

## Implementing the Pledge for Children in Care

### 1. Introduction

The Pledge is a promise made by Derby City Council to all children in their care. The Pledge is part of Derby's commitment to give children in their care the best opportunities they can have in life. The Pledge is a commitment about the support and services children in care can expect to receive. All adults who work for and with the Council are required to make a commitment to work to the Pledge at all times.

Care Matters (2007) identified underpinning principles that Local Authorities must adhere to in complying with the basic statutory duties relating to looked after children. It places a responsibility on Local Authorities to ensure children in care have been consulted and involved in developing the Pledge and the regular review of the Pledge.

The previous Pledge that was conceived by the children in care council in 2012, had 28 commitments. It was felt that it was too long and the commitments needed to be updated and be more aspirational. From June to August 2015, the children in care council took on the task of updating the Pledge. Various consultations were undertaken with children and young people in care. Looked after children and young people were asked to highlight what was important for them and identify their top ten priorities. These priorities have formed the new Pledge.

The new Pledge was accepted and launched at a special Corporate Parenting Committee held in the Council Chamber on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

### 2. Commitments to Implementing the Pledge

As part of the launch of the Pledge all strategic and service directors from across the council were invited to attend the Corporate Parenting Committee. Members of the children in care council did a presentation about the Pledge.

The Pledge has ten points and covers a number of key and important areas as identified by children in care.

Strategic and service directors were asked to give commitments outlining what their departments will do to support the Pledge and in turn exercise the council's corporate parenting responsibilities for children in care.

The full details of each department's commitment to implementing the Pledge are outlined further in this document. There are some very important and innovative commitments made to support the Pledge. These include:

- If a young person moves placement from Derby to another city they are able to return their loaned library books to any UK library and arrangements will be put in place to return their books to Derby. Furthermore the library service will be exercising its discretion not to charge a fee to children looked after if they return their loaned books late, they are lost, stolen or damaged.
- The library service will send details of all forthcoming events for children and young people to be included in mailings to foster carers and children's residential homes e.g. the annual Summer Reading Challenge. Also updates regarding details of other regular services offered as required e.g. Code Clubs and Homework Clubs.
- Training / employment opportunities to be explored; both relate to over 16's; for example, National Pool Lifeguard Qualification course.
- The development of the Plus One scheme led on by Derby Theatre, with QUAD, Déda and Baby People. This has enabled over 1,500 positive arts experiences to young people in care and their carers.
- All senior managers in CYP to commit to take part in takeover day in November 2016.
- Ensure all care leavers have bank account and passport.
- Commission enhanced support to meet mental health and psychological needs of children and young people.
- All social workers to complete a 'profile' of themselves to share information about themselves with children whom they are social worker for.
- Incentives and reward scheme for children in care that make good progress in education. As well as send vouchers to support the purchase of educational books and resources

There are also a number of key themes across department's that have been identified. These include:

- **Provide apprenticeship opportunities for children in care in the Council.**  
A number of departments have committed that they want to provide/allocate a specific number of apprenticeship opportunities for young people in care.
- **Work experience opportunities**  
A number of departments have committed that they want to provide opportunities for young people that may be interested in working in their area of work.

- **Voice of children and young people in care**

A number of commitments to include the voices of children and young people in care these include the development and delivery of an Engagement Strategy for Children and Young People's Services. Support the Leaving Care Team to establish the Leaving Care Forum so that Young People can feel comfortable to have their say and influence decisions.

### **3. Future Planning**

It is proposed that to start off the promotion and marketing of the Pledge a formal sign up is undertaken by senior leaders in the council. Councillor Sara Bolton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding and Andy Smith, Acting Strategic Director Children and Young People formally sign the document. This will be undertaken at a formal press ceremony.

A marketing and communication process will need to be agreed to ensure all looked after children and staff across the council have ready access, understand and continue to contribute to the implementation of the Pledge.

Further promotion and distribution of the Pledge document could be undertaken. It is proposed that the Pledge is sent to all children and young people in care as well as all council residential homes as well as foster carers and IFA foster carers that have placements of Derby children. Further promotion of the Pledge in all council buildings. This can include posters and electronic visual displays.

The Corporate Parenting Committee will monitor the progress of implementing the Pledge across the council. It is proposed that progress on implementing the commitments will be reported by each department to the Corporate Parenting Committee in July 2016 and there upon reviewed regularly.

4. **Commitments to implement the Pledge for children in care from each department.**

<b>Service Director Name:</b> Hazel Lymbery; Maureen Darbon; Iain Peel; Frank McGhee		<b>Directorate:</b> CYP for People Services	
<b>What will you do to support The Pledge?</b>	<b>When will you do this?</b>	<b>What difference will this make for Children in Care and Care Leavers?</b>	
Facilitate Leaving Care Forum -MD	Current	Voice heard and help shape services	
Commit to 2 CYP apprenticeships of the 6 across the Council-IP	Current	Meet individual aspiration and learning opportunities	
All care leavers having Bank Account and a passport-MD	Immediately	Essential for independence	
Coordination process to identify and source care leavers for Apprenticeships – if criteria met – guaranteed an interview-IP	Currently planning	Prioritisation given to care leavers. Care leavers have a quick and effective response.	
Each SW to complete a profile on themselves to share information about themselves-MD/HL	Current	An equal balance of information	
Commission enhanced support to meet mental health and psychological needs of cyp-FM	Current work	Quicker access to support for mental health needs	
Consider Grand Mentor scheme-MD	March 2016	Combat loneliness	
All senior managers in CYP to commit to taking	November 2016	Personal confidence, improve aspiration	

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part in 'takeover day'-ALL		
<p>All SSIOs (Senior School Improvement Officers) will be asking about the progress and attainment of Children in Care on their visits out to school. A proforma has been provided by the Headteacher of the Virtual School for this purpose. Headteachers will be expected to talk through this data and to discuss any support they require to help CiC with their learning. The SSIO will evaluate (or signpost) use of the additional funding available to schools (Pupil Premium Plus) and will send on this information to the Head of Virtual School.</p> <p>For sponsored academies, the Head of Service will contact each headteacher to collect the current achievement data.-IP</p>	Spring term 2016 and termly	Ensure that Children in Care are making progress in line with their peers and that the school is utilising appropriate strategies and all available support in order to meet their needs.
Send vouchers to support the purchase of educational books and resources	Once a month for 6 months	Support children and young people's education
Incentive and reward scheme being finalised	For year 6 and year 11 pupils	Incentivise progress, attainment and attendance until the end of the Key Stage
QA the PEP Process	Weekly	Targets set by schools and SW's are challenged for appropriateness
Allocate PP+ funding to support the educational targets identified in the e PEPS	Twice a year	Identified additional needs are resourced
Attend e PEP meetings as necessary	As Required	Pupil has an additional advocate

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<p>We will support Vulnerable Learners through Derby City Inclusion Strategy and Vision.-IP</p> <p><b>Access</b> being an advocate for parents and families by ensuring that there is fair access to all schools for all children and young people.</p> <p><b>Advocacy</b> for all children and especially for vulnerable children – by using the LA's democratic mandate, the LA will act on behalf of groups of children and young people to ensure that they receive the best education from schools, including those with special educational needs and those outside mainstream education.</p> <p><b>Achievement</b> for all by being a champion for educational excellence – The LA will challenge all schools in Derby to deliver excellence</p>	<p>On-going Inclusion Service for Vulnerable Learners</p>	<p>This will prepare Children in Care and Care Leavers to achieve the best possible outcomes; keep safe and healthy and go on to enjoy life.</p>
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<p><b>Service Director Name:</b> Brian Frisby, Kirsty Everson, Perveez Sadiq &amp; Cate Edwynn</p>		<p><b>Directorate:</b> People Services</p>
<p><b>What will you do to support The Pledge?</b></p>	<p><b>When will you do this?</b></p>	<p><b>What difference will this make for Children in Care and Care Leavers?</b></p>
<p>Make sure that every looked after child with a disability has a named adult social care social worker from age 14, to support them in preparing for adulthood.</p>	<p>By September 2016</p>	<p>It will make sure that planning for life beyond age 18 starts early and provide more certainty about what comes next.</p>

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We will offer work experience opportunities within our service – as many as we can, to young people who are interested in adult social care.	During the Summer Term, 2016	It will give care leavers an insight into a career in adult social care and/or public health.
We will offer up to 3 apprenticeships within adult social care and/or public health – including one looked after child with a disability.	By December 2016	It will give up to 3 care leavers significant paid work experience and increase their future prospects for employment.

<b>Strategic Director:</b> Christine Durrant		<b>Directorate:</b> Communities and Place
<b>What will you do to support The Pledge?</b>	<b>When will you do this?</b>	<b>What difference will this make for Children in Care and Care Leavers?</b>
<p><b>Recreation Leisure Card</b> Foster Carers are entitled to get a Recreation Leisure Card which offers discounted activities at a charge of £1 adults and 50p juniors at our Leisure facilities.</p> <p><b>Training / Employment</b> Training / employment opportunities can be explored; both relate to over 16's; for example, National Pool Lifeguard Qualification course and work experience opportunities.</p> <p><b>Health / Livewell</b> Foster Carers may be referred to our Livewell</p>	<p>The Leisure Card scheme is in place and being promoted; Foster Carers can apply at any time.</p> <p>Training opportunities could be offered later in 2016 following the implementation of service restructuring.</p> <p>The service is available for referrals and</p>	<p>The Leisure Card helps children in care to access our services at an affordable rate to help enhance their health as well as providing social opportunities.</p> <p>The provision of experience and training that could lead to employment opportunities.</p> <p>The services help to keep children in care</p>

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<p>service to enable them to be supported to stop smoking. Children in care could be referred to our child weight management programme.</p> <p><b>Library Service</b> The library service will send details of all forthcoming events for children and young people to be included in mailings to foster carers and Children's Residential Homes e.g. the annual Summer Reading Challenge. Also updates regarding details of other regular services we offer as required e.g. Code Clubs and Homework Clubs.</p> <p>We will ensure that front-line library staff and volunteers delivering services to children and young people are fully trained on health and safety, safeguarding including safe surfing and are aware of any specific duty of care issues specific to children in care.</p> <p>Front-line library staff have discretion to waive late fees and lost/ damaged stock charges for children in care as circumstances require to enable them to continue to use our services.</p> <p>Informal agreement across library authorities</p>	<p>applications.</p> <p>As part of our promotions plan during event planning events/ service updates etc.</p> <p>As part of staff induction, focused and refresher training on safeguarding.</p> <p>Staff induction, instructions and refresher training.</p> <p>Staff induction, instructions and refresher</p>	<p>healthy.</p> <p>Able to participate in all our library services to support leisure activity, education and learning, personal development and general health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Able to feel confident and safe in using the library and be assured of friendly and welcoming staff.</p> <p>Able to feel confident that they won't be judged and that there is an understanding that they may have specific issues that impact on their use of libraries.</p> <p>Able to feel confident that they won't be judged</p>
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<p>nationally that if children in care move residential placements they can return library stock to any UK library and that library will send it back to the home library authority. We will ensure that frontline library staff are aware of this.</p> <p><b>Arts Development</b> The Arts Development Service plays a strategic role linking cultural provision into city priorities. This has supported the development of the Plus One scheme led on by Derby Theatre, with QUAD, Déda and Baby People. This has enabled over 1,500 positive arts experiences to young people in care and their carers.</p> <p>Funding agreements with recipients of regular Arts Grant funding require them to abide with the principles of Putting People First in Derby. The funding agreements are due to be refreshed for 2016/17. Improving life chances of young people is being developed as a funding priority.</p> <p>Review of Small Arts Grants priorities is under way. Improving life chances of young people is being developed as a funding priority.</p>	<p>training.</p> <p>Plus One project is on-going. In addition the service will be alert to further opportunities that will enable children in care to access cultural experiences.</p> <p>To be implemented April 2016</p> <p>To be implemented April 2016</p>	<p>and that there is an understanding that they may have specific issues that impact on their use of libraries.</p> <p>Plus One project enables young people to experience arts and culture in the city and participate in workshop activity. This can build confidence and self-esteem. Project also provides opportunity for deeper engagement for those who will be leaving care and care leavers. This has included paid work and apprenticeships.</p> <p>Ensure council funding to partner organisations supports delivery of The Pledge. This with particular relevance to developing a strong sense of personal identity, encouragement to reach goals and achieve potential.</p> <p>To encourage grant applicants to consider building benefit to children in care into their project activity.</p>
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<p><b>Culture and Business Development</b> Review of Cultural Strategy for Derby is under way. Corporate Parenting role within culture is on the agenda for this.</p> <p><b>Mock Interviews</b> Enterprise for Education run Mock Interview sessions for secondary school students on a monthly basis with business volunteers giving students a 1-2-1 mock interview. We will put on a session for Children in Care and or invite them to an upcoming session at a school (with the schools permission).</p> <p><b>Industry Visits</b> Throughout the year Enterprise for Education arrange for students from secondary schools to visit local industry and annually in June we run “Just Imagine... Working Here”. This JIWH could be opened up to Children in Care.</p> <p><b>Apprenticeship Opportunities</b> Enterprise for Education promote apprenticeship opportunities to all young people across Derby via various methods. These vacancies can be promoted to those in Care and support can be given with the application process.</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>Children in Care could be invited to join some of these Mock Interview sessions run at a school near to them - sessions are run monthly. Alternatively an extra session could be put on for these students at the Council This could be done by July 2016.</p> <p>A visit to for example the Council House to find out about the different job roles and departments could be arranged during “Just Imagine... Working Here” in 2016. .... By July 2016</p> <p>The latest vacancies are sent to the team on a weekly basis and so this can be available to the Children in Care team from February 2016 onwards.</p>	<p>Potential to place greater emphasis on meeting The Pledge within future service delivery.</p> <p>Having a mock interview with a business volunteer will help Children in Care and Care Leavers to increase their understanding, practice and confidence of interview skills.</p> <p>This would help inform and inspire Children in Care about the opportunities in the world of work. The children will get the opportunity to speak to local employees and find out about their job role.</p> <p>Children in Care will have additional information, access and support with applying for apprenticeships.</p>
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<b>Service Director Name:</b> Nick O'Reilly		<b>Directorate:</b> Digital Services (Customer Management and Information Systems)
<b>What will you do to support The Pledge?</b>	<b>When will you do this?</b>	<b>What difference will this make for Children in Care and Care Leavers?</b>
<p>Ensure customer services staff when they interact with customers understand and follow the pledge</p> <p>Promote and provide safeguards for staying safe on line be this in school, at home or in use of digital tools such as social media.</p> <p>Provide secure gateways for schools and care homes and provide advice and guidance on line for children and parents</p> <p>With respective services work with children's groups to seek feedback on their digital experience and on how our digital presence helps or hinders them and involve children in reviewing and improving such digital content.</p>	<p>In all relevant interactions</p> <p>Embedded in the service provision throughout the year and responding to increased alerts when notified.</p> <p>As above</p> <p>Led by the timing and touch points planned by the service who are the owners of the content.</p>	<p>Make it easier to report and raise concerns and ensure early response as appropriate.</p> <p>Ensure stable foundation for on line access in school, in care homes to enable young people to engage digitally and to avoid exclusion. Helping prepare them for a digital world.</p> <p>As Above</p> <p>Provide more engaging digital content and possibly help children learn their own digital skills as they can contribute to content and subject to cyber security self-help community forums where they may feel better able to discuss on line problems and challenges they face.</p>

<b>Service Director Name:</b> Gordon Stirling Director of Strategic Services and Organisational Development		<b>Directorate:</b> Strategic Services and Organisational Development Organisation and Governance Directorate
What will you do to support The Pledge?	When will you do this?	What difference will this make for Children in Care and Care Leavers?
<p>We will work with Customer Management to monitor the complaints made across the Council including those made by Children in Care. Where possible we will encourage the service to learn from complaints and challenge them if we do not respond to you in a timely way. ( <i>Pledge 1</i>)</p> <p>We lead on the production of management information for Children's Services, which means that we will know if you have moved home a lot or if you are in accommodation that is not safe. (i.e. B&amp;B).</p> <p>We also undertake regular benchmarking so know how your experiences compare to children in care in other areas and if we need to challenge the service to make improvements for you. (<i>Pledge 2</i>)</p> <p>We will support the Leaving Care Team to establish the Leaving Care Forum so that Young People can feel comfortable to have their say and influence decisions.</p>	<p>We monitor complaints on a quarterly basis. (every three months)</p> <p>We update Children's Services key performance information every three months and undertake a full review of performance at the end of the year.</p> <p>On a monthly basis.</p>	<p>It will mean if things go wrong that your views are responded to and that you are reassured that workers in Children's Services will be challenged to demonstrate how they are learning from your experiences to mean this does not happen for another child or young person.</p> <p>We will challenge the service if performance information shows too many children / young people are moving too often or are in unsuitable accommodation. Where necessary we will escalate issues to the Corporate Parenting Board for further investigation / challenge through our Annual Update on performance.</p> <p>This will build the confidence of care leavers and will mean that you can influence decisions about the services that matter to you.</p>

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<p>We will continue to run the Council's Youth Forum 'Voices in Action' that provides all young people in the city with an opportunity to get involved in decision making. For any Children in Care or Care Leavers who participate in Voices in Action there will also be an opportunity to stand for Youth Mayor. <i>(Review of the Youth Mayor to be completed on 2016/17) (Pledge 3)</i></p>	<p>We will make contact with the Children in Care Council at least twice a year to make sure that you are aware of the Forum and how to get involved.</p>	<p>The Forums will help to build your confidence and share your views and ideas with other young people in the city.</p>
<p>We lead on Equality and Diversity for the Council and if you require support with any issue we will be available to support you. <i>(Pledge 5)</i></p>	<p>On an on-going basis</p>	<p>It will provide children in care and care leavers with an opportunity to seek independent support if they feel it is needed.</p>
<p>We will work with the Virtual School to make sure that they have all the information they need about your education to support you to achieve your best outcomes. <i>(Pledge 7)</i></p>	<p>We review school information relating to you at the end of each term, as a minimum.</p> <p>We will benchmark with our peers once a year.</p>	<p>If you are not achieving your full potential or are behind peers we will challenge the service on what further actions they could take. Where necessary we will escalate issues to the Corporate Parenting Board for further investigation / challenge through our Annual Update on performance.</p>
<p>We will participate in the Strategic Engagement Group and support the Strategic Director for People to challenge all services on how they are listening to your views and what they are doing as a result of what they tell you.</p>	<p>On a monthly basis through the Improvement Board and every two months through the Strategy Engagement Group</p>	<p>If there is evidence that your voice is not being listened to, we will challenge the service and make recommendations on how they could improve this. If necessary we will escalate issues to the Corporate Parenting Committee</p>

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<p>We will lead on the development and delivery of an Engagement Strategy for Children and Young People's Services.</p> <p>We will support Children's Services on targeted 'engagement projects' which means if they are planning to make a change to a service that you receive, we will work with them to provide advice on how you should be involved (CYP Participation Standards) in decision-making and challenge them on what difference your views have made. <i>(Pledge 9)</i></p>	<p>Every 6 months through our participation measures.</p> <p>Once a year through a review of the Engagement Strategy Delivery Plan.</p>	
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<b>Service Director Name:</b> Martyn Marples		<b>Directorate:</b> Organisation & Governance - Finance
<b>What will you do to support The Pledge?</b>	<b>When will you do this?</b>	<b>What difference will this make for Children in Care and Care Leavers?</b>
<p>My Department has supported Voices in Action for many years. I have attended a number of meetings to explain the Councils finances, and to listen to views raised by young people. This relationship will continue to ensure that the voice of young people is heard when we are making important decisions <i>(Pledges 8 &amp; 9)</i></p> <p>ACTION: Continue to listen to Voices in Action</p>		

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<p>as the conduit for young people's input into budget decisions.</p> <p>My service has recruited and subsequently recruited a number of young people through the Councils apprenticeship scheme. This not only supports their employment opportunities, but sometimes training is provided. Each apprentice also gets a dedicated manager and a wider support network (<i>Pledges 4, 7 &amp; 10</i>)</p> <p>ACTION: Look to target specific young people when apprenticeship opportunities arise</p> <p>I have personally attended interview skill training for young people in my spare time. This scheme is vital for young people to prepare themselves for the first steps into work and to build their confidence in what can be unfamiliar circumstances. (<i>Pledge 3</i>)</p> <p>ACTION: Continue to devote my time and available team time to sharing advice and experience in supporting interview skills</p>	<p>Annually through the budget cycle</p> <p>Usually annually, around the end of the summer academic year</p> <p>Not time specific</p>	<p>Their voice will be considered in designing future services of the Council</p> <p>This will provide opportunities to gain valuable work experience</p> <p>This is a skill which all young people should hold, but is vital for those young people leaving care and into the world of work</p>
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<b>Service Director Name:</b> Janie Berry	<b>Directorate:</b> Organisation and Governance
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What will you do to support The Pledge?	When will you do this?	What difference will this make for Children in Care and Care Leavers?
<p>My department will support the People Directorate by providing timely professional advice and support to promote and secure your rights as an individual and to ensure your interests are safeguarded (pledges 2 and 9)</p> <p>We will work with colleagues to ensure there are opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships, skill development such as CV writing and interview skills (pledges 7 and 10)</p> <p>My department will review the systems and procedures in place that support our children in our care to ensure they are robust and that risks are properly mitigated. This will also include safeguarding now the Council holds and processes your personal data (pledges 2 and 9).</p> <p>My department is responsible for supporting Elected Members in the delivery of a variety of Council meetings. We would therefore be able to support opportunities, for example supporting 'Take Over Day' to attend, participate in and possibly Chair a meeting.</p>	<p>On going</p> <p>During 2016</p> <p>Annually through the Audit cycle.</p> <p>Dates to be agreed with the Municipal Year.</p>	<p>Ensure that you are respected and valued as an individual</p> <p>Provide our young people with key opportunities to develop skills for the transition into adulthood and empower and confidence build.</p> <p>Ensure that you are respected and valued as an individual</p> <p>Provide an opportunity to get directly involved in the Council's democratic process and utilise key skills required in a large public setting.</p>

Pervez Akhtar  
Corporate Parenting Lead  
February 2016