

Respected

getting  
it right

for every child  
in South Lanarkshire

Safe

Achieving

Included

Responsible

Nurtured

Healthy

Active



South Lanarkshire  
Partnership  
Stronger together

# South Lanarkshire's Promise

Corporate Parenting Strategy

2021 – 2024

Respected

Safe

Included

Healthy

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Active

Achieving

Responsible

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# Section 1:

# Foreword

## Cleland Sneddon (Chair The Promise Board)

**I am passionate about making sure that care experienced children and Young people across South Lanarkshire have the necessary opportunities they need to thrive and succeed.**

The Corporate Parenting Board's vision is to make sure everyone plays their part in supporting our care experienced children and young people as they grow and develop.

Our refreshed strategy sets out our vision and direction and is shaped by the views and experiences of South Lanarkshire's care experienced children and young people. It describes what we hope to achieve over the next three years and how we be the best possible corporate parents.

I am extremely proud of our care experienced children and young people and I am committed to do all I can to support them to benefit from the many opportunities our corporate parents have to offer. In all we do we want children and young people who have experienced care, to feel loved, accepted and safe.

I particularly want to thank our skilled, dedicated and compassionate foster carers, kinship carers and staff for their commitment as we navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic together.

Our Corporate Parenting Strategy builds on our vision for children and young people as set out in the Children's Services Plan and from the lessons learned from our recent care and protection inspection. Moreover, it starts to work towards the ambitions of the Care Review and challenge us to do what we can to be the best corporate parents we can be.

Our new strategy sees the implementation of a refreshed governance structure that I believe will help us to achieve best practice in implementing The Promise and The Plan 2021-24 and in making sure that our care experienced children and young people are safeguarded and supported to reach their full potential and thrive within their communities.

This strategy underpins our commitment to champion care experienced children and young people and to ensure they have every opportunity to live happy and fulfilling lives.



**Cleland Sneddon**  
**Chief Executive**  
South Lanarkshire Council and  
Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board

# Section 2: Introduction

## Important messages from our Champions Board to all of South Lanarkshire's corporate parents

### Welcome to South Lanarkshire's Promise 2021-24. In 2019 Scotland was asked to Keep The Promise.

The Promise is the result of the Independent Care Review and our voices are at the centre of The Promise.

The Care Review listened to thousands of children, young people, adults, families, and professionals to understand what needed to change about how adults care for children and young people to make sure children and families get the best support possible at the right time. This document aims to deliver a review that listens to young people at its heart. It was made by listening to the views of over 2,300 care experienced young people and adults.

The Promise isn't set just a list of conclusions, it is a commitment to make all the changes we deserve, to make sure that we all grow up loved, safe and respected, and able to realise our full potential.

The Plan 2021-2024 is the next step towards keeping the promise made to children and families. It sets out the changes that will happen at a national level over the next three years and is the first of three plans, the final concluding in 2030.

- Plan 21-24 contains a series of outcomes that must be achieved by 2024. It seeks to ensure that the fundamentals are set and there is significant and sustained action over five priority areas: **A good childhood**
- Whole family support
- Supporting the workforce
- Planning
- Building Capacity

A Corporate Parenting Board and Champion's Board will support South Lanarkshire's corporate parents to deliver the promise for us and to be the best possible corporate parents they can be. The Champions Board and the newly established Promise Board will lead on the change agenda and hold all partners to account with the collective response to the needs identified and the improvements required.

We launched the Champions Board approach on 10 December 2019. This provided an opportunity to present to key partners and elected members who have Corporate Parenting responsibilities and provided a commitment to take our approach forward in the future. The Champions Board will support our corporate parents to deliver The Promise in South Lanarkshire. This approach will facilitate more productive spaces and opportunities for discussions and identification of areas for action to make the required changes.

In South Lanarkshire, care experienced children and young people are already beginning to work alongside the adults in our lives to make the changes that need to happen, so that The Promise becomes a reality for all of us, not just some of us.

But the work doesn't stop here. We need as many care experienced children and young people as possible to make their voices heard in order to make sure the adults in our lives deliver the change we deserve.

### The Champion's Board



# Section 3: The Promise Partnership

Our corporate parenting partners in South Lanarkshire are: most importantly our children, young people and families, South Lanarkshire Council, South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), Police Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture and Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASLAN) on behalf of the vibrant and valuable third sector organisations working with children and families.

The diagram below shows the governance structure that oversees the work of our Corporate Parenting Partnership and the implementation of our strategy.



This structure supports progress reporting and ensures accountability in all that we do. By working together meaningfully and sharing information appropriately, we will better support our children and families. We are committed to ensure that every child is supported throughout their childhood and into adulthood, getting the help they need, when they need it. We have located our Champions board within our revised Corporate Parenting structures, this ensures that the Champions board has a significant role in progressing our strategy. The Champions board approach is well positioned to continue to challenge and influence change.

## The Corporate Parenting Board key objectives

To raise awareness of the CPPs corporate parenting strategy and responsibilities and ensure all care experienced children and young people have a positive experience and that the strategy enhances their lives

To ensure that looked after children, care leavers and their carers are listened to and engaged with, and to ensure that their views influence new policy and service development

To encourage all partners, across the partnership work in an integrated manner in the best interests of care experienced children and young people; to ensure that every child and young person looked after is supported to be safe, happy and healthy and to achieve their full potential

To lead cultural and behavioural change to promote better outcomes for care experienced children and young people

To hold all partners to account for their role in the delivery of services to care experienced children and young people and unlock opportunities for all care experienced young people.

## What we know about our care experienced children and young people

In 2019, South Lanarkshire was home to 320,530 people, of which 17.3% were 15 and under. The area covers 180,000 hectares of land stretching from a few miles from the city centre of Glasgow to close to the Scottish Border (with an 80% Urban and 20% rural split and is one of the largest and most diverse areas of Scotland. There are four localities that are aligned to support planning across Education, Health and Social Work and 17 learning communities with 20 secondary establishments, 124 primary schools and 72 early years establishments.

The key characteristics of our care experienced children and young people can be seen in the profiles below.

## Care Experienced children and young people

**725** children and young people were looked after – 10.6 per 1,000 population and lower than the national figure of **14.3%**. Of these, during the reporting period:



- **27%** of children and young people were Looked After at Home with parents.

**1% above the Scotland total of 26%**

- **29%** with Kinship Carers Friends/Relatives.

**1% above the Scotland total of 28%**

- **33%** with Foster Carers.

**8% above the Scotland total of 24%**

- **1%** with Foster Carers purchased by Local Authority.

**9% below the Scotland total of 10%**

- **1%** in other community settings (includes prospective adopters)

**the same as the national figure**

## Attainment of care experienced pupils 2018-2019 (one or more award)



National 3	<b>83.3%</b>
National 4	<b>66.7%</b>
National 5	<b>tbc</b>
Higher Grade	<b>tbc</b>
Advanced Higher	<b>tbc</b>

## Attendance of care experienced pupils 2018-19



Looked After at Home	Looked After Away from Home	All care experienced
<b>82.7%</b>	<b>92.8%</b>	<b>89.6%</b>

## Positive post-school destinations for care experienced young people 2017-2018



All care experienced young people	<b>90%</b>
Looked after at home	<b>78.9%</b>
Looked after away from home	<b>96.7%</b>

## Housing for Throughcare young people



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
No. of Throughcare applications on list	<b>70</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>87</b>
No. of new Throughcare applications received	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>
No. of Throughcare applicants housed	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>

## Homeless care leavers

**6.6%** of all youth homeless applications were from care leavers



2018-19

# Section 4: Voice (Including UNCRC)

When children speak, adults must really listen to them. Adults must make sure that children are included in decisions about their lives.

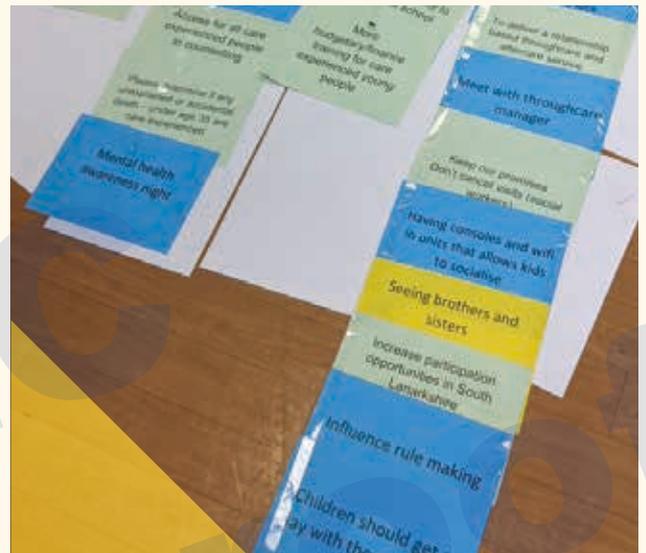


## Our pledges to the voice of children:

- We will listen to all care experienced children and young people
- We will increase participation opportunities in South Lanarkshire
- We will ensure that our care experienced population are not digitally excluded
- We will raise the profile of the Champions Board across all corporate parents
- We will increase participation within the children's hearing system for care experienced young people

# Section 5: Family

If children are living with their family and are safe and feel loved, they should stay there. Their family should be given all the help they need to stay together. If they need extra help when things get difficult, they should get it.



## Our pledges to the family:

- We will improve support to kinship carers
- We will develop meaningful and equal relationships with care experienced families
- We will offer specialist support to our foster carers.
- We will develop highly participative ways of working with families to understand and meet needs of families within their communities.
- We will develop family support approaches based on the ten national principles.
- We will do our best to keep families and brothers and sisters together, unless there are safeguarding issues to do so
- We will treat families as equal corporate parenting partners
- We will work to build strong trusting relationships with care experienced families

## Section 6: Care

If children cannot stay with the adults in their family, they will stay with their brothers and sisters. The home they live in together will be a place where they feel safe and loved. It should be their home for as long as they want and need it to be.



### Our pledges to the care of children:

- We will deliver a relationship based throughcare and aftercare service
- Access to improved health supports, especially when moving on
- We will provide access to counselling for all care experienced children and young people so they are supported to recover from trauma.
- We will work to create stable and loving relationships for young people who cannot stay with their families.
- We will encourage our care experienced young people to remain in stable and loving care placement up until they are 21 years old.
- We will work to break down barriers to enabling life long relationships for our care experienced young people.
- We will provide care, compassion and understanding and be there for care experienced children and young people
- We will continue to engage with partners nationally to examine the use of restrictive practice and we will be influencing action towards the reduction and elimination of physical restraint in Scotland

## Section 7: People

Relationships are important and adults must make sure children are able to stay close to the people they want to and keep in contact with them. Adults must also help children make new relationships as they grow up. Sometimes adults need some help too. The adults who are close to children must get the help they need to make sure they can do their best for children.



### Our pledges to and by the people who care for children:

- We will organise corporate parenting training for the community planning partnership partners including young people
- We will speak up for care experienced children and young people
- We will involve young care experienced children and young people in the recruitment of Children's Panel members in South Lanarkshire (and other events)
- We will continue to champion for the children in our care
- We will support partners to plan services and develop policy change with care experienced children and young people at the heart of the process
- Our practice will be trauma informed

## Section 8:

# Whole System Approach as it relates to young people in conflict with the law

In South Lanarkshire we are committed to preventing the criminalisation of children and young people and promoting a progressive, child centred and welfare-based approach to young people in conflict with the law where children are supported to know their rights and have these respected at every stage of the process.

The Whole System Approach is committed to ensuring that children and young people in conflict with the law are offered the Care and Protection they require at the right time and that proportionate, age-appropriate responses are introduced to prevent early criminalisation of young people and to ensure protection of persons in the community from harm. A range of steps are in place to help support child centred approaches to this group of young people.

A dedicated team of social workers and social work assistants has been established to work with young people from the age of 14 -21 who are in conflict with the law. The team work closely with third sector partners Action for Children and Includem to deliver tailored interventions in response to the needs of young people. Interventions are proportionate and promote child centred approaches which involve retaining children in the children's hearing system to maximise opportunities for age-appropriate responses.

Central to our approach is Inclusion as Prevention, an innovative community-driven practice model that aims to collaboratively shift and re-shape the design and delivery of services for children and young people at risk of offending and their families. Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, it is a partnership between South Lanarkshire Council, Action for Children, the Children and Young Persons Centre for Justice and Dartington Service Design Lab.

The voice of children, young people, their families and communities is at the heart of Inclusion as Prevention. This approach has facilitated a range of innovative practice, including the Junior Pathfinder project for children who experience barriers to learning. We know that the children who are most vulnerable to future negative outcomes and wider exclusion often have troubled relationships with education. Research highlights that exclusion is one of the most important predictors of getting a criminal record in adult life.

This unique approach focusses on transition support between primary 7 and s1, with family engagement and building confidence and resilience as a central feature.

## Our commitments under the Whole System Approach are:

- We will maximise the volume of remittals to the children's hearings for disposal from courts.
- We will maximise the use of bail for young people who would otherwise be remanded in custody.
- We will apply a partnership approach with South Lanarkshire's Homeless Team and the Blue Triangle for people at risk of remand due to homelessness.
- We will maximise the use of secure care for young people at risk of being remanded
- We will increase the use of Structured Deferred Sentences for young people under the age of 21 years and support them to be admonished at the end of their sentence.
- We will increase the opportunities for young people to be diverted from prosecution.
- We will increase options for Community Based Sentencing for young people under the age of 21 years to continue the trend of young people in conflict with the law receiving community rather than custodial sentences.
- Since 2016 the Scottish Prison Service Statistics indicate that the volume of young people under the age of 21 years who are either remanded or detained in HM Polmont Youth Offenders Institution has reduced by 69%. These statistics are particularly important as Who Cares Scotland reported that In Scotland as many as 50% of people in prison have previously been looked after.
- We will continue to increase the use of Structured Deferred Sentences for young people under the age of 21 years and support them to be admonished at the end of their sentence. This tailored disposal offers greater flexibility than a community payback order which demands adherence to strict standards and guidelines. Young people in South Lanarkshire have responded well to this disposal. The University of West of Scotland evaluation (2019) indicated an 83% completion rate for this group.
- The Scottish Prison Service Statistics also reflect a downward trend in the volume of under 18s remanded or sentenced to custody. Currently, South Lanarkshire is consistent with comparator authorities and has seen an overall reduction in the detention of this age group. There are presently no young people under the age of 18 in custody.

# Section 9: Scaffolding

Help and support must be there for children and families whenever they need it. It must also be there for the adults who are close to children and families. It is important everyone knows where to go for help and that it is ready when it is asked for.

## Our commitment for the scaffolding that provides the support for children:

- We will provide bespoke employability support to all care experienced young people who need it
- We will expand the care experienced pilot Into Work program and provide five more places within the council and five more places within NHS Lanarkshire
- We will work together to prevent any young care leaver being homeless from care
- We will work together to ensure that children's rights are being upheld
- We will work closely with our partners in further and higher education to ensure care experienced young people get continued support throughout their studies



My Brighter Future  
**Aspire**

**Reece McGrotty**  
KEAR Campus



Reece was supported on Aspire during his last 6 months at school, his Aspire worker helped him through the transition of leaving school into formal training.

“ My Aspire worker helped me to take part in different activities while still at school. This helped my confidence and got me into a routine. I've now progressed onto Employability Fund with LAMH and I am hoping to gain employment eventually. ”

Reece progressed to Employability Fund Training with LAMH.

South Lanarkshire  
Youth Employability  
Education Resources

# Section 10: Next steps

**Our strategy has three themes that reflects our priorities over the next two years:**

- Redesigning services for children and young people looked after in the community
- Engagement and participation
- Throughcare and aftercare

Each of the priorities listed below will be further developed into aims that follow the SMART model to ensure they are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time based. These aims and supporting measurement plans are detailed in the action plans of the linked thematic groups.

## Redesigning services for children and young people looked after in the community

This is a new subgroup that will initially scope the nature of provision and look at areas for further development to improve the quality of service provision. Following this scoping process there will be an action plan of improvements and timescales. This should be completed by August 2021.

Areas for action	Priorities	The Promise
1. Develop a robust data set of the looked after in the community population	Improved data information that allows for improved information sharing and joint working. Also improve the ability to identify and trends that highlight the need for additional provision.	Planning and building capacity
2. Positive post school destinations for Young people looked after in the community	Young people looked after at home achieve sustained positive post school destinations and the gap in destinations for those looked after at home is reduced	Moving on
3. Care experienced outcomes	A redesign of corporate parenting support improves outcomes for all care experienced children and young people and especially for those looked after at home	Whole family support
4. Care planning	The number of children, young people and families who are satisfied by their participation in the care planning and review process increases	Voice
5. Kinship care	The number of Kinship Carers reporting satisfaction with the support they receive from service providers increases	Whole family support

## Engagement and participation

Areas for action	Priorities	The Promise
1. Advocacy	Children and young people record high levels of satisfaction with having their voice heard	Voice
2. Opportunities	Corporate parents and partners provide all care experienced people regardless of their different starting points with positive opportunities for them to engage	Scaffolding
3. Voice of care experienced children and young people	The voice of all care experienced individuals and groups is valued and corporate parents and partners work with them to amplify it	Voice
4. Relationships	Interactions with corporate parents and partners are based on meaningful and equal relationships with those taking part	Workforce
5. Growth	Corporate parents and partners support people with care experience in their capacity to grow as individuals and shape the world around them	People
6. Inclusion	Corporate parents and partners value difference and include people with care experience as widely as possible	Workforce
7. Learning	Corporate parents and partners create learning spaces for people with care experience to better understand their experiences, their rights and their potential	Scaffolding

## Throughcare and aftercare

Areas for action	Priorities	The Promise
1. Care leaver transitions	Care leavers achieve best possible outcomes and transition successfully into adulthood	Moving on
2. Assessment and planning	Young people in receipt of Throughcare and Aftercare will benefit from improved assessment and support pathways that are reviewed timeously	Care
3. Health and wellbeing	Young people eligible for Through care and Aftercare will experience improved access to health and wellbeing assessment	Care
4. Housing	Young people in receipt of continuing and aftercare will benefit from suitable accommodation options and appropriate support will be provided to meet young people's individual needs. The provision of accommodation and support will be provided to a quality and in a manner that reflects the values of a responsible parent	Scaffolding
5. Positive destinations for care experienced young people	Young people will be supported to achieve positive educational outcomes and supported to achieve positive transitions into further and higher education, training and employment.	People

# Section 11: Key Contacts

## Champions Board

### Who Cares? Scotland

Regent House  
9 High Patrick Street  
Hamilton ML3 7JA

**Phone: 0141 226 4441**

## South Lanarkshire Youth Council

Email: [chair@slycmail.org.uk](mailto:chair@slycmail.org.uk)

Twitter account:

 [@SLYouthCouncil](https://twitter.com/SLYouthCouncil)

Facebook pages:

 [@slansyp](https://www.facebook.com/slansyp)  
[@SLYouthCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/SLYouthCouncil)

Instagram:

 [@southlanyouthcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/southlanyouthcouncil)

## Children's Health Commissioner

### Child Health Commissioner

NHS Lanarkshire  
Kirklands Hospital,  
Fallside Road,  
Bothwell G71 8BB

**Phone: 01698 858052**

## Kinship care supports

### Kinship Care Support Worker

South Lanarkshire Health and  
Social Care Partnership

East Kilbride Local Office  
Civic Centre, Andrew Street,  
East Kilbride G74 1AB

**Phone: 01355 806165**

## Throughcare and aftercare teams

### Team Leader

Social Work Resources  
Throughcare and Aftercare Team  
South Lanarkshire Council  
East Kilbride Local Office

**Phone: 01355 807062**



If you need this information in another language or format,  
please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.  
Phone: 0303 123 1015 Email: [equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

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Produced for Education Resources by Communications and Strategy. 061015/Apr21



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