

Lewisham Children & Young People's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021–24



CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. Legal framework	3
3. Lewisham Council's Corporate Strategy	3
4. Lewisham's vision for Children's Social Care	4
5. Our Children in Care and Care Leaver Profile	5
6. Summary of our current practice	6 - 7
7. The Children in Care Council and children and young people's engagement in this strategy.	8
8. The Lewisham Pledge our ambitions for improving the care experience of our children and young people.	9
9. Corporate Parenting Groups who will help deliver and monitor the progress of this strategy.	10
10. Measures of success	11
11. Summary action plan to deliver the strategy	12-18

1. Introduction

What is Corporate Parenting and who are the Corporate Parents?

“Corporate Parenting” is the term used to describe our collective responsibility to ensure the best outcomes for children in the care of Lewisham Council, and those young people who have left our care. Care experienced children and young people are amongst the most vulnerable in our society. As corporate parents, it is our role to ensure that they are safe, happy, and given every opportunity to achieve their full potential.



Good, responsible parents hold together the many strands of their child’s life. They care about their child’s safety, health, education, identity, hobbies, interests, friendships and futures. They protect and support them. They are ambitious for them. They continuously know about their developments and talents. They listen and talk to their children, celebrate and share their achievements and are aware of their needs and concerns. Good parents recognise that parenting does not stop when a child turns 18 and that even as adults their children will need support. Good corporate parenting is about mirroring parenting as best as we can.

This strategy and action plan sets out how we will hold these strands together and answer “**Yes**” every time we ask ourselves..... “**Would this be good enough for my child?**”

The responsibility of a 'corporate parent' for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for children and young people is a responsibility that is shared between the council, the elected members, ALL of its employees and partner agencies (such as education/schools, health services and housing departments). All elected members have a shared responsibility however some individuals have particular responsibilities. These include:

The Lead member

The lead member has the lead political role in ensuring that the Council and their partner agencies fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities to our care experienced children and young people. This includes ensuring that the services in place meet their identified needs, and ensuring that the Corporate Parenting Strategy is effectively delivered and makes a positive impact.

Senior Officers and Elected Members

These individuals similarly have a particular responsibility to ensure that the Corporate Parenting Strategy is delivered. These individuals are required to:

- Be aware of Lewisham’s Children in Care and Care Leaver population and demographic.
- Have a good understanding of the issues they face and their needs, including how many are disabled and their specific needs.
- Understand current services and where there are gaps.
- Hold high aspirations and champion the interests of our care experienced children and young people in all they do, promoting any opportunities that will support these groups.
- Gather the views of our care experienced children and young people, about the how well ‘Our Pledge’ is being delivered and how we can do better.
- Monitor the effectiveness and impact of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

2. The legal framework.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 defined the responsibilities placed upon councils to ensure the best outcomes for Children Looked After (0-18 years old) and Care Leavers (18 – 25 years old). The Act outlines these duties as a set principles i.e.

- (a) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people (CYP);*
- (b) encourage those CYP to express their views, wishes and feelings;*
- (c) to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those CYP;*
- (d) to help those CYP gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;*
- (e) to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those CYP;*
- (f) CYP to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;*
- (g) to prepare those CYP for adulthood and independent living.*

In the Children & Social Work Act (2017), the following applies:

- Part 3 of the Children’s Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010
- Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 – *The duty (of partner agencies) to co-operate with the Local Authority to improve the well-being of children.*

In addition, the cross Government Guidance (July 2016): Keep on Caring, supporting young people from care to independence, sets out how the state, as corporate parents will support care leavers to achieve 5 key outcomes. These outcomes underpin the Care Leaver Covenant which Lewisham is signed up to.

- ✓ Living independently
- ✓ Stability, safety & security
- ✓ Access to health support
- ✓ Financial stability
- ✓ Access to education, employment and training

3. Lewisham Council’s Corporate Strategy

Our approach to Corporate Parenting supports **Lewisham’s Corporate Strategy 2019-2023**. In particular, it is aligned with the following priorities:

- ✓ Open Lewisham: Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all, where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us
- ✓ Tackling the housing crisis: Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable
- ✓ Giving children and young people the best start in life: Every child has access to an outstanding and inspiring education, and is given the support they need to keep them safe, well and able to achieve their full potential.
- ✓ Delivering and defending health, social care and support: Ensuring everyone receives the health, mental health, social care and support services they need
- ✓ Building safer communities: Every resident feels safe and secure living here as we work together towards a borough free from the fear of crime

4. Lewisham's Vision for Children's Social Care and Social Work

- ✓ Families will tell us they understand why we are involved and the reasons for our decisions and the actions we take
- ✓ Children & young people will tell us their social worker spent time getting to know them and made a difference to their lives
- ✓ Families are respected and supported to stay together whenever there is enough safety
- ✓ Children & young people who are in our care know we care and we won't give up on them
- ✓ Young people who have been in our care feel confident about themselves and their future



In 2019/20 Children's Social Care refreshed its improvement programme and a 'vision' was developed. Signs of Safety (SoS) was introduced as the practice framework to support the delivery of the vision and practice standards have since been introduced. All of this is brought together in our Practice Handbook. The values embedded in our vision, SoS and practice standards, underpin how we care for our children and young people and puts strength based relationships at the heart of what we do.



In our vision, for our children in care and care leavers we have said...

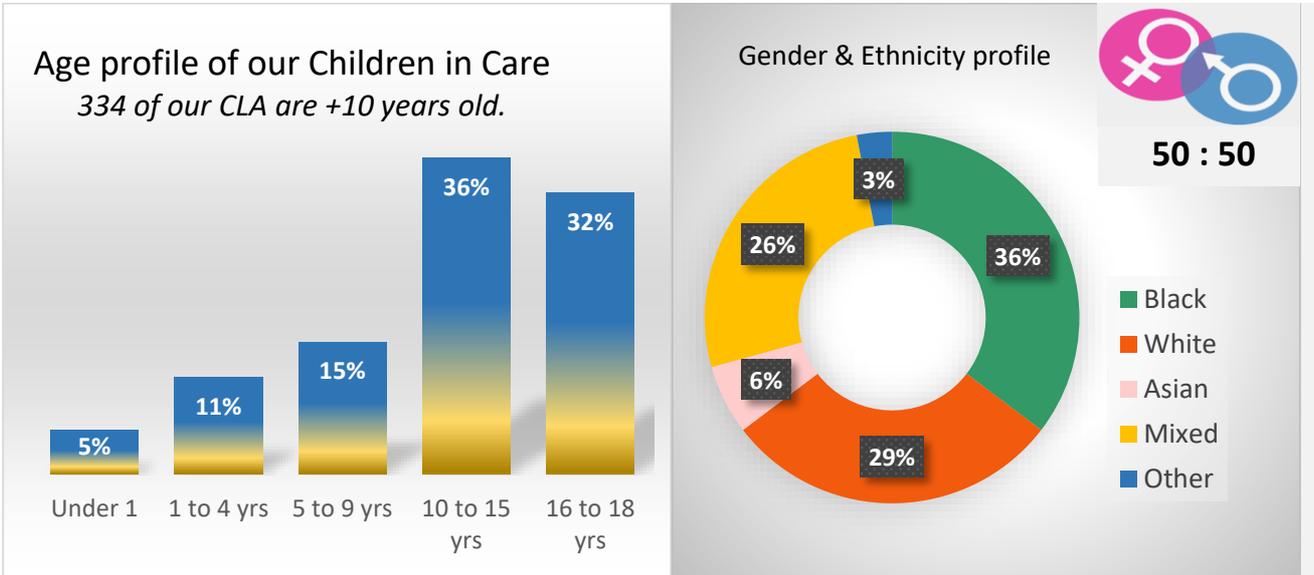


When a child or young person comes into our care we will do everything we can to make them safe and secure. We will talk with them about their life story, to help them understand and make sense of the difficulties they may have experienced. We will keep them connected to their family, culture and community. We will always champion their interests, celebrate their achievements and have high aspirations for them, to help them grow and to do the best they can in their lives.

The young adults who have been in our care will be provided with the tools and support they need to build their knowledge, skills and confidence to lead successful, independent lives. We will help them access services and keep connected in their culture and communities. We will encourage and support them to realise and achieve their hopes and ambitions. We will ensure they always have someone to turn to if they need advice or help.



5. Our Children in Care and the Care Leaver profile (EOY 2020/21)



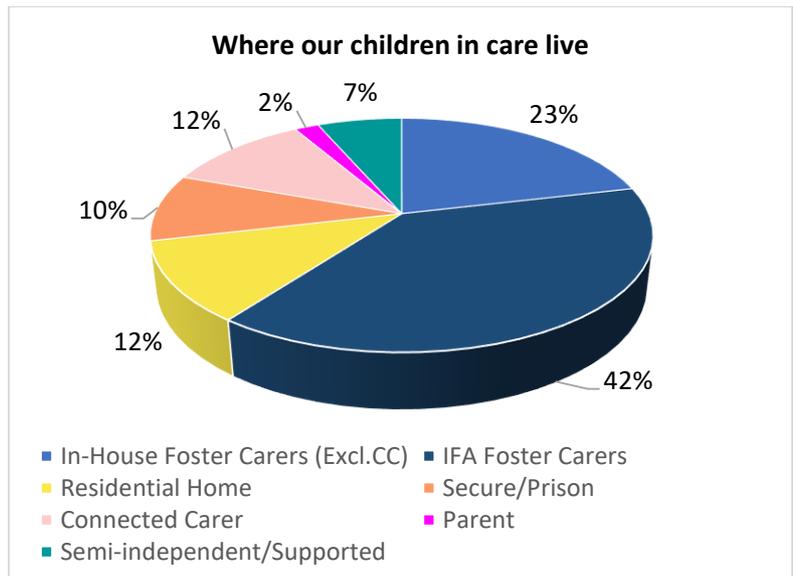
170 (36%) Living in Lewisham



96 (20%) Placed 20+ miles from home

7%
3+ placements

71%
In same placement 2+ years



CARE LEAVERS
575 Net no.
413 With an allocated personal advisor & active pathway plan.
157 16/17 CLA eligible

57%
18-20 yr olds in EET

90%
With up to date pathway plan

92%
In suitable accommodation. Includes 18% (18-20 yr olds) Staying Put with carers

89%
Visited in last 8 weeks

266
Live in Lewisham

6. A summary of our current practice, a snapshot from the Children's Social Care (CSC) 2020/21 Annual Self Assessment.

The no. and rate of children and young people entering care during 2020/21 has fallen, but the net no. of children in care has remained steady and is still higher than the London average. A focus on improving early permanence planning is beginning to see better outcomes. The no. of children and young people who have care plans that involve living with family, has doubled since 2019/20. We have also seen an increase in children and young people returning home and the expansion of our Special Guardianship Team means we are now better placed to support more kinship care arrangements.

Visits and Reviews: CSC continued to see our children and young people regularly whether face to face or virtually (resulting from Covid lockdown restrictions), 88% of visits and 96% of review meetings were carried out in timescale. A positive outcome of the pandemic has been better participation of children and young people in reviews, especially those placed at a distance, but we still need to do more to support children and young people to attend their review in person.

Health & Education: 96% of Review Health Assessments are held in time, but we still need to improve the timeliness of our Initial Assessments and Covid has impacted on dental examinations in 2020/21. Despite the challenges of 2020/21, there was no drop in school attendance, fixed term exclusions did not increase (0.2%) and attainment remained above the national average, with more YP attending Higher education.

Advocacy and Independent Visiting: In January 2020 a new provider was commissioned, this has helped improve uptake and strengthened children and young people's voice in care planning.

Placements: The stability of our placements compares well but our challenge is sufficiency. Most of our children and young people live in a foster placement, but only 20% are with Lewisham carers. We have a shortage of in-house carers, recruitment campaigns through 2019-20 saw an improvement on previous years, but has not delivered a net gain. The lack of local placements means only 35% of our children and young people live in Lewisham, which is not atypical in London, but those living more than 20 miles from their own home is slightly higher than other Boroughs. New mechanisms for placement monitoring have been introduced, which is starting to take effect with better placement planning and reduced costs. However, there is much more to do, hence our sufficiency and fostering strategies are being refreshed in 2022 to improve our sufficiency position for the future.

At the end of 2020/21 there were 38 young people aged 16/17 year olds live in unregulated semi-independent placements. For many of our young people's semi-independent housing it is a positive choice and part of their care/pathway plan towards independence. We have a quality assurance process to visit and check the provision to ensure it is suitable, safe and supported, bespoke levels of additional support from a key worker is provided.

Adoption: For those with placement orders it remains a challenge to find adopters for sibling groups, older children and those with complex health needs. Prospective adopters of BAME heritage also remain in short supply. Lewisham is working closely with the Regional Adoption Agency to improve timeliness of matching and recruitment of adopters.



Unaccompanied children and young people seeking asylum (UASC): Lewisham is proud to be a Borough of Sanctuary and we care for a higher rate of UASC. Through better utilisation of Home Office funding and working closely with the Refugee Council, Red Cross, Police and others, specialist UASC social workers now provide enhanced support from the point YP are referred to Lewisham, we have set up a range of services and activities and 93% of our UASCL have an up to date pathway plan.

Care Leavers: Lewisham is a signatory member of the Care Leaver Covenant and has high aspirations for our care experienced young people. The dedicated Care Leaver and UASC Service, created in spring 2019 has been continuing to establish itself throughout 2020/21 and this has enabled us to deliver improvements in all aspects of key performance for our service.



Keep of Caring Outcomes	Lewisham's improvement activity so far
<p>Care Leavers are...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are better prepared and supported to live independently. 2. Have improved access to education, employment & training. 3. Experience stability in their lives and feel safe and secure. 4. Have improved access to health and emotional support. 5. Achieve financial stability. 	<p>Creation of a dedicated Care Leavers Service, expanded with more Personal Advisors. Pathway Plans re-designed with young people in our CICC, so they had more meaning for the young person.</p> <p>Engagement in the I-Aspire programme which 3 neighbouring boroughs.</p> <p>Housing Protocol, to improve supported housing pathways and access to suitable accommodation.</p> <p>Children's Services and Health developing a joint funded dedicated nursing post. Development of a Transitions Service, for those with complex needs.</p> <p>Financial Entitlement Policy introduced to provide clarity on available financial support and equity.</p>



Lewisham works closely with Depaul, 145 of our care leavers are enrolled on the I-Aspire programme. Despite the challenges of Covid there have been some good outcomes achieved: 55 young people entered employment and/or training, 27 completed qualifications and/or entered higher education. 57% of our Care Leavers are in EET an improvement on previous years, and comparable with other LA's but still below our aspirational target of >80%.

There remains a recognised gap in dedicated health and wellbeing support for YP leaving care. Online counselling services were extended up to 25 years olds in 2021, but where the care of specialist services ends at age 18, there are insufficient transitional arrangements into adult services. The connectivity between children and adult services is a key priority for 2021/22.

92% of our care leavers are living in suitable accommodation, an increase of 21% since 2018 and a project this year has been successfully expanding the continuum of housing options for our care leavers, including staying put and supported lodgings options. We want to further improve our pathway planning and better tailor support for YP to be confidently and successfully independent.

7. The Children in Care Council and children and young people's engagement in this strategy

The Child in Care Council (CICC)

Our Junior Children in Care Council is for those aged 7-11 & 12-15 years old. It is now active during school breaks based on the feedback our children gave us when we reviewed our groups in June 2019. Membership has doubled since 2020 and is currently consists of 20.



Elevation is a care experienced young people's group aged 16-21 years old, membership is currently 15 young people.

CICC are represented on the Corporate Parenting Board and Fostering Advisory Board. They lead on organising events throughout the year to connect and support care experienced children and young people and celebrate their successes. They have also began developing a Charter, helping children and young people develop resilience and skills to enhance their employment opportunities. They have also co-produced an independence skills course.



The participation officer and CICC developed a participation strategy, which is our first step towards strengthening the engagement of children, young people and families in service evaluation and design. Children and young people are now routinely involved in interviews for social workers and managers and staff training. They have contributed to shaping the Child Sexual Exploitation strategy, the Local Offer to care leavers and this Corporate Parenting Strategy. But we still have much more to do to put children, young people and families voices at the heart of our learning, decision making and planning.

In developing this strategy, the participation officer led a series of sessions with care experienced children and young people. We asked "What do you think a good parent looks like?" and explored the standards they wanted Lewisham to meet as their Corporate Parents. Their feedback directly shaped the pledge and ambitions we have set out.

The Foster Carers Advisory Board (FAB)

The FAB consists of foster carer representatives (champions) and representation from key stakeholders from across children social care, health, education and the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) service. One of the main aims of the board is to adopt a culture of continuous improvement and to maximise the welfare of our children and young people through the promotion of good practice and partnership working. We want to ensure that our foster carers are at the center of the team around the children and young people they care for as well as offering solutions on issues which impact on them directly. We have 4 foster carer champions on the Board. These champions hold meetings with the carer cohort and feedback to the wider Board meeting when it is held on a monthly basis. This group has contributed to the development of this strategy and will support its delivery.

8. The Lewisham pledge, our ambitions for improving the care experience of our children and young people.

Our pledge sets out in six key ambitions, how we intend to make sure our care experienced children and young people have a positive care experience and we make a bigger difference in their lives, both now and in the future.

WE ARE PROUD PARENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Committed to Corporate Parenting2. Promoting Inclusivity and diversity3. Living in a safe and caring community4. Improving our care and pathway planning
THIS IS MY HOME	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Knowing where I will grow up6. Receiving good quality care7. Staying in the same place8. Feeling safe and secure in my home
HEALTHY & WELL	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. Being fit and well10. Feeling happy and hopeful11. Having hobbies and interests12. Keeping connected to people that matter
HAVING A VOICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">13. Making a difference14. Listening to my experience15. My care & pathway plan16. Helping to grow good social work
ASPIRATIONS & AMBITIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">17. Reaching my potential18. Being the best version of myself19. Getting involved and having fun20. Skills for work
BEING INDEPENDENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none">21. Managing my money22. Ready to look after myself23. Knowing where to get advice and help24. Having access to the right services

9. Corporate Parenting Groups - who will help deliver and monitor the progress of this strategy.

Our Corporate Parenting Group/Board

Our Corporate Parenting Group/Board is an advisory group chaired by the Cabinet Member for School Performance and Children's Services. It meets four times per year. Membership includes:

Children & young people from the Child in Care groups, supported by the Participation Officer

Partners and others, e.g. Foster Carer Representative, young Mayors group.

Key Council Officers with lead responsibility

Elected members of the Council

The role and responsibilities of our Corporate Parenting Group/Board are...

- ✓ To raise awareness of, and promote Lewisham Council's corporate parenting responsibilities among elected members and officers, including advising the Mayor and Cabinet. Ensuring arrangements are made for the training of Councillors (and others as appropriate).
- ✓ To consider what the strategic priorities should be and provide a forum for elected members to oversee the progress of all children in care and care leavers, through the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-23.
- ✓ To monitor that the delivery of Lewisham's Pledge's and the Local Offer to children in care and care leavers are having a positive impact and achieving best outcomes for them.
- ✓ To champion care experienced children and young people having a voice in evaluating, shaping services and decision making, to enable them to have a positive experience in Lewisham's care.
- ✓ To encourage all partners, to work well together in the best interests of children in care and care leavers. Holding all partners to account for their role in the delivery of services.



The Independent Reviewing Officers annual report has informed this strategy and the IRO's will continue to play an important role in quality assuring the way in which the Local Authority delivers its Corporate Parenting duties.

Delivering our Corporate Parenting duties are also supported and underpinned by:

- Lewisham Children & Young People's Plan.
- Children's Social Care Vision & Practice Framework.
- Children Looked After Pledge.
- Care Leavers Financial Entitlement Policy.
- Commitment to the Care Leaver Covenant.
- Sufficiency & Fostering Strategies & Board.
- Participation Strategy.
- Workforce Development Strategy & Practice Standards Handbook
- Terms of Reference - Corporate Parenting Board.

10. Measures of success

Alongside regular feedback from children and young people about their experiences in care, oversight from the IRO's and auditing of practice. The following quantitative and qualitative measures will be used to track the progress and impact of this strategy:

Area	Current position (2020/21 EoY)	Aspiration
Key performance and qualitative information		
1. A lower rate of Children Looked After (CLA)	69	<62
2. More Social Worker visits to CLA in timescale	89%	>90%
3. More CLA attending their CLA review meetings	73%	>90%
4. More CLA living with in-house foster carers	20%	>40%
5. More CLA living with Kinship Carers	12%	>25%
6. More CLA living in Lewisham	36%	>50%
7. More permanence plans confirmed by 2 nd Review	TBC	>90%
8. Reduced time taken to match CYP with adopters	239 days	200 days
9. Maintenance of placement stability	7% (3+) 71% (2yrs)	<8% >70%
10. Better educational outcomes for CLA	Targets TBC	
11. Improved school/college attendance, fewer exclusions	TBC	Targets TBC
12. Fewer delays in IHA & dental assessments and immunisations being completed.	30% 30% 74%	>90%
13. Fewer CYP involved in the criminal justice system	TBC	Target TBC
14. Care leavers in EET (18-25)	57%	>70%
15. Care leavers in suitable accommodation (18-25)	92%	>95%
16. More Care Leavers in Staying Put arrangements	n.62	Increase
17. Fewer CYP subject to exploitation	Data measures to be developed	
18. Pathway plans started for CLA at 16 years.	0%	>85%
19. Quality of care & pathway plans judged as scale 6 (Good) or above in audit.	46%	>80%
20. Complaints received from care experienced CYP	TBC	Reduced
Qualitative measures captured through feedback and audit		
21. More CYP actively engaged in their hobbies & interests		
22. Positive feedback received from care experienced CYP		
23. Engagement of more CYP in the CICC		
24. A wider range of housing options for our Care Leavers		

11. Action Plan to deliver the Corporate Parenting Strategic Ambitions (Our Pledge)

PLEDGE Ambitions	What we want for our children and young people	How we will deliver	Who will lead
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">WE ARE PROUD PARENTS</p>	<p>1. Understanding Corporate Parenting All council elected members, officers, carers and key partners are aware of and their role and responsibilities as Corporate Parents. Always keep our CYP in mind, champion them and are engaged in activities that create opportunities and promote good outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Parenting workshops mandatory in induction & training for all Council staff and newly elected members. Foster carer reviews to consider Corporate Parenting principles and delivery on this strategy and the Pledge. Identify Elected Member champions to promote activity for each ambition in the strategy Broaden wider partnership representation on CPB 	<p>Children’s Social Care (CSC)</p> <p>All Cllrs</p> <p>CYP Directorate</p>
	<p>2. Promoting inclusivity and diversity We work hard to promote inclusivity and practice in an explicitly anti-discriminatory and anti-racist way, tackling oppression, disproportionality and unconscious bias whenever it occurs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create statement of intent: to be an anti-racist organisation Training to practitioners and carers on anti-discriminatory and anti-racist practice. All significant religious holidays marked, celebrated and represented through our financial policy for care leavers. Recruit a diverse workforce, reflecting the community. 	<p>CSC</p>
	<p>3. Living in a safe and caring community Our local community is a safe place to live, learn and work and our CYP are welcomed to, and engaged in local groups and settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Child Exploitation Strategy (with the LSCB). Expand family support, to avoid CYP coming into care unnecessarily and support them to returning home safely. Strengthen our processes for when CYP go missing. Improve notification and information sharing systems for CYP placed out of the Borough. 	<p>CSC, YOS & Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)</p>
	<p>4. Improving our care and pathway planning We focus relentlessly on improving the quality of our practice, to make a positive difference to children, young people, their families and the local community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver recruitment & retention plan to provide continuity of social workers and PA’s. Deliver workforce development strategy - applying practice standards, delivering learning & embedding SoS practice. Strengthen the IRO footprint in improving care planning. Through robust QA, apply learning, address all areas for improvement as identified by Ofsted (July 2019 Inspection). 	<p>CSC & Human Resources</p>

PLEDGE Ambitions	What we want for our children and young people	How we will deliver	Who will lead
	<p>5. Knowing where I will grow up Through early permanence planning CYP will feel secure in knowing where they are growing up and if it is safe they will be helped live with/return to their family.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve early permanence planning (Panel & training) • Strengthen Special Guardianship and kinship care support • Develop stronger links with the RAA - Adopt London South • Improve processes and practice for formal matching CLA into long term carer arrangements. 	CSC
	<p>6. Receiving good quality care CYP will have a good quality, local placement that meets their needs, reflects their culture and delivers a high standard of care. Wherever possible CYP will be able live in a family based environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update & deliver the Sufficiency Strategy (Includes Fostering). • Improve commissioning and contract management of placements & review consortium/framework arrangements. • Strengthen QAF mechanisms for all placements. • Establish panel for unregulated kinship placements (Reg 24/25) to strengthen management oversight. 	CSC, Children's Commissioning & Communications Directorate.
	<p>7. Staying in the same place CYP will have placement stability and only move when it is the best care plan for them. There will be more opportunities for YP to 'stay put' and close to their carers and communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-design placements team to improve matching and stability. • Improve placement planning and disruption management. • Develop reciprocal housing arrangements with other LA's • Develop our Staying Put offer to YP in IFA placements 	CSC & Housing
	<p>8. Feeling safe and secure in my home If a YP's pathway plan is to move to semi or independent housing, this will be safe, secure, a good standard and they will be helped to move and maintain their tenancy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Housing /CSC protocol & ring fence supported accommodation for care leavers. • Repurpose assets and enter partnerships with trusted providers to increase housing capacity for care leavers. • Strengthen tenancy support for YP in independent housing. • Work with DFE on the rough sleepers initiative. 	CSC, Adults Commissioning & Housing

PLEDGE Ambitions	What we want for our children and young people	How we will deliver	Who will lead
<div style="background-color: #2e8b57; color: white; padding: 20px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">HEALTHY AND WELL</div>	<p>9. Being fit and well CYP will understand what a healthy diet and lifestyle involves and be helped to eat healthily and stay physically fit and active.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Health & CSC joint funded post for a dedicated Care Leaver health advisor. • Improve timeliness of health assessments and integrate holistic health needs into CYP plans. • Improve data sharing and recording processes to provide accurate history/records of health. • Ensure CWCN have clear health plans and access to the right resources, equipment, medications where needed 	<p>CSC & Health</p> <p>CWCN</p>
	<p>10. Feeling happy and hopeful We will be sensitive and honest, so CYP know and understand their life story and care journey. When CYP need emotional and mental health support we will ensure they have timely access to the right services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create practice toolkits and training to improve life story work. • Enable better access to therapeutic services and better use SDQ's to plan services with CAMHS. • Develop a transition into adulthood strategy with Adults Services, including mental health pathways • Improve access to broader range of substance misuse services. 	<p>CSC, CAMHS, ASC & Commissioning</p>
	<p>11. Having hobbies and interests CYP will be encouraged and helped to get involved in leisure activities and local interest groups, to better connect them to their local communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote free gym memberships / Leisure passes/ Bursaries • Pay for driving lessons for care leavers in EET • Develop a Charter for all CYP to participate in challenges and activities to develop new skills and resilience • Focus on strengthening this aspect of care/pathway planning 	<p>CSC & ASC</p>
	<p>12. Keeping connected to people that matter We will help CYP to stay connected to friends, family (where it is safe to do so). Ensure they always have at least one consistent trusted adult, looking out for them. Help them to form lasting networks in the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying SoS framework, tenaciously identifying wider family at earlier stage in permanence planning. • Bring supervision contact service in-house (Meliot) to improve quality and connection to care planning. • Support more wider family members be able care for CYP. • Extend and promote access to independent visitors. 	<p>CSC & Children's Commissioning</p>

PLEDGE Ambitions	What we want for our children and young people	How we will deliver	Who will lead
	<p>13. Making a difference Children in Care Council & Care Leavers forums have a wide representative membership group. They have regular access to influence senior leaders/ decision makers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the availability of advocacy services for CYP. • CICC have presence in the groups responsible for delivering this strategy e.g. Fostering Advisory Group • Broaden CICC involvement and influence by working with the Young Mayors Team. • Senior Leaders attend CICC regularly to here direct from CYP. 	CSC
	<p>14. Listening to my experience CYP’s feedback is routinely sought to evaluate services and influence shaping future policies and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop mechanisms for engagement through a refresh of the Participation Strategy. • Extend and promote access to and use of advocacy. • Better use complaints and compliments to improve services. • Identify suitable digital/media options for improving communication and consultation opportunities. 	CSC
	<p>15. Making plans and decisions ‘with’ you CYP are helped to purposefully take part in their own care and pathway plans. Promoting strong participation in Looked After Review meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More actively engage CYP in shaping their own plans. • CYP supported to chair their own review meetings. • CICC supported to help develop child friendly versions of key documents which involve them. • Explain and record decisions about CYP and their care journey and ensure it is accessible to them. 	CSC
	<p>16. Helping to grow good social work CYP are involved in interviewing and training their Corporate Parents and the professionals who are involved in their lives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYP are consulted on content, development and have the opportunity to deliver relevant training. • Identify and train more CYP to participate in interviews. • Develop CYP forum to develop a ‘kitemark’ standard of all relevant service developments. • Develop a young inspector’s framework. 	CSC

PLEDGE Ambitions	What we want for our children and young people	How we will deliver	Who will lead
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">ASPIRATIONS & AMBITIONS</p>	<p>17. Reaching my potential CYP will be helped to progress through their own learning journey, to reach their potential and succeed in attaining their best educational outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target support through transitions e.g. entry into care, moving school, to minimise disruption to learning. • Extend Virtual School offer to extend to care leavers. • Strengthen processes and increase practice development to improve timeliness & quality of PEPs • Identify Special Education Needs (SEN) earlier and develop more holistic approach to EHCPs. 	<p>CSC, Virtual School & Education</p>
	<p>18. Being the best version of myself CYP will be supported to be in an environment that best suits their learning needs, to allow them to fully participate in their school/college community, develop strong relationships and have the confidence to thrive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase capacity in Virtual School to identify appropriate SEND provision and avoid delays in access. • Strengthen our responses to have a timely multi-agency approach to addressing absence. • Work with schools, to become trauma informed to better support CLA to achieve in education. • Improve the timeliness of responses to all episodes of exclusion, with a personalised inclusion plan. Ensuring no CLA is permanently excluded. 	<p>CSC, Virtual School & Education</p>
	<p>19. Getting involved and having fun CYP will be actively encouraged to get involved in hobbies, sports and recreation clubs and activities to foster talents, knowledge, friendships and networks of support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish regular programme of celebratory events • Free Gym membership/passes for Lewisham Services • Promote CYP to be able to get involved in community groups • Encourage activities of interest as part of care planning • Proactively support CYP to pursue their talents and hobbies. 	<p>CSC, Virtual School & Education</p>
	<p>20. Skills for work YP will have a range of opportunities to gain working experience, workplace skills and pathways into employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing work experience during school holidays. • Promote engagement in I-Aspire programme and transition into existing services, when it ends (2022). • Create ring fenced apprenticeship opportunities. • Develop the Care Leaver Covenant with Local Businesses. 	<p>CSC, Virtual School, Education & DWP</p>

PLEDGE Ambitions	What we want for our children and young people	How we will deliver	Who will lead
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">BECOMING INDEPENDENT</p>	<p>21. Managing my money Young people will be helped to know how to budget and financially support themselves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Entitlements policy complete, publish & implement. • Develop more tailored group & individual work support activities for YP and carers, with CICC. • Improve mechanisms for managing savings for CLA to ensure care leavers have easy access to their trust funds. • DWP and PA's to work to provide 121 benefits advice. 	<p>CSC</p> <p>CSC & Finance Services CSC & DWP</p>
	<p>22. Ready to look after myself Young people will feel confident about their life skills and ability to live independently, with sustainable support networks around them so they will not need to rely solely on professionals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbish Bromley Road building to relocate services and create 'one stop' location for care leavers to access help • Reorganise use of training flats for independence training. • Promote more take up of Money House project. • Work with probation to further improve resettlement plans. 	<p>CSC & Corporate Services</p> <p>CSC & Probation</p>
	<p>23. Knowing where to get advice and help Young people will know how to navigate services, so they are confident about where and when to get the right help.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase no. of Personal Advisors to reduce caseloads • Extended the leaving care offer to YP formerly in Special Guardianship care arrangements. • Develop mentoring/buddying support scheme, delivered by care experienced YP. • Improve CYP seeking asylum links to Red Cross and provide more specialist assistance in applying for Citizenship. 	<p>CSC</p> <p>CSC & Red Cross</p>
	<p>24. Having access to the right services Young people with complex needs will be able to transition smoothly from children's to adult services without delay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with Adults Services to expand the remit of the transitions strategy and the transitions team. • Improve earlier transitions planning for adults services. • Explore extended use of pathway plan as a holistic referral document for a range of adult services. • Joint adults/CSC funding arrangements to be put in place for the accommodation for those with complex needs. 	<p>CSC & Adults Services</p>