

**Corporate Parenting  
Panel  
28 February 2018**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor Nicola Greene (Deputy Leader) - Chair; Councillor Bobbie Dove - Vice-Chair, Councillors Rae Stollard, Michael Weinhonig, and Blair Crawford.

**NON-ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Lisa Male                      Participation Worker, Children's Social Care  
Click Member

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

Kayleigh Jones              16+ Care Leavers Team  
Mike Felstead                Service Manager - Quality Assurance and Safeguarding  
Penny Lodwick                Service Manager - LAC and Care Leavers  
Suzie Levett                  Virtual School Head Teacher  
Tracey Tomlin                Post-16 Looked After Children/Care Leavers team  
Wayne Chappell              Caseworker

**FROM LINWOOD SCHOOL:**

Sue Bridle                      Assistant Head Teacher

**FROM PARLEY FIRST SCHOOL:**

John Bagwell                Head Teacher

**FROM BOURNEMOUTH AND POOLE COLLEGE:**

Sara Churchill                Student Welfare Coach - Bournemouth and Poole College

The meeting started at 5pm and finished at 7pm

Note: To see a copy of the public reports that were considered by the Panel at this meeting please visit:

<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/councildemocratic/CouncilMeetings/CommitteeMeetings/CorporateParentingPanel/2018/02/28/corporateparentingpanel28-feb-2018.aspx>

Please note that the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel is scheduled to take place on 4 June 2018.

It is recommended that you check this information with Democratic Services closer to the scheduled date of the next meeting in case the arrangements have been changed.

Contact: Samineh Richardson, Democratic and Overview and Scrutiny Officer

☎ 01202 454713

✉ [samineh.richardson@bournemouth.gov.uk](mailto:samineh.richardson@bournemouth.gov.uk)

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Agenda Item / Report No.	Minute No.	Matter Considered	Decisions to be confirmed at the next meeting
Item 1	1	<p><b>MEMBERSHIP OF THE PANEL</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillor Lynda Price</p>	
Item 2	2	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests or other interest from members.</p>	
Item 3	3	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2017 AND THE MEETING OF 4 SEPTEMBER</b></p> <p>There were no actions arising from the minutes.</p>	The minutes were agreed as a correct record.
Item 4	4	<p><b>ITEMS CIRCULATED TO PANEL MEMBERS FOR INFORMATION</b></p> <p>Performance data was circulated by the Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Head of Service. The data looked at key LAC statistics for Bournemouth Borough Council including the number of Looked After Children, 237, and the rate of LAC per 10,000 of the child population which was 66.75 compared to 72.1 in the South West and 62 in England.</p>	
Item 6	5	<p><b>CLICK SURVEY PRESENTATION ON EDUCATION</b></p> <p>The Panel received a presentation from CLICK members. The presentation highlighted the key findings from part of the review of The Promise, which is Bournemouth's promise to Looked After Children (LAC). All children and young people, aged 8 to 17, who were in care, were asked to fill in a survey that identified what was very important, important or not</p>	The Participation Worker agreed to send a copy of the presentation and the

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		<p>important to them in considering their care, 55 responses were received. The presentation was split into themes that included contact with family, health, money, preparation for independence, social workers, being involved in their own care, their placement and education.</p> <p>It was highlighted to the Panel that most LAC found it either important or very important to know why they weren't able to have contact with their families. In considering their health, most LAC said it was important to have support with their emotions and to have a placement that helped them to stay healthy, however 24 respondents said a regular visit with a LAC nurse was not important. Nearly all LAC said that pocket money and allowances were important or very important (52) and that they wanted have a say in how their money was managed (48). They also wanted help learning how to manage their money (38). Most respondents said support to develop the skills needed to live independently was important, this included receiving information before they turned 18 on options for accommodation when they leave care.</p> <p>Of all the responses 42 respondents said that having a social worker was important. The responses highlighted that the majority of LAC wanted their social worker to listen to them, ask about their wishes and feelings, be accessible and be able to speak to them in private. Nearly all respondents, 53, said that staff following through with their promises was important or very important and similarly 54 LAC said that honesty was important or very important. In response to the survey questions about their placement, most LAC said they wanted a safe place where they could settle and where they were also fed and clothed. Most also wanted the opportunity to get to know their carers before they moved in and to live with friends and family where possible.</p> <p>In education, it was important to LAC to be able to attend school trips, to have help planning their next steps and for their status as LAC to be kept confidential. Thirty-eight respondents wanted their carers or keyworkers to go to parent's evenings with them and 39 LAC wanted</p>	<p>full review of The Promise to members</p>

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		<p>information about 6<sup>th</sup> forms and universities. Support with accommodation, information about grants, costs and the application process for university was important. LAC also wanted volunteering and work experience opportunities to be offered to them.</p> <p>Members discussed why respondents considered certain things unimportant and whether there were some young people who didn't want intervention. They also discussed the work that could be done to make despondent LAC feel like a priority. The chair highlighted to the Panel that the Promise had been to Cabinet on the 24 January and would be agreed at Full Council on 6 March. The participation worker agreed to send a copy of the full review of The Promise and a copy of the presentation to members.</p>	
	6	<p><b>PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT OF PUPILS ATTENDING BOURNEMOUTH'S VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND AN OVERVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL ISSUES</b></p> <p>The Panel received an update from the Virtual School Head Teacher on the educational progress, attainment, outcomes and provision of education for looked after children in Bournemouth. It was highlighted to the Panel that a new Personal Education Plan for LAC had been successfully implemented. The plan included direct feedback from LAC whose input had led to improvements in the service, for example, feedback had highlighted that LAC saw staff's identity badges' as a visual indicator that they were in care. It was important to LAC to not be identified as a looked after child, so badges were no longer displayed while staff were with the child. The feedback was considered a valuable tool in helping to tackle LAC's issues as they arose.</p> <p>It was also highlighted that there had been a successful event at Absolute Music. LAC had come together to rehearse for a live piece of music and had appreciated the opportunity to rehearse and to spend time with other LAC who were going through similar</p>	<p>The Vice-Chair, Virtual School Head Teacher and the LAC and Care Leavers Service Manager agreed to meet to see how communication channels could be improved and to see whether a monthly meeting could be set up to ensure any issues could be tackled.</p>

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		<p>experiences. There had also been special educational needs and disability (SEND) activities organised for LAC and a literacy event at Kinson Library.</p> <p>The Virtual School Head Teacher highlighted that Key Stage 2 results for LAC were the best in the South West and were approaching the average for non-looked after children. The Panel were also informed that the team would be fully staffed by Easter and that a new post 16 case-worker, employed to spend 50% of their time with separated children, would soon be in post. It was also brought to the attention of the Panel that staff caseloads had more than doubled in the last ten years.</p> <p>A member of the Post-16 Looked After Children Team updated the Panel on LAC in education post 16. The Panel were informed that no care leavers had dropped out of university and that two were accessing higher education courses at Bournemouth and Poole College. A post 16 case-worker had also been employed to offer a drop-in service at Bournemouth University, it was hoped that this would improve retention rates. There was also a new process in place to help LAC who wanted to make an application to college.</p> <p>The Chair invited the Head Teachers present at the meeting to share their experiences, particularly any experiences relating to LAC that could be important to the Council as a Corporate Parent. The Head Teachers highlighted the positive work that was being done with LAC and emphasised the importance of good communication between the schools, the Local Authority and the social care workers. Communication was described as a priority by those that attended the Panel. The Vice-Chair, Virtual School Head Teacher and the LAC and Care Leavers Service Manager agreed to meet to see how communication channels could be improved.</p>	

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		<p>The impact of the pupil premium was discussed. A looked after child told the Panel that he enjoyed his extra-curricular activities and had support for his schooling. Another young person said that he hadn't enjoyed school until he had an education case worker.</p> <p>A number of questions were raised by members. The main points discussed were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether interventions to help reduce young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) were working. The Panel discussed policy that was helping, for example transport help including lifts and pre-apprenticeship programmes. They also highlighted that some LAC may be struggling with mental health issues or have other priorities that need to be addressed before they can enter employment or training. The Panel were informed that flexibility was important because young people may need to come off programmes due to personal circumstances and in these cases a plan should be put in place that allows them to continue once they are able;</li> <li>• It was highlighted to the Panel that there needed to be a balance between sport, academic and musical opportunities depending on what the young person's talents and passions were. The more that the children and young people engaged with these activities the more likely they were to engage in other areas.</li> <li>• The difficulties that young people face at school were discussed and whether intervention could be carried out earlier and be personalised to make the education system work for the young person. The possibility of using Pupil Premium Mentors was raised and the importance of raising the young person's self-esteem was discussed;</li> <li>• All LAC were allocated a Personal Advisor prior to their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, this coincided with a planned withdrawal of the LAC's social worker. The Panel</li> </ul>	

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		<p>discussed the impact of this happening during the GCSE period and queried whether the conversations regarding post 16 options could start earlier. Bournemouth University had said that aspirations to attend University should start in primary schools and should challenge stereotypes. A care leaver stressed their own experience of achieving at school and then leaving 6th form after 4 months, not realising there was support available. The importance of information regarding support being readily available was pointed out;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ofsted and accountability in teaching was discussed and the importance of personalising the young person's curriculum.</li> <li>• The Panel discussed the recognisable link between carers attendance at university and the subsequent attendance of LAC in their care. The Panel were informed that carers needed reminding that it was important to provide a space for the young people to work, they did not need to be able to understand the work themselves. The Panel were informed that foster carers have annual reviews and an education caseworker will provide feedback for that review. There were also a number of mechanisms in place for flagging and escalating concerns. Additionally, there were annual rewards for carers that recognised their commitment to training.</li> <li>• It was highlighted that the South West did not perform well nationally when looking at the educational attainment of LAC. The question of what more could be done for young people was posed to the Panel. It was explained that statistics were sometimes unhelpful, for example where there are extreme educational needs in the cohort and where pupils underachieve due to their personal circumstances. To improve LAC's results, it was put forward that looking at the stability of placements could be beneficial. LAC may also benefit from an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to assess the child's need, this would also benefit out of borough LAC.</li> </ul>	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was pointed out to the Panel that out of borough children needed to be reached; the Council needed to look externally for best practice and there needed to be effective and timely communication between professionals. The Virtual School Head Teacher, The Service Manager-LAC and Care Leavers and the Vice-Chair agreed to meet to discuss communication and the potential for monthly meetings. The Chair invited the Virtual School Head Teacher to attend the next Corporate Parenting Panel meeting on Education.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked all those in attendance and advised them they were always welcome.</p>	