



North East Lincolnshire Corporate and Community Parenting **STRATEGIC PLAN**

2025/29

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Introduction and context

Welcome to our North East Lincolnshire Corporate and Community Parenting Strategic Plan 2025/29.

In the context of our vision ‘Our Children Our Future’, we want to work 'stronger together' so that North East Lincolnshire is a place where our children can grow up happy and healthy, safe in their homes and communities with people that love them. We are ambitious for children’s futures with a focus on learning and aspiration so they can be the best they can be.

In North East Lincolnshire, we want all children to be safe from harm and enjoy growing up in loving homes, have the best start in life and a happy, healthy, fun childhood. We want them to start school ready to learn, do well at all levels of learning and have the skills and opportunities they need to enjoy a bright future. We want children be part of an inclusive, compassionate, and thriving community, be listened to, involved in the decisions on their future and respected.

Across the place of North East Lincolnshire, relationships unite us and we put children in our care and care leavers first, centre and last within the work we do. Across the borough, there is an absolute focus on building the economy that supports its community, and we are committed to creating opportunities for children in our care and care leavers. This is further supported through the Greater Lincolnshire devolution deal, in which there are key elements in relation to skills, including a specific focus on supporting care leavers to access more opportunities to employment.

We also recognise that children and young people who have care-experience, including those who are adopted, can face additional challenges that others their age may not. As their corporate and community parents, and despite these obstacles, we want them to achieve good outcomes in all aspects of their lives. For this reason, our ambition to be good corporate and community parents goes far beyond the relevant legislation and government policy. Instead, we have a moral, social and economic responsibility as public services, civil society, local communities and wider society to work together to equip and empower our care-experienced children and young people to succeed and thrive throughout their lives, including when they have their own families.

Ultimately, we are fiercely ambitious for children in our care and care leavers and by working ‘stronger together’, by being innovative and collaborative, we can improve their lived experiences and outcomes, so they can thrive throughout their lives.

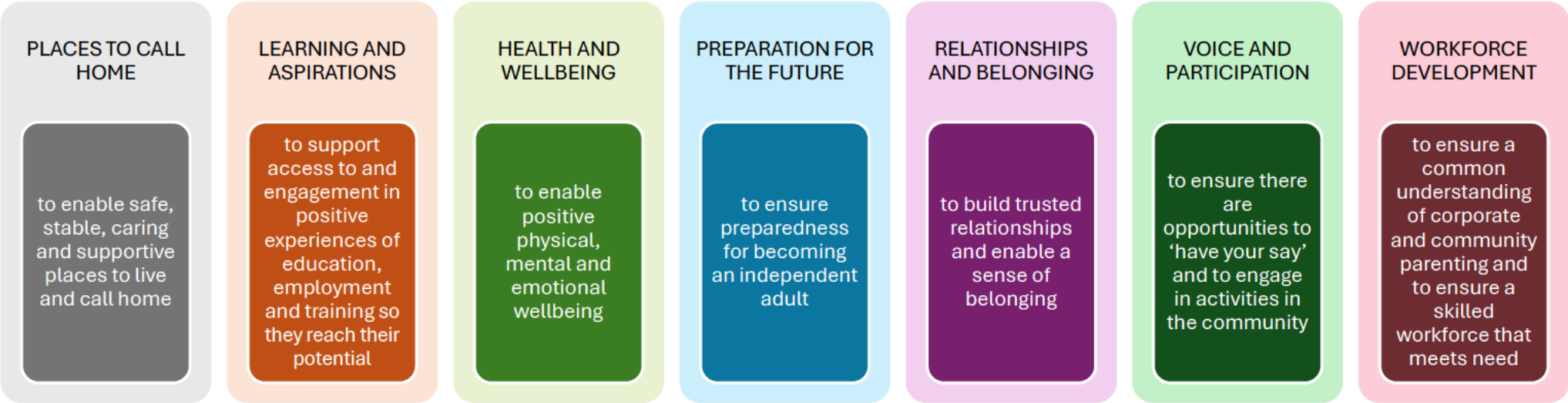
Feedback from children and young people

As part of the development of this strategic plan, we sought the views of children in our care and care leavers. Some examples of feedback were that:

Young people have said that they value being praised	When asked about their experiences of education, young people said, it was good and bad, and that it'd be better if: • 'school was less boring' • 'teachers understood our needs more' • 'they had people to talk to in school (who they trust)' • 'we weren't more likely to be expelled'	When asked about their views and experiences of health services, young people said that it'd be good if: • they were able to get a quicker diagnosis • they could have free prescriptions • they were seen as a person, not just as their trauma • they had access to relevant advice	'When we move into independence, we need to do it when we're ready, and when we move, we need more support....'	The recipe for good relationships is: • Love • Care • Compassion • Kindness • Approachable • Friendly The method of having a good relationship is about: • Asking about their day and what they did • Being nice to people • Consideration	'We want the workforce to: • Care, listen and act • Understand more about children and young people's mental health • Be better trained about children and young people's issues'
'It's really important for us to know about where we are moving to, and people need to think about how this info is shared with us'	When asked about what they wanted to do as a job, and if they knew how to get there, young people said: • that an apprenticeship was an option ('so I can help people like me') • they wanted to achieve in their lives ('to see the light in life') • they wanted people to help them make up their mind				

Vision and scope of the strategy (strategic objectives)

- In the context of our vision ‘Our Children Our Future’ we will work collaboratively to improve the lived experiences and outcomes for children in our care and care leavers.
- In developing this strategy, we have taken account of our Corporate Parenting Promise, the outcomes of engagement activity, the findings from our self-assessment and other assurance activity, to identify a number of strategic objectives which will provide the basis for partnership action. Working together across the corporate and community parenting agenda to achieve the best outcomes for children in our care and care leavers, we will focus on:



What is corporate and community parenting

Corporate parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of local authorities towards children and young people in their care.

From a North East Lincolnshire perspective, corporate and community parenting emphasises the collective responsibility of the local authority and all its partners to achieve 'good parenting' for all children and young people in and leaving our care. It means taking this responsibility seriously and wrapping ourselves around our children and young people as both the child's own community and the wider community to achieve the best for our children.

'Good parenting' includes ensuring the child / young person's health, wellbeing, and safety as well as things like success in school, college and hobbies and interests based on their individual abilities and aspirations. It also means constantly stretching and raising the ambitions of our children and young people, building them up to achieve the best outcomes.

Corporate and community parenting is our responsibility to be loving, caring and aspirational for all children and young people who are in our care, or who have recently left our care as adults.

Above all else, this means protecting children and young people from harm and keeping them safe. Importantly, it is about always striving for their best interests, nurturing their ambitions and helping our children and young people to get the most out of their lives. Ultimately, it means they become independent and thriving young adults.

Corporate and community parenting is our collective responsibility to break down barriers to good outcomes for care experienced children and young people in different ways, and by leveraging the tools, resources and systems at our disposal within our individual roles and organisations.

Elected members, alongside other local authority officers across the Council, automatically hold corporate parenting responsibilities. Corporate parenting is not the sole responsibility of the Local Authority, it is also the responsibility of the health service and wider partners. Incoming legislation proposed by 'Keeping children safe, helping families thrive' also proposes legislative changes that would see these responsibilities extended across various government departments and public services.

At its heart, Corporate and Community Parenting means always asking ourselves 'would this be good enough for my child?'

The corporate parenting principles

In delivering this strategy, the local authority and all partners will have regard to the corporate parenting principles as detailed in the Children and Social Work Act (2017) when exercising our functions in relation to children and young people in our care and care leavers, as follows:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
- to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
- for those children and young people to be safe, and have stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living

The Act states that these apply to:

- (a) children who are looked after by a local authority, within the meaning given by section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 (children in our care)
- (b) relevant children within the meaning given by section 23A(2) of that Act (care leavers aged 16/17)
- (c) persons aged under 25 who are former relevant children within the meaning given by section 23C(1) of that Act (care leavers aged 18-25)

The purpose of this strategic plan: delivering our Corporate and Community Parenting Promise

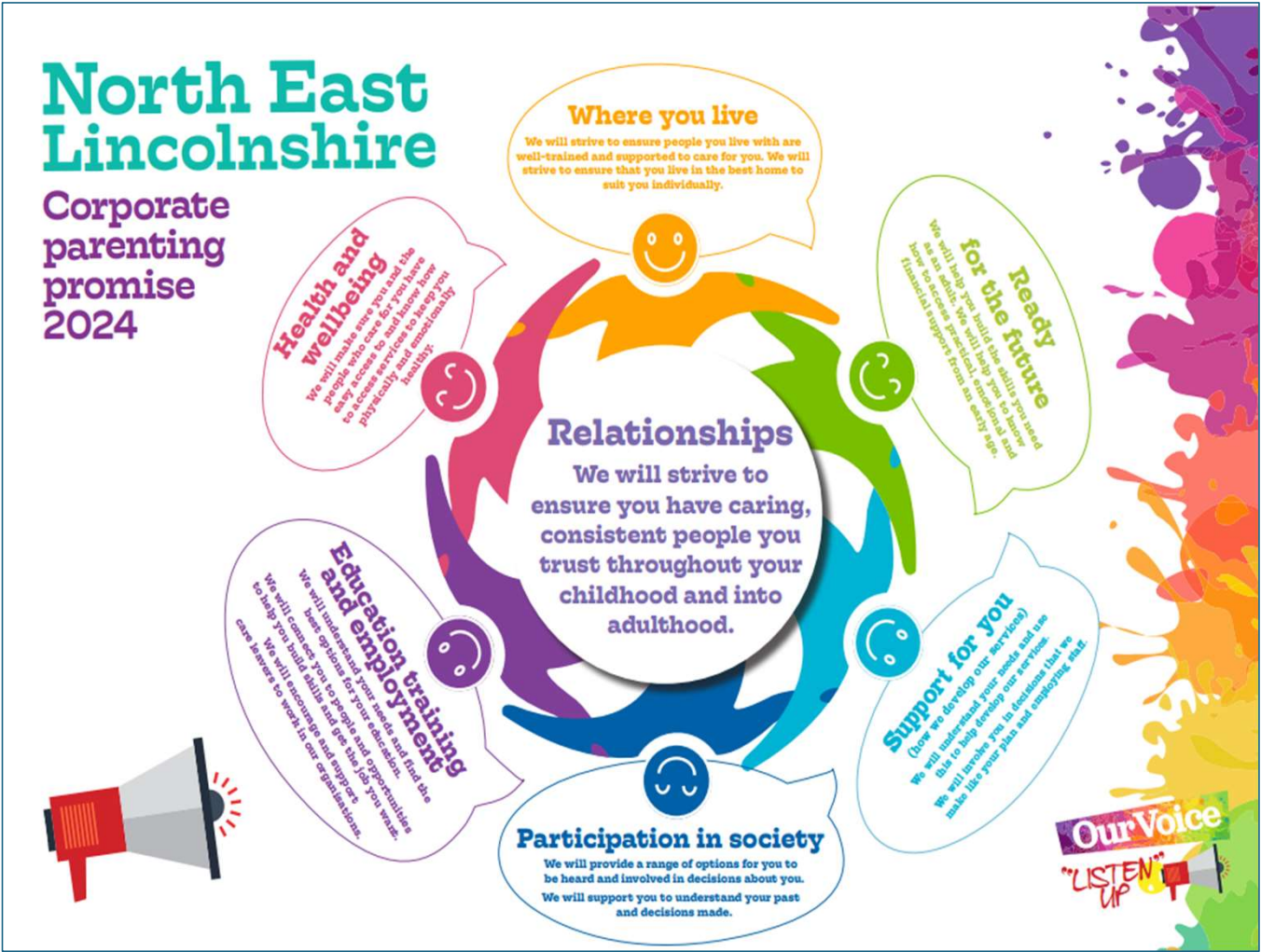
We have a plan for how North East Lincolnshire can be the best possible corporate and community parents we can be.

We want to be clear about what is expected of us, what we want to achieve and how we aim to do that.

Essentially, the strategic plan is about one thing: making the lives and prospects of the children in our care, care leavers and those with care experience in North East Lincolnshire better.

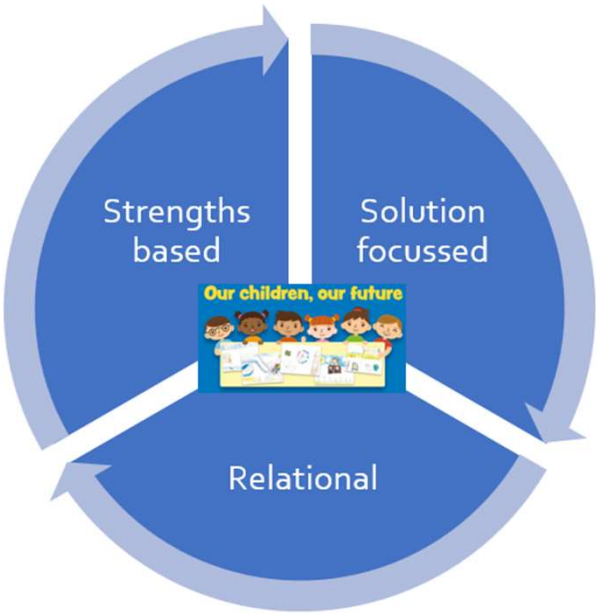
It sounds simple, but it will take time, hard work and involve challenges along the way. But, by working together, holding each other to account, and delivering on our plan, we believe we can turn our words into positive outcomes in the lives of care-experienced children and young people across North East Lincolnshire.

Through our vision and our strategy, we will deliver this promise we have made to our children and young people as their corporate and community parents.



The North East Lincolnshire Approach

- In North East Lincolnshire, we are committed to working ‘stronger together’ for ‘Our Children Our Future’
- Through our North East Lincolnshire Approach, we will work relationally with children in our care and care leavers to build on their strengths and enable them to find solutions for themselves
- Our approach, which is set in the context of being trauma informed, also sets the blueprint for how we will work with each other, as key stakeholders, partners and communities
- *The North East Lincolnshire Approach adopts the practice approach articulated in the [Helping, Supporting and Protecting Children, Young People and Families threshold document](#) which provides the framework for how we should all work with children, young people, and families across the Borough*



Relational	We want: • to have strong, positive, trusting relationships across the partnership that builds co-operation and constructive challenge • such relationships to be at the heart of practitioners, managers and senior leaders’ relationships with children, young people and families • that everyone engages constructively to deliver effective support to children, young people and families
Strengths based	We want: • to work with children, young people, parents and carers to find and amplify their strengths to effect positive change and achieve the best possible outcomes
Solution focussed	We want: • to help people explore their strengths and resources and drawing up a plan about what needs to be achieved to overcome concerns

In the spirit of our vision, our approach is underpinned by **shared principles** which bind us and enable us to be ‘stronger together’, and contribute to creating a system which works for children in our care and care leavers, as follows:

Integrity

Transparency

Honesty

Trust

Inclusivity

Curiosity

Courage

Aspiration

Outcomes (what do we want to achieve, what will we do and how will we know)

To support the delivery of our strategic objectives, across the scope of our system for children, young people and families, we have articulated the outcomes that we want to achieve, as well as what we will do to achieve them and how we will know:

Strategic Objective
• PLACES TO CALL HOME to enable safe, stable, caring and supportive places to live and call home
Outcomes
• Children who aren't able to remain living with their family – which is our first priority – live in fostering families or Children's Homes provision in their local community • Young people have access to safe, supported accommodation that supports their preparation for adulthood • Young people leaving care benefit from safe, stable, long-term homes in their local community
What will we do
• Review, refresh and deliver the fostering recruitment programme of activities • Deliver the integrated local offer to foster carers and support them to meet children's needs and interests • Further develop the landscape of local Children's Homes provision through a partnership approach • Further develop oversight of costs breakdowns for external placements, and partnership contributions, and provide appropriate challenge in line with children and young people's care plans and needs • Further develop the range and choice of accommodation for care leavers, including 'staying put', supported accommodation and follow on accommodation, alongside dedicated housing pathways with local housing providers • Ensure compliance with and preparedness for regulatory/inspection frameworks from a partnership perspective
How will we know
• Increase in the proportion of children in our care living with local authority foster carers • Increase in the proportion of children in our care living in Children's Homes in the Borough compared to children's homes outside the area • Children experience fewer home moves • More children and young people are returned from external placements to live in the local community • Increase in the number of young people 'staying put' • Improved access to and choice of housing options • Positive supported accommodation inspection outcome • Feedback from children, young people and the people that care for them that demonstrates they feel stable, cared for and supported where they live

Outcomes (what do we want to achieve, what will we do and how will we know)

Strategic Objective	• LEARNING AND ASPIRATIONS to support access to and engagement in positive experiences of education, employment and training
Outcomes	• Children and young people are attending school or college, and are happy and thriving and achieving academic attainment outcomes from their starting point • Young people are supported to build and achieve their aspirations and potential and are in education, employment or training that meets their needs and expectations
What will we do	• Develop and deliver a bespoke employability strategy for children in our care and care leavers, focussing on ensuring access to the best possible education, training and job opportunities to meet their needs • Work collaboratively with education settings to identify and address barriers to learning / attendance for children in our care • Review and refresh the Personal Education Plan process, including the development of SMART targets • Explore and develop an exclusions protocol to ensure a consistent approach to preventing and responding to exclusions for children in our care • Further develop understanding of young people’s needs and build relationships to develop the education, employment and training offer (including roll out of the Health and Care Partnership Employability programme and development of a wider programme across the partnership) • Hold a Virtual School Conference with partnership representatives
How will we know	• Improved educational outcomes for children in our care • Improved school and college attendance of children in our care • Reduction in the number of school exclusions • Increased in the number of post 16 children in our care and care leavers in education, employment and training • Number of young people successfully experiencing apprenticeship programme • Feedback from children and young people to indicate they feel supported in their education and to achieve their aspirations and potential

Outcomes (what do we want to achieve, what will we do and how will we know)

Strategic Objective	• HEALTH AND WELLBEING to enable positive physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing
Outcomes	• Children in our care and care leavers are, and feel supported, to be happy, well, resilient and healthy • Children in our care and care leavers are aware of, and feel supported and empowered to access a timely, robust health offer
What will we do	• Review and refresh the health needs analysis for children in our care and care leavers to identify and address barriers to achieving optimal health • Engage with children and young people to understand what health issues are important to them, including as parents • Develop the therapeutic offer to children in our care, including those in children’s homes • Further the develop the health offer (including therapeutic pathways) for care leavers who are 18-25 • Further develop strong transitional pathways into adult facing health and social care for those young people who have ongoing health or complex needs • Further develop the dental health offer for all children in our care and care leavers • Ensure children and young people’s views and experiences help to shape and influence the development and delivery of the health offer
How will we know	• Health outcomes (measured through statistical first release) are in line or better than comparators • Gaps in health service provision are identified and actioned accordingly • Numbers of children in our care and care leavers accessing therapeutic support (and numbers waiting) • Numbers of children in our care registered with a GP and Dentist • Outcomes of strengths and difficulties questionnaires • Feedback from children and young people which indicates they understand their health and have easy access to services when they need them • Care leavers feedback that they have been supported to achieve optimal health and have a clear understanding of how to continue to meet their health needs as adults

Outcomes (what do we want to achieve, what will we do and how will we know)

Strategic Objective	• PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE to ensure preparedness for becoming an independent adult
Outcomes	• Children in our care and care leavers have access to information, support and training to develop life skills • Children and young people are, and feel supported, empowered and confident and grow up to be independent adults
What will we do	• Develop and deliver a bespoke employability strategy for children in our care and care leavers, focussing on supporting them to make a positive transition into adult life • Develop a Care Leaver app as a means of sharing information around the Care Leaver offer, support and opportunities • Ensure that practice is consistently strong in providing robust and tailored support in preparing young people for adulthood • NELC to roll out the implementation of protected characteristics of care experienced people, and Corporate and Community Parenting Board member organisations to explore how this could be rolled out across the wider workforce • Develop and roll out Care Leaver friendly business scheme
How will we know	• Care Leaver app in place and evidence of impact • Pathway plans have a clear focus on ensuring preparedness for adulthood • More organisations adopt protected characteristics for care experienced people • Businesses who are care leaver friendly • Feedback from children and young people that indicates they feel supported and prepared for becoming an independent adult

Outcomes (what do we want to achieve, what will we do and how will we know)

Strategic Objective	• RELATIONSHIPS AND BELONGING to build trusted relationships and enable a sense of belonging
Outcomes	• Children in our care and care leavers have trusted and stable relationships with people who love and care for them, and feel a sense of belonging • Children in our care and care leavers have developed relationships with the Corporate and Community Parenting Board members
What will we do	• Develop a programme of creative conversations between children in our care, care leavers and members of the Corporate and Community Parenting Board and the wider workforce as appropriate, to build relationships, and to shape and influence priority setting and service delivery • Corporate and Community Parenting Board members to engage in the programme of events and activities, including but not exhaustive Corporate and Community Parenting Fortnight (including Care Leavers week) • Review, refresh and develop the independent visitor ‘buddies’ scheme and roll out across the partnership
How will we know	• Corporate and Community Parenting Champions engagement in events and activities • Evidence of you said, we did, as a result of the creative conversations • Feedback from children, young people and the people that care for them • Feedback from across the corporate and community parenting workforce • Increase in the number of Buddies, and the number of children and young people matched, and evidence of positive relationships, impacts and outcomes

Outcomes (what do we want to achieve, what will we do and how will we know)

Strategic Objective
• VOICE AND PARTICIPATION to ensure there are opportunities to ‘have your say’ and to engage in activities in the community
Outcomes
• Children in our care and care leavers are aware of, and are supported and empowered to engage in a range of opportunities to share their views and lived experiences • There is a greater understanding of the views and lived experiences of children in our care and care leavers, which are taken into account to shape and influence the local offer, services and support • Children in our care and care leavers are aware of, empowered and confident to access and engage in the community offer and local activities
What will we do
• Review and refresh the wishes and feelings survey to understand the views and experiences of children in our care and care leavers at an individual level, and ensure they are representative of diversity • Review, refresh and develop the scope, role and remit of Our Voice Listen Up as the umbrella Children In Our Care Council (including care leaver drop ins) • Further develop young people representation on the Corporate and Community Parenting Board and associated groups and workstreams • Identify and develop key workstreams with a focus on co-production • Raise awareness of the engagement framework across the corporate and community parenting workforce to encourage and support children in our care and care leavers to engage and have their say • Explore and develop how children in our care and care leavers engage and contribute in the Integrated Youth Offer
How will we know
• Positive outcomes of the wishes and feelings survey • The Children in Our Care Council (via Our Voice Listen Up) and young people members on the Corporate and Community Parenting Board are representative of children in our care and care leavers • Evidence of children in our care and care leavers views shaping and influencing at all levels across the corporate and community parenting workforce • Feedback from children and young people

Outcomes (what do we want to achieve, what will we do and how will we know)

Strategic Objective	• WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT to ensure a common understanding of corporate and community parenting and to ensure a skilled corporate and community parenting partnership workforce that meets need
Outcomes	• Corporate and community parenting is understood across the corporate and community parenting partnership workforce • The corporate and community parenting partnership workforce are and feel better equipped to actively contribute to corporate and community parenting • The corporate parenting promise is not just promised, but proved
What will we do	• Engage with the LGA as a follow up to the peer review, to roll out further training and awareness raising across the Corporate and Community Parenting Board members • Deliver a programme of corporate and community parenting training and awareness raising across the partnership • Raise awareness of corporate and community parenting across the community • Strengthen the scope, remit, membership and offer of the corporate and community parenting champions group • Develop mechanisms for sharing information, communications, what good looks like, impacts and outcomes across the partnership and the wider community i.e. via newsletter, LinkedIn, events
How will we know	• Corporate and Community Parenting Board members engaged in the LGA peer review follow up session(s) • The number of training and development sessions undertaken, their reach and evidence of impact • Feedback from across the corporate and community parenting workforce • There are outputs to share information et al and examples of best practice

Each of these strategic delivery plans will be underpinned by delivery plans which will be the responsibility of the most appropriate sub group and/or functional workstream strategic lead(s).

Enablers: voice and engagement

Children and young people in our care, care leavers and the people that care for them are at the heart of corporate and community parenting. In the context of our North East Lincolnshire Practice Approach, and our focus on relationships, we will listen to and take account of children and young people’s views and lived experiences and through working together with them as partners and experts in their own lives, we will co-produce local services and support which meet their needs, leading to better outcomes.

We want to develop and build relationships with our children and young people, and the people that care for them, and we are keen to continue to develop voice and engagement mechanisms with the whole population of children in our care and care leavers. This will help to ensure that more children and young people have the opportunity to shape and influence partnership action, build relationships, develop new skills and engage in new activities and experiences.

This strategy has taken into account the outcomes of engagement activity with children in our care and care leavers, including through Our Voice Listen Up, and we are committed to ensuring voice and engagement at an individual, service and strategic level.

At an individual level, we must

- ensure there are opportunities to gain the views and feedback of individual children in our care, care leavers and people that care for them
- ensure that children in our care and care leavers are able to have a say on issues that directly impact on their lives, experiences or outcomes
- ensure that individual children, young people and the people that care for them, have access to self directed information and support through a trusted digital offer

At a service level, we must:

- ensure there are voice and engagement groups/partnerships/mechanisms to listen to and take account of experiences of services and provision (including Our Voice Listen Up)
- ensure the collective views of children and young people are taken into account to shape and influence service developments
- include children and young people are involved in recruitment and commissioning processes (where applicable)

At a strategic level, we must:

- ensure the views and lived experiences of children in our care and care leavers are included in needs assessments, priority setting and strategic planning frameworks
- include children in our care, care leavers and the people that care for them in joint commissioning, assurance / scrutiny, partnerships and governance processes, and develop their opportunities for challenge, power and influence
- show evidence of voice and engagement, and its impact and outcomes across the system

To enable engagement, we must:

- ensure clear, open, transparent communications, representative voice and engagement opportunities and fair access
- provide feedback on the outcomes of voice and engagement activity, and share across the partnership as appropriate to ensure we make the best use of information available to us to ensure it shapes and influences service design and commissioning, and to encourage and support ongoing relationships and trust
- challenge and support each other to work within these engagement principles

Enablers: voice and engagement

The overarching 'Our Voice Listen Up' represents the range of voice and engagement mechanisms, at a strategic level, for children in our care and care leavers. It fulfils our responsibility to have a children in care council.

We will continue to listen, learn, review and adapt the scope and opportunities of Our Voice Listen Up because we are committed to raising awareness of, and supporting children in our care and care leavers to engage in arrangements.



Enablers: workforce development

- Across the corporate and community parenting partnership, our workforce are our greatest asset to support children in our care, care leavers and the people that care for them.
- We want children in our care, care leavers and the people that care for them to be supported by a partnership workforce that is relational, passionate, compassionate, motivated, and proud of their work and who know, support, love and care for our children and young people. We want a partnership workforce that is supported by caring and knowledgeable system leaders, managers and colleagues and that they be supported to learn, develop, reflect on practice, and feel valued, appreciated, and respected.
- Across the corporate and community parenting partnership, we are ambitious for what we want to achieve as individuals, and by working ‘stronger together’, we want to be the best we can be. We want the corporate and community parenting partnership workforce to have the tools and resources that they need to make a difference with everyone taking responsibility for their own learning, development and practice.
- Ultimately.....

We want a corporate and community parenting partnership workforce who:

- Work within the auspices of the NEL Approach in that they are relational, strengths based and solution focussed
- Understands the needs of children in our care and care leavers
- Do the right thing at the right time, based on need, rather than what is necessarily in the scope of their role
- Are motivated, skilled, competent, resilient and confident
- Champion equality and diversity, and are comfortable with high support and high challenge
- Are and feel supported to achieve their potential, and work ‘stronger together’ for our children and young people, and the people that care for them

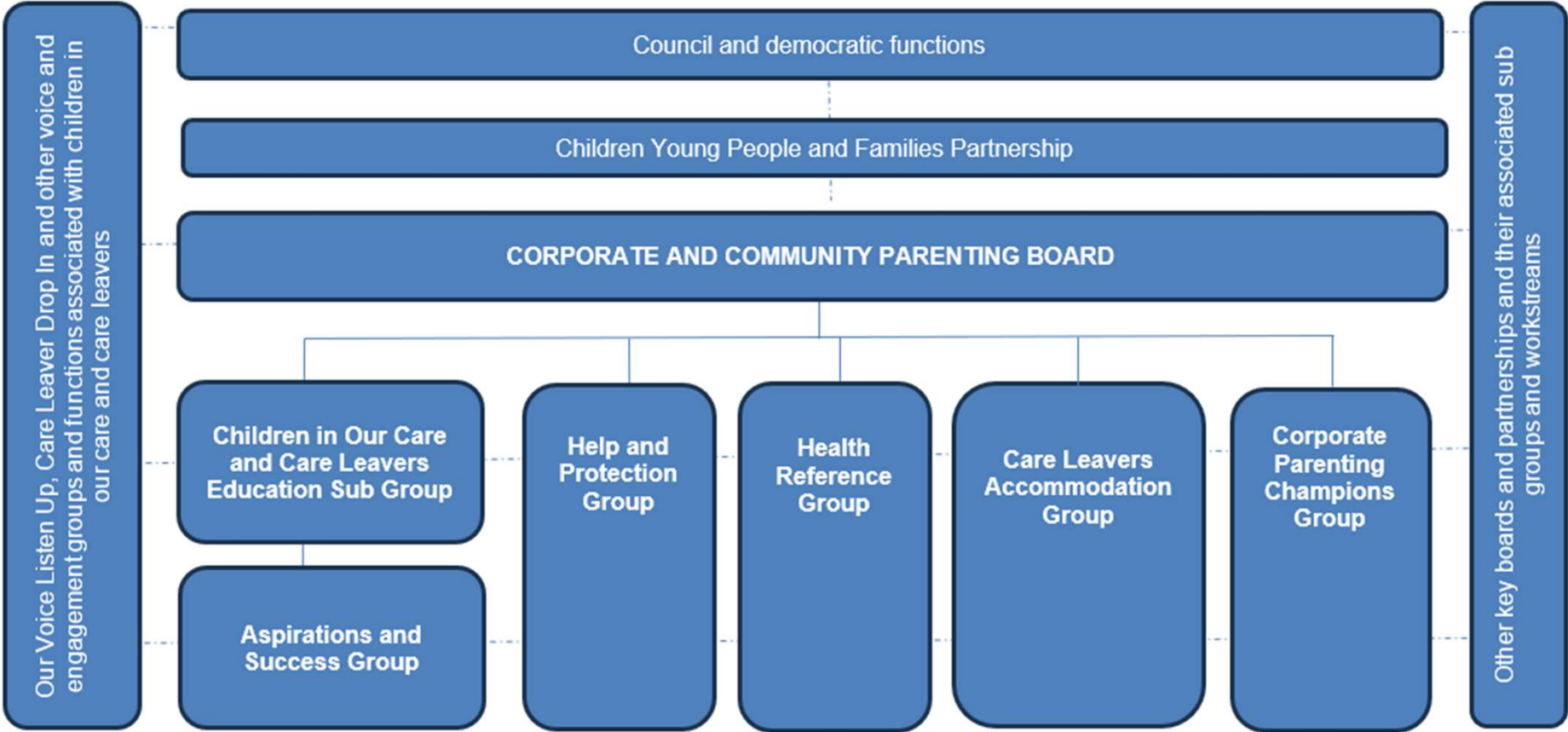
This will be achieved by:

- Understanding our individual and collective roles as corporate and community parenting and how we can fulfil our responsibilities
- Listening, learning, reviewing and adapting
- Being flexible, agile, innovative and creative
- Valuing and recognising achievement
- Sharing information and best practice
- Enabling leadership and engaging the corporate and community parenting partnership workforce at all levels

Monitoring and evaluation

- The Corporate and Community Parenting Board provides the strategic partnership to oversee and drive forward the delivery of progress against this strategic plan, and for ensuring that children in our care and care leavers achieve the best possible outcomes
- The Corporate and Community Parenting Board, which is co-chaired by an elected member, and a young person who has care experience, is represented by system leaders across the corporate and community parenting partnership workforce, along with other care experienced young people and the people that care for them
- We have a strong commitment to listening, learning, reviewing and adapting, in a context of high support and high challenge. Through the Corporate and Community Parenting Board, and its sub groups, there are clear partnership governance and reporting arrangements in place to ensure oversight and assurance of progress in the delivery of the strategic objectives
- As well as routine reporting on a quarterly basis, there is a commitment to undertaking an annual self-assessment, culminating in an annual report. This will take account of and acknowledge progress against the strategic objectives, and consider further areas for development

Partnership and governance arrangements



Points of reference and other associated documents

- Corporate Parenting Promise
- Care Leaver Offer
- Foster Carer Offer
- Corporate and Community Parenting Board Terms of Reference
- NEL Children in Our Care and Care Leavers Employability Strategy
- NEL Sufficiency Strategy