice.

The support provided to corporate parenting organisations by this independent organisation should include the following functions.

Training - The development and roll-out of training, and learning resources on corporate parenting responsibilities and requirements, the needs and experiences of care-experienced children and young people, trauma-informed practice, co-production, and how to develop impactful and ambitious corporate parenting plans that meet or exceed legislative requirements;

Sharing of learning and best practice - The development of a corporate parenting forum and the sharing of best practice, so that different corporate parenting organisations can learn from each other, connect and collaborate;

Advice and support - Providing information, advice and guidance to corporate parents, including in relation to the development of corporate parenting plans, and seeking the views or involvement of care-experienced young people; as well as responding to specific queries.

Through the responses to our survey for public bodies, we have heard that public organisations would welcome a range of support measures to help them to respond more strategically and compassionately to the views and needs of care-experienced young people, including training, guidance, advice and the sharing of best practice.

To ensure that the appointed independent organisation is equipped to effectively fulfil the functions outlined above, we think it is important that they are provided with sufficient and sustainable funding; and are appointed for a substantial period to provide the stability required to develop their expertise, and build strong working relationships with corporate parents. The role and functions of the independent supporting organisation should be clearly outlined in statutory guidance for corporate parents to raise awareness of the support and training available to them.

“Learning from good practice examples of how other similar bodies to ourselves do this”

Sport England,
in response to our public bodies survey

Unlike the Scottish approach, we think it is important that the independent organisation appointed to provide support, advice and training to corporate parents does not also play a role in holding corporate parents to account. This would prevent conflicts of interest and enable the organisation to develop and maintain positive working relationships with corporate parents, based on transparency, collaboration and learning.

Part 4: How should corporate parents be held to account?

The success of reforms to corporate parenting will depend on the extent to which new corporate parents are incentivised to comply with their new responsibilities. Robust accountability measures are needed to guarantee compliance and drive behaviour change. Throughout our inquiry, care-experienced children and young people have resoundingly told us that reforms will only be effective if they include strong accountability measures.

In this report, we are recommending a suite of measures, which taken together will instil a culture of learning, improvement and accountability for corporate parents without being resource-intensive or an overly-bureaucratic burden on public bodies.

“Young people’s lived experiences will not improve unless corporate parents hold themselves accountable and drive forward”

Care-experienced young person

“[Corporate parents should be] legally and financially responsible—they should be held to same account as biological parents, so if they are neglecting young people’s rights they could be done for neglect.”

Care-experienced young person, aged 25, North West

The six measures that we recommend in this section are set out in the box below.

- 1) **Stronger legislation** – corporate parenting responsibilities should be given a stronger legislative weighting.
- 2) **Strategic planning and reporting** – all corporate parents should be required to develop and publish plans setting out the actions they will take to comply with corporate parenting responsibilities, and annual progress reports on the implementation of these plans should be published to increase transparency and accountability.
- 3) **Assessment of compliance through regulatory frameworks** – the extent to which organisations are complying with their corporate parenting responsibilities should be assessed as part of their relevant regulatory or inspection frameworks.
- 4) **Increased transparency and scrutiny of the Government’s progress in improving support, services and outcomes for care-experienced young people**
- 5) **Putting young people’s voices and views at the heart of corporate parenting**
- 6) **Accountability and recourse for care-experienced young people** – there should be more centralised accountability and recourse where there are serious concerns about compliance.

1) Stronger legislation

Corporate parenting responsibilities should be given a stronger legislative weighting than the current corporate parenting principles: organisations should be expected to comply with corporate parenting responsibilities rather than have ‘regard to’ them.

2) Strategic planning and reporting

All corporate parents should be required to develop and publish plans setting out the actions they will take to comply with corporate parenting responsibilities; SMART objectives for improving support, services or outcomes for care-experienced young people; and how these objectives will be achieved.

We recognise that it takes time to implement change, whether rolling out training programmes or embedding new data metrics, so corporate parenting plans should be developed and published every three years.

However, to increase transparency and accountability about these responsibilities being embedded into the day-to-day operation of organisations, corporate parents should also be required to publish annual

progress reports on the implementation of plans, which should include any relevant outcomes data to track the impact of changes.

It should be mandatory for corporate parents to develop, publish and submit corporate parenting plans and we recommend that a range of enforcement measures or penalties are established for corporate parents that don’t comply with this requirement.

“Have a roadmap of what they will do and by when and hold them accountable for these deadlines”

Care-experienced young person,
Yorkshire

Recommendation – We recommend that the Department for Education oversee and enforce the failure of any corporate parenting organisations to submit corporate parenting plans or progress reports using a range of enforcement measures.

3) Assessment of compliance through regulatory frameworks

Effective regulation can play a significant role in driving behaviour change. The extent to which organisations are complying with their corporate parenting responsibilities should be assessed as part of their relevant regulatory or inspection frameworks.

We are proposing that some specific regulators be appointed as corporate parents, such as Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission, given their existing role in inspecting services that provide care or support to care-experienced children and young people. In other sectors, we would expect the relevant Government Departments to encourage regulators to adapt regulatory frameworks to adequately reflect new corporate parenting legislation.

Recommendation – We recommend that relevant regulators, inspectorates and ombuds-organisations ensure that assessments of how well corporate parenting organisations are complying with corporate parenting responsibilities are adequately reflected in relevant regulatory frameworks.

4) Increased transparency and scrutiny of the Government's progress in improving support, services and outcomes for care-experienced young people

To provide a comprehensive and joined-up approach, we recommend that a cross-Government corporate parenting plan be developed every three years to summarise the Government's overarching strategy for corporate parenting. This should be additional to individual Departmental plans and demonstrate the main objectives and plans being taken across Government to improve support, services and outcomes for care-experienced young people.

We recommend that an annual progress report is published, which includes relevant data about the experiences and outcomes of care-experienced young people to track progress. To enable Parliamentary scrutiny of Government's plans and progress, we recommend that the Secretary of State for Education be required to provide an annual statement to Parliament upon publication of the annual progress report.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Government be required to develop and publish a cross-Government corporate parenting plan every three years, co-ordinated by the Department for Education, which brings together strategic objectives and plans from across Government Departments; as well as publishing an annual progress report.

The Secretary of State for Education should be required to make an annual statement to Parliament upon publication of the progress report to enable Parliamentary scrutiny of the Government's plans and progress.

5) Putting young people's voice and views at the heart of corporate parenting

In Scotland, the Scottish Government develops and publishes a corporate parenting progress report every three years. Whilst this can be a helpful celebration of the positive action being taken by corporate parents across the country, it does not allow for effective challenge or constructive feedback, and unfortunately doesn't always chime with the experiences or views of care-experienced children and young people.

We have heard consistently that corporate parents should be accountable to care-experienced children and young people. Corporate parenting plans should be meaningfully informed by the views of care-experienced young people. Additionally, we recommend that an independent body, such

as the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England be resourced to develop a shadow corporate parenting report every three years, based on consultation with care-experienced young people about progress to date, areas for improvement, and what care-experienced young people would like to see from their corporate parents in the future. This shadow report should be shared with corporate parents and should be used to inform their future planning.

“Need to be answerable to people with lived experienced - have to listen to us and be accountable”

Care-experienced young person

Recommendation – We recommend that the Children's Commissioner's Office be funded to develop and publish a shadow corporate parenting report every three years based on consultation with care-experienced young people about progress to date and areas for improvement.

6) Accountability and recourse for care-experienced young people

Outside of existing regulatory frameworks and the proposed reporting frameworks, there should be more centralised accountability and recourse for care-experienced young people where there are serious concerns about compliance. This could be, for example, if a corporate parent has eligibility criteria for service provision that indirectly discriminates against care-experienced young people, or if an organisation's decision-making or conduct has a detrimental impact on care-experienced young people's wellbeing, safety or stability.

We recommend that an independent body, such as the Children's Commissioner's Office be granted additional powers, set out in legislation, to receive and raise complaints about flagrant or systemic breaches of corporate parenting responsibilities, and to be able to require corporate parents to take specific action to rectify this and ensure compliance.

Recommendation – We recommend that the Children's Commissioner's Office be given additional powers to hold corporate parents to account, including powers to:

- receive complaints about flagrant or systemic breaches of corporate parenting responsibilities;
- compel information from corporate parenting organisations as part of investigations into complaints;
- write to a corporate parenting organisation setting out remedial action that it must take to ensure compliance with corporate parenting responsibilities; and
- undertake enforcement action or penalties if requested remedial action is not taken.

Part 5: Should corporate parenting be renamed?

The name ‘corporate parenting’ is controversial. Throughout the inquiry we have heard consistently that care-experienced young people have mixed views and feelings about the term ‘corporate parenting’.

A minority of the children and young people we heard from were supportive of the name because it conveyed, in fairly literal terms, the nature and limitations of corporate parenting. Others thought that the term ‘corporate parenting’ already had some currency or public understanding and that this was helpful for consistency when implementing reforms.

“From my understanding a local authority is a ‘corporate parent’ exactly because they are a care corporation and they can’t be a mum or a dad”

Care-experienced young person

However, a much greater number of children and young people shared concerns that the term was inappropriate or problematic. We heard that the word ‘corporate’, as a term felt too cold and impersonal.

“We believe the concept of ‘corporate parenting’ encourages detached and dispassionate language and terminology and works against what children consistently say they want from care – to feel loved, secure, to understand their identity and their past and to be connected to people who appreciate and value them and stay in their lives.”

Article 39,
in response to our call for evidence

In direct contradiction to this, other children and young people felt that the term ‘corporate’ was appropriate precisely because it captured the fact that corporate parenting is not a form of parenting in the usual sense, instead being characterised by the involvement of corporations with which care-experienced children and young people usually do not have a personal relationship.

The term ‘parenting’ was the more controversial of the two. A small number of children and young people supported the use of the term, feeling that it was important to convey the idea that corporate parents should act, in some sense, as parents, and that they should take their responsibilities as corporate parents as seriously as they would take direct parental responsibility.

However, the majority of children and young people we heard from took the opposite view. Some said that they felt uncomfortable with the use of the term ‘parenting’ to describe their relationship with corporations. Many pointed out that corporate parenting is not and never will be anything like ‘parenting’ in the usual sense of the word, and that this made the use of the term inappropriate.

Other children and young people pointed out that, for many, being in care does not mean having no parent, that they still had a significant and important relationship with their biological parent(s) and that the use of the term ‘parenting’ to describe their relationship with corporations created a conflict with their feelings about their relationship with their biological parent(s).

We heard very clearly that the term ‘parenting’ is an emotive one, and that many children and young people were uncomfortable with its use in the name ‘corporate parenting’.

“Article 39 has previously suggested ‘shared parenting’ as possible new terminology, since this recognises the continuing role of birth parents for many children (and adults), and also signals the collective responsibilities of different professionals and organisations in the life of a child or an adult.”

Article 39,
in response to our call for evidence

“At the end of the day, they are not your parent, and never will be.

A parent is the person who helps you set up your room for university, with a tear in their eye. A parent is the person who brings you soup and holds your hand when you are ill. A parent is someone who holds you when you are scared, and who tells you they are proud of you.

As much as we want there to be, there will never be this same connection between a corporate parent and a young person in care.

Why? Because the young person will always know that that person gets paid to do what they do.”

Care-experienced young person, aged 19, South West

When evaluating the success of reforms to corporate parenting, much will depend on what corporate parenting means to care-experienced young people, and the use of a term which can feel jarring or stigmatising could negatively effect this. The Independent Review of Children’s Social Care recommended that corporate parenting be renamed to community parenting. We recommend that there is further consultation with care-experienced young people about renaming corporate parenting and potential alternative options. Some of the alternatives suggested throughout our inquiry include:

- Community parenting
- Shared parenting
- Community champions
- Community guardians
- Care-experienced champions
- Collective guardians
- Collective parenting
- Care-experienced support network
- Corporate care-givers
- Appointed advocates

Recommendation – We recommend that the Department for Education consult further with care-experienced children and young people about renaming ‘corporate parenting’ and potential alternative options.

Recommendations

We recommend that:

- 1) The Government legislates to introduce a new set of more action-focused corporate parenting responsibilities, with a stronger legal weighting⁷³, to replace the existing corporate parenting principles.
- 2) The Department for Education develops and publishes statutory guidance setting out the requirements for new corporate parenting organisations and ways in which these can be fulfilled, the support available to them, how they will be held to account, and examples of best practice.
- 3) The Government legislates to confer corporate parenting responsibilities onto a broad range of public sector bodies and organisations.
- 4) The Secretary of State for Education be given the power to confer corporate parenting responsibilities onto other public sector organisations in the future, in line with agreed criteria.
- 5) The Department for Education appoints and funds an independent organisation to provide training, advice, guidance and support to corporate parenting organisations to enable them to effectively fulfil their responsibilities and promote best practice.
- 6) Corporate parenting organisations be required to develop and publish corporate parenting plans every three years, and progress reports annually, and submit these to their relevant Government Department.
 - a. Corporate parenting plans should set out SMART objectives for how organisations will fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities over this period, an action plan for delivery and how plans have been informed by the views of care-experienced young people.
- 7) The Department for Education should oversee and enforce the failure of any corporate parenting organisations to submit corporate parenting plans or progress reports using a range of enforcement measures.
- 8) The Government be required to develop and publish a cross-Government corporate parenting plan every three years, co-ordinated by the Department for Education, which brings together strategic objectives and plans from across Government Departments; as well as publishing an annual progress report.
 - a. The Secretary of State for Education should be required to make an annual statement to Parliament upon publication of the progress report to enable Parliamentary scrutiny of the Government's plans and progress.
- 9) An independent body, such as the Children's Commissioner's Office be funded to develop and publish a shadow corporate parenting report every three years based on consultation with care-experienced young people about progress to date and areas for improvement.
- 10) Relevant regulators, inspectorates and ombuds-organisations ensure that assessments of how well corporate parenting organisations are complying with corporate parenting responsibilities are adequately reflected in relevant regulatory frameworks.

⁷³ Requiring new corporate parenting organisations to comply with new corporate parenting responsibilities, so far as this is consistent with the exercise of their other functions, instead of just having regard to principles.

- 11) An independent body, such as the Children’s Commissioner’s Office be given additional powers to hold corporate parents to account, including powers to:
 - a. receive complaints about flagrant or systemic breaches of corporate parenting responsibilities;
 - b. compel information from corporate parenting organisations as part of investigations into complaints;
 - c. write to a corporate parenting organisation setting out remedial action that they must take to ensure compliance with corporate parenting responsibilities; and
 - d. undertake enforcement action or penalties if requested remedial action is not taken.
- 12) The Department for Education consult further with care-experienced children and young people about renaming ‘corporate parenting’ and potential alternative options.
- 13) The Government funds and implements a workforce development programme to upskill frontline professionals who work with care-experienced children and young people, including building their understanding of the impact of childhood trauma.
- 14) The Government improves and increases the collection of data relating to children and young people’s outcomes, which is disaggregated by care experience.



Appendix A: Proposed corporate parenting responsibilities

It is the duty of every corporate parent, in so far as consistent with the proper exercise of its other functions:

- 1) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health, well-being and safety, of care-experienced children and young people;
- 2) to proactively identify and respond to the views, wishes and feelings of care-experienced children and young people, including about service improvement;
- 3) to assess the needs of care-experienced children and young people for services and support it provides, and any barriers, stigma or discrimination they may face;
- 4) to take a trauma-informed approach, and to adapt or introduce policies, services or opportunities to meet the needs of care-experienced children and young people and address any barriers, stigma or discrimination they face;
- 5) to promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for care-experienced children and young people, and prepare them for adulthood;
- 6) to promote, protect and fulfil the full rights of care-experienced children and young people, including those contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- 7) to act in ways that promote and protect the stability and security of care-experienced children and young people in their home lives, relationships, education, employment or finances;
- 8) to take such other action as it considers appropriate for the purposes of improving the way in which it exercises its functions in relation to care-experienced children and young people.

Appendix B: Our proposed list of corporate parents

List of public sector organisations that we recommend are appointed as corporate parents under new legislation

- All tier-one local authorities in England and district councils
- Metro Mayors
- Department for Health and Social Care, NHS England, the Care Quality Commission, all Integrated Care Boards, and all NHS Trusts (including Foundation Trusts, Mental Health Trusts, Ambulance Service Trusts and others)
- Department for Education, Ofsted, the Office for Students, schools (including maintained schools, academies, free schools and alternative provision), further education providers, and higher education institutes and providers
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and housing associations
- Department for Work and Pensions, and Job Centre Plus
- Ministry of Justice, police forces, Youth Justice Board, His Majesty's Prisons and Probation Service, and Police and Crime Commissioners
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Arts Council, and Sport England
- Department for Transport and regional transport authorities
- The Home Office
- His Majesty's Treasury, and the Cabinet Office

Appendix C: Methodology

The APPG's Corporate Parenting Inquiry was co-ordinated by Become, the national charity for children in care and young care leavers, which acts as secretariat to the APPG.

The Inquiry ran from July 2023 to January 2024, with evidence being collected between July and October 2023.

Research Questions

The Inquiry had three separate evidence-gathering streams, which collectively investigated the following research questions:

- How should the corporate parenting responsibilities be adapted and strengthened?
- Which organisations should be corporate parents, which should not, and why?
- Are there examples of good practice where a public body has:
 - collected feedback from and listened to the views of care-experienced children and young people,
 - adapted their policies, practices or services in order to better serve and support care-experienced children and young people,
 - provided specific support services for care-experienced children and young people, or
 - provided ringfenced opportunities, such as employment, training or grants?
- How should corporate parents be supported?
- How should corporate parents be held to account?
- Should corporate parenting be renamed?

Evidence Gathering

In total, the Inquiry received evidence or heard from **more than 200 individuals and organisations**. This was done using three separate methods, each of which are set out below.

1) Sessions for Care-Experienced Children and Young People

In total, we conducted 14 sessions between August and October 2024 to hear the views of care-experienced children and young people about the proposals to reform corporate parenting in England.

This included six regional sessions covering all regions in England: London, the Midlands, the North West, Yorkshire and the North East, the South West, and South East and East of England.

We also held a number of sessions aimed at particular groups of care-experienced young people, including those from minoritised ethnic groups, those who identify as LGBTQI+, disabled children and young people, care-experienced young parents, and young people who have been subject to immigration control. These sessions were intended to provide a safe space to discuss the particular needs, experiences and views of children and young people belonging to those groups.

We held three separate sessions with groups of care-experienced young people who are part of participation groups with Drive Forward Foundation, Sister System and Leaders Unlocked.

We also received and included the views, insights and quotes from care-experienced young people who had attended separate engagement sessions held by Become, Coram Voice and the National Care Leaving Benchmarking Forum, which is run by Catch22.⁷⁴

In total, we heard from 167 care-experienced children and young people.

2) Call for Evidence

We also issued a call for evidence, which was open to any individuals and organisations with views or evidence about corporate parenting in England.

We received responses from a wide variety of individuals, including care-experienced young people and adults, professionals, academics, foster carers, parents, carers, and members of the public.

We also received evidence from a variety of organisations including local authorities, public bodies, charities and research institutions.

3) Survey for Public Bodies

Through a separate survey, we collected evidence from public bodies in England.

This survey had a particular focus on identifying existing good practice, as well as understanding what support public bodies would need as prospective corporate parents and to be able to deliver the strongest impact in improving support, services and outcomes for care-experienced young people

Evidence Coding and Analysis

During the coding and analysing of evidence, all sources of evidence were treated equally—no weighting was applied and responses from individuals were handled identically to responses from organisations and public bodies. The findings and recommendations contained in this report are therefore a reflection of the full body of evidence that we collected from all sources.

Whilst we have endeavoured to reflect the evidence as comprehensively as possible, we have not been able to include every opinion and viewpoint expressed in the various sources of evidence. Throughout the report, as far as possible, we have tried to highlight where there have been significant differences of opinion, or consensus on any particular issues.

⁷⁴ Some of these sessions were carried out prior to the start of the inquiry, between March and August 2023.

Acknowledgements

The APPG would like to thank all of the more than 200 individuals and organisations who contributed their experiences, views and recommendations to the Inquiry.

A total of 185 individual people provided input, of whom 167 were care-experienced children and young people. We particularly want to thank these children and young people for sharing their views, experiences and ideas as part of the inquiry.

We would also like to thank the 23 organisations—including public bodies, charities, research institutions and others—that provided evidence.

Our thanks goes to the APPG Officers for chairing regional sessions for care-experienced young people: Steve McCabe, MP for Birmingham, Selly Oak; Tim Loughton, MP for East Worthing and Shoreham; Edward Timpson CBE KC, MP for Eddisbury; and Rachael Maskell, MP for York Central.

Thanks to all of the individuals, not named here, who responded to our call for evidence. Thanks also to the organisations who responded to our call for evidence and our survey for public bodies, including:

- Article 39
- Barnardo's
- BBC
- CoramBAAF
- Coram Voice
- The Department for Education
- The Department for Health and Social Care
- Frontline
- Haringey CYPS
- HM Treasury
- Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust
- London Borough of Waltham Forest
- The Mighty Creatives
- MyBnk
- National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum (NLCBF)
- National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)
- NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB
- The Office of the Children's Commissioner for England
- Ofsted
- The Rees Centre, University of Oxford
- Social Work England
- Sport England

Our special thanks also goes to Chloe Dobson and Lynsey Emery at Who Cares? Scotland for their insightful contributions and support for this Inquiry.

Thanks also to the many organisations that supported the young people's workshops, including the Drive Forward Foundation, Leaders Unlocked, and Sister System.

Finally, thanks to Become, the national charity for children in care and young care leavers, without which this Inquiry would not have been possible. As secretariat to the APPG, Become co-ordinated this Corporate Parenting Inquiry. Particular thanks go to Matt Blow, Policy & Public Affairs Manager at Become and Senior Clerk to the APPG for overseeing this Inquiry, to Mark Paul and Simone Connolly for their research and writing, and to Jo Petty and Henrietta Imoreh for overseeing the participation of care experienced children and young people.

BECOME.

THE CHARITY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE
AND YOUNG CARE LEAVERS



for Care-Experienced
Children and Young People

Contact

You can find out more about the APPG for Care-Experienced Children and Young People and join our mailing list by visiting: <https://becomecharity.org.uk/become-the-movement/appg/>

You can also e-mail us at appg@becomecharity.org.uk

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