North East Lincolnshire Corporate and Community Parenting Quarterly Newsletter

February 2026

Welcome to the NEL Corporate and Community Parenting newsletter!

This newsletter is published on a quarterly basis, following meetings of the Corporate and Community Parenting Board, and will celebrate the positive news of our partnership approach to supporting the children in our care and care leavers.

It will also include information on any upcoming training opportunities and events, as well as any relevant legislation or guidance to help us to be the best possible Corporate and Community Parents for our children.

Corporate and Community Parenting Board Meeting - 15th December 2025

The December meeting of the Corporate and Community Parenting Board reflected a year of strong progress and celebration. **2025's Corporate and Community Parenting Fortnight** and Care Leavers Month were praised as "brilliant", with a wider range of events and increased engagement from young people and Corporate and Community Parents, supported by an accompanying newsletter being shared across the Council and partner organisations.

The newly facilitated **NEL Independent Advocacy Service** has begun visiting children's homes and supported accommodation, making a positive start, and seven newly trained buddies are set to be matched with children in our care, strengthening our independent visitor offer.

Young people also had the opportunity to visit the House of Lords, where they met with Baroness Longfield and explored shared challenges faced by children nationally - work which will continue through further joint activity.

The 2025 Younique Awards were celebrated as a major success, with a 50% increase in nominations.

The Creative Conversation prior to the December Board focused on health, highlighting the importance of identifying a next of kin for all care leavers and progressing the health offer booklet. A continued focus on permanency was noted, including supporting our children to return to the local area. The Board also received assurance regarding strengthened oversight of plans for children and young people. Members heard about new frameworks supporting emotional wellbeing, alongside the establishment of a focus group to ensure timely, targeted therapeutic support, including for those placed out of area. Subgroups continue to deliver against their actions, with no areas currently off-track, though several actions due by March 2026 will be reviewed to determine next steps.

Looking ahead, the Board noted two key upcoming events: a regional event for children in our care and care leavers on 19 February, and the inaugural Virtual School Conference on 10 February.

Sub group Updates

Education

The subgroup shared expectations around attendance and exclusions for children in our care.

Overall, attendance remains above the national average, though more work is underway to ensure we have a complete and accurate picture.

Suspensions continue to be an area of focus. The Board discussed the need for stronger preventative approaches and more collaborative work with schools. Key messages continue to focus on trauma-informed and relational practice, and training is available to support this.

A recent deep dive into children missing education has been valuable in shaping practice. Further work with education leaders around policy and practice has been identified.

The subgroup discussed the importance of understanding children's views and experiences. Work will take place with children's homes staff to identify barriers to education and explore solution-focused approaches. Similar work will be undertaken with social workers, and any useful resources to support improvements are being explored.

Help and Protection

The sub-group continues to make strong progress, with real momentum since the last Board meeting.

It was shared that the number of children in our care is continuing to fall,

reflecting the positive impact of our collective work.

Work to enhance analysis and tracking is moving forward at pace, including a sharper focus on identifying and supporting children who may be at risk of exploitation.

A significant milestone has also been reached with the completion of the new health-record flag, helping to ensure children's needs are recognised quickly and consistently.

Looking ahead, the group will keep driving forward improvements to our accommodation offer and strengthening community understanding of child exploitation - key steps in enabling earlier intervention and better outcomes for children and young people. These developments aim to support a more detailed and enriched report for a future Board meeting.

Health

Health partners are driving forward several developments to strengthen support for our children and young people.

Work is underway to identify more suitable premises for the nursing team who support the children in our care, alongside exploring innovative ways of working to better meet the needs of those living both locally and out of our area.

Initial and review health assessments continue to be completed within statutory timescales, with the focus now firmly on ensuring these assessments

lead to meaningful, positive outcomes.

CAMHS has extended its offer to include support for staff in residential homes, recognising the critical role they play in supporting our young people.

Reflection reinforced the importance of ensuring timely and accessible emotional and mental health support. As a result of this, we are strengthening our mental health offer.

Finally, the group noted that the proposed restructuring of the ICB presents a potential risk to current support. Planning for contingencies is now a priority to ensure that children and young people continue to receive the care they need without disruption.

Housing

We were delighted to welcome Charlotte Dring to the Board as our newly appointed Assistant Director for Housing and Communities, and the new chair of the Housing Subgroup.

Work is now underway to develop a refreshed Care Leavers Accommodation Pathway. The team has identified constructive, achievable outcomes that have the potential to drive meaningful and lasting change for our young people.

Crucially, the pathway is being shaped *with* young people, not just *for* them. Ensuring their voices are heard and embedded throughout the work remains a top priority.

Champions

There was a strong sense of energy and commitment as colleagues reflected on the growing enthusiasm for Corporate and Community Parenting across North East Lincolnshire.

Champions - particularly within NELC - continue to lead the way with proactive ideas about how engagement can be broadened further as we move further into 2026.

A key priority is expanding activity beyond digital channels to create more meaningful, face-to-face connections with staff, partners, and the wider community.

Training packages are now available, including mandatory modules, with access also open to partners. This shared learning offer is helping to strengthen understanding and reinforce our collective responsibilities to children and young people.

Recent achievements were highlighted, including the success of the Care Leavers Secret Santa initiative and the positive impact of increased corporate parenting awareness within waste services, where 20 employment opportunities have been created.

These examples show how raising the profile of corporate and community parenting is already making a real difference.

As we look ahead, there is a clear recognition of the need to further grow our champion network, particularly among external partners. Support from the

Board has been requested to help extend this reach and strengthen our shared commitment moving forward.

If you would like to be part of this, and add your voice to the championing of Corporate and Community Parenting, then please contact: **corporateparenting@nelincs.gov.uk**

The Corporate and Community Parenting Promise

Work is progressing on transforming the Corporate and Community Parenting Promise into a tangible and visible offer that clearly demonstrates what children and young people in our care can expect from us.

In North East Lincolnshire, our Corporate and Community Parenting Promise represents our collective commitment as a whole council and wider community to ensure children in our care and care-experienced young people feel safe, heard, supported, and hopeful about their future.

Our Promise emphasises that every child and young person in our care has the right to:

- Feel loved, valued, and be part of their community
- Access opportunities that help them thrive - from education and employment to hobbies, wellbeing support, and safe places to live
- Have their voice heard and acted upon
- Be supported by adults who champion them, challenge inequality, and remove barriers
- Experience stability, belonging, and positive relationships

To help turn this Promise into real, practical support, we've included a QR code that staff can scan to share offers of help, opportunities, or contributions that you or your service can make. Whether it's offering work experience, mentoring, access to resources, discounted or free activities, sharing skills, or simply wanting to get involved in a way that supports our children and young people - every offer makes a difference.

We strongly encourage all colleagues across North East Lincolnshire Council and partner organisations to make use of the QR code and reflect on how their service can play a part. Our children and young people deserve the very best from all of us, and together we can build an offer that reflects the ambition, compassion, and community spirit of our area.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming events and activities include:

- 25th February 2026 Creative Conversation - Feeling Safe
  If you are working with any young people who you think would be interested in contributing to this discussion, please encourage them to attend at the Haven from 5-7pm
- 16th March 2026 - Corporate and Community Parenting Board

If you would like to know more about Corporate and Community Parenting, please go to the website via: **Corporate and Community Parenting | NELC** or contact: **corporateparenting@nelincs.gov.uk**

If you would like to know more about Fostering, please go to the website via: **Fostering in North East Lincolnshire | NELC** or contact the Fostering team on: **fosteringandadoption@nelincs.gov.uk**