



mental welfare
commission for scotland

Corporate parenting action plan 2021-2024

Corporate document

October 2021



Our mission and purpose

Our Mission

To be a leading and independent voice in promoting a society where people with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions are treated fairly, have their rights respected, and have appropriate support to live the life of their choice.

Our Purpose

We protect and promote the human rights of people with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions.

Our Priorities

To achieve our mission and purpose over the next three years we have identified four strategic priorities.

- To challenge and to promote change
- Focus on the most vulnerable
- Increase our impact (in the work that we do)
- Improve our efficiency and effectiveness

Our Activity

- Influencing and empowering
- Visiting individuals
- Monitoring the law
- Investigations and casework
- Information and advice

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Introduction

Under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014) (“the Act”)¹ the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland (“the Commission”) was made a Corporate Parent and given a specific role with responsibilities towards children and young people who are ‘looked after’ or care experienced. These responsibilities extended our existing role in promoting the rights and welfare of individuals of all ages and from all backgrounds who experience significant mental health difficulties and are subject to mental health and incapacity legislation in Scotland. From our work with children and young people we are aware of the increased and often complex mental health needs of looked after children and young people. As part of our role as a Corporate Parent every three years we are required to publish a Corporate Parenting plan which provides an update on our progress in working towards our Corporate Parent responsibilities and lays out our plan for work over the next three years. In 2018 we published our first ever Corporate Parent Plan which outlined our plans for 2018-2021² and we are now pleased to publish our second report which will give an update on this activity and will also describe the work we hope to undertake in 2021-2024.

Corporate parenting is defined as ³ *“An organisation’s performance of actions necessary to uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of a looked after child or care leaver, and through which physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational development is promoted.”*

Section 57 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 defines a person who is considered ‘looked after’ and a ‘care leaver’ and this includes any child who is looked after by a local authority, and anyone who is under the age of 26 and has been looked after by a local authority. Young people may be placed in foster care, residential care, secure care, ‘looked after at home’ (on Compulsory Supervision Orders with no condition of residence) or maybe in formal kinship care. Although the law defines children and young people as ‘looked after children’ many of the children and young people themselves prefer the term ‘care experienced’ and so this term will be primarily used in this Corporate Parenting Plan⁴.

¹ Scottish Government, Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Norwich, The Stationary Office, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>

² the Commission Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2021 https://www.mwscot.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-06/corporate_parenting_plan2018-21.pdf

³ Scottish Government, Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014: Statutory Guidance on Part 9: Corporate Parenting, Edinburgh, APS Group Scotland. Adapted from Sonia Jackson’s definition of parenting presented in M. Davis (ed) (2000) The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Social Work, Oxford, Blackwell and cited in the Scottish Government

⁴ <https://www.whocaresscotland.org/get-involved/1000-voices/>

Section 58 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act states that in relation to care experienced children and young people and consistent with the Commission's role and duties, we must:

- be alert to issues which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of an eligible child or young person;
- assess the needs of eligible children and young people for any services or support provided;
- promote the interests of eligible children and young people;
- seek to provide eligible children and young people with opportunities to promote their wellbeing and take appropriate action to support eligible children and young people access these opportunities; and
- keep our approach to corporate parenting under constant review and seek improvement wherever possible.

We recognise that corporate parenting duties should be delivered collectively as an organisation and should not be seen as only the responsibility of a single post holder or group within the Commission.

Sections 59-65 (inclusive) of the Act describe additional duties of corporate parents to the ones outlined above. These are to provide detailed plans and reports periodically, to collaborate with one another in relation to Corporate Parenting duties, to follow directions and guidance from Scottish Ministers, and provide relevant information to Scottish Ministers in relation to their Corporate Parenting role.

In the Commission's first Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2021 our aims were to embed our new Corporate Parenting role into our ongoing work; to learn more about the needs and the rights of this group of care experienced children and young people and about how our work can support them; and to raise any concerns or views we have about looked after or care experienced children and young people with relevant services and policy makers.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 listed the organisations that became Corporate Parents under the Act. In addition to creating this new role of a Corporate Parent, the Act also made the Commission an Authority in schedule 1 of the Act with Part 1 duties in relation to the rights of all children and young people in Scotland under the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The UNCRC is an international human rights treaty, which sets out the rights that all children should have and be able to enjoy up to the age of 18. These Part 1 duties began in 2017 and our first Children's Rights Report 2017-2020 which documents our work to promote the rights of all children in Scotland between 2017 and 2020 has recently been published⁵.

We have structured this second corporate parenting report by providing a brief initial introduction of our duties under the Children's and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the work of the Commission before going on to report on our progress towards the goals we made in our first Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2021 and then detailing our future plans for 2021-2024. The range of examples we will give is wide and reflects the broad nature of the work of

⁵ <https://www.mwscot.org.uk/node/1544>

the Commission. We hope it demonstrates our commitment to ensure that the rights of all children and young people are protected, promoted and realised, as enshrined in the UNCRC and that our particular duties towards care experienced children and young people are valued and respected.

General background – the role of the Mental Welfare Commission

The Mental Welfare Commission is an independent organisation with duties set out in current mental health and incapacity law. We aim to safeguard the rights and welfare of individuals with mental illness, a learning disability or other mental health disorder especially those who are vulnerable and less able to safeguard their own interests and make decisions about their treatment. When individuals have restrictions placed on them in order to receive mental health care and treatment we make sure that this is legal and ethical and is in line with the principles that guide the use of mental health law. We draw on our experience of health and social care, and the experience of service users and carers in order to do this.

We carry out our duties by focussing on five main areas of work. These are:

- **Visiting people** - we visit people who are in hospital, at home or in any other setting where they are receiving care and treatment We produce reports on our visits so that services can learn from our findings and improve patient care.
- **Monitoring the use of mental health laws** - we monitor the Mental Health (Care and Treatment)(Scotland) Act 2003 (“the mental health act” or MHA) and the welfare parts of the Adults With Incapacity Act 2000 (“the AWIA”). We check the paperwork we receive and let the professionals and/or the person know if we think there is a problem. If there is a serious issue we may follow up any difficulties with visits or investigation work. We regularly analyse and report on the use of the MHA and AWIA across Scotland and identify trends in how the acts are being used.
- **Investigations into individual cases** - where we believe the person may not be receiving the right care and treatment. We may make enquiries into the case or undertake a full investigation. We are particularly interested in cases where there may be learning for professionals and services across the country to try and avoid the same mistakes happening again. We report on our findings from full investigations.
- **Providing information and advice about the best use of mental health law** - we give advice about best practise in the use of the MHA and AWIA. Our website contains a lot of information for individuals, patients and professionals and we can also signpost users to other sources of advice. We also host a telephone advice line with is available within office hours on weekdays and is free of charge. Advice is available for individuals or professionals and if we cannot help we will try and signpost callers to others who can.
- **Influencing and challenging** - At times we draw attention to mistakes and ask people to learn from them. At others we use our unique overview of mental health and learning disability services to help Scottish Ministers and service managers shape policy. This way we aim to help develop services that safeguard rights, and improve care and treatment for people with mental illness, learning disability, dementia and related conditions.

Although the Commission provides limited direct services for children and young people, we ensure that children's rights are protected and promoted through our work with the services in Scotland that do work more intensively with children and young people and their families.

Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2021

In the Commission's first Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2021 we provided an Action plan which listed six outcomes for our work which detailed how we would fulfil our corporate parenting duties over this time period. Three of these outcomes (Outcomes 1, 5 and 6 in the action plan for 2018-2021) had a common theme of ensuring that we understood our Corporate Parenting duties as an organisation and were able to take steps to ensure that decisions made about priorities or planned work of the organisation were informed by our responsibilities towards care experienced children and young people in Scotland.

We understand our duties as Corporate Parents and these duties form an integral part of decision making about Commission priorities and activities.

Outcome 5 of our 2018-2021 action plan stated that the MWC would ensure that all staff, including Board members, understand and are aware of the needs of care experienced children and young people, and of our corporate parenting responsibilities. In June 2018 relevant Board members and managers undertook training about their new duties in relation to Corporate Parenting with Who Cares? Scotland, a national voluntary organisation that works with care experienced children and care leavers in Scotland. In December 2018 practitioners and administration staff in the Commission took part in training about the Commission's Corporate Parenting Plan which served as an opportunity to update and discuss our new role with colleagues and reflect on how the Commission's work would incorporate these new duties going forwards.

Outcome 6 of the 2018-2021 action plan aimed to ensure that our Corporate Parenting responsibilities remain a corporate priority for the Commission. To support this, in February 2018 changes were implemented so that our business and strategic plans would consistently reference our Corporate Parenting plan and thereby provide the Corporate Parenting plan with the structure and support necessary for its influence and inclusion in strategic decision making on an ongoing basis. At the same time governance arrangements were put in place so that our duties as Corporate Parents were overseen by both the Commission's Operational Management Group and the Commission's Children and Young People's group. The latter group is an internal group of nursing, medical and social work practitioner staff who have experience of working with children and young people with mental health difficulties. Since 2018, the executive director with lead responsibility for the Children and Young People's group at the Commission, together with the Children and Young People's group, have continued to review whether specific pieces of work might be undertaken to explore and promote the needs of care experienced children and young people in Scotland more directly. Views of the Commission's stakeholder advisory group have also been sought. This activity also reflects outcome 1 of the 2018-2021 action plan which required the Commission to consider the needs of care experienced children and young people on an ongoing basis as part of our business and strategic plans.

Next steps: Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2021-2024

Second theme

- We will provide opportunities to refresh knowledge and ensure awareness of the current Corporate Parenting plan with Commission staff and inform good practise in our work.
- We will develop induction materials and Q&As in relation to common questions about Corporate Parenting and make them available to Commission staff.
- Our strategic and business plans will signpost to the Corporate Parenting plan as a standard item.
- We will ensure governance of corporate parenting duties is overseen by the Commission's executive leadership team and the Children & Young People's group.
- When setting out our business plan for coming years we will ensure that we consider the needs of care experienced children and young people in our planning activity and when deciding priorities for monitoring and themed visit programmes.
- Work carried out under the above headings will be monitored by the executive lead within the Commission along with the practitioner lead for specific pieces of work. All work will be reported on in our annual report, and planning for future work will be included in the Commission's business plan on an annual basis.
- We continue to learn more about the needs and the rights of care experienced children and young people and about how our work can support them

A second theme in our 2018-2021 action plan had the overall aim of better understanding the needs of children and young people who are care experienced and to reflect on how we might support their needs and promote their rights through the work of the Commission (outcomes 2 and 3 of the 2018-2021 action plan).

A key way in which we have done this since 2018 is to prioritise opportunities to speak with people who are care experienced and gather their views about their care and experience when we visit in hospital and in the community. By doing this we hope to learn from individuals' experiences and should any particular aspects of care or service provision be of concern, we either raise it with relevant services about a particular individual's care or, use the information to inform decision making in the Commission about future planned themed visiting activity to explore issues for groups of individuals.

Since 2018 we have made a number of changes to our visiting activity and the recording of information we gather during our visits and now routinely collect information on whether the individuals we are visiting are care experienced and document this. This takes place when we visit people in hospital as part of a local or themed visit and when we visit individuals who are placed on guardianship orders under the Adults with Incapacity Act. When we visit hospital wards as part of a local visit we specifically ask staff to ensure that people with care experience are given the opportunity to meet with us and we have amended the pre-visit information given to services about the visit to reflect this. We have amended our visit template so that Commission staff can ask about and record whether an individual is care

experienced. By identifying individuals as having had looked after experience, we can report on this data in our annual reports. If individuals are willing to tell us they have looked after experience, we will also have the opportunity to ask about and report on their experience in accessing mental health or learning disability services.

Since 1 April 2019 Commission staff have visited and interviewed 657 individuals who are over 18 and reviewed the care of a further 336 as part of our visiting programme. 47 of the 657 individuals we interviewed told us that they were care experienced when younger and 11 of the 336 individual case files we reviewed documented that the person was care experienced. Of the 317 guardianship visits we have undertaken since 1 April 2019 only two were to young people aged under 18. 26 of the adults we visited on guardianship visits were care experienced when younger.

In 2019/2020 we undertook a themed visit which explored the care and treatment in Scotland of individuals who had an eating disorder such as anorexia nervosa. During that visit we reviewed the care of 50 individuals, 23 of whom were young people aged between 12 and 18 years old. None of these young people told us they were care experienced and none of the 27 adults reviewed were either care experienced when younger or a care leaver. We aim to visit each of the specialist adolescent units each year (except Edinburgh YPU) and also the National Child Inpatient unit each year. During these visits, we now ask routinely if there are any young people in the unit that have looked after experience and try to meet with them.

Visiting people and hearing from them about their experiences is an important way that we develop an understanding of matters that affect an individual and are important to them. When we visit a number of individuals we are able to begin to gather information about certain themes or issues that are affecting certain groups of people over a period of time.

A further way in which we learn about the needs of children and young people who are care experienced is through the monitoring work of the Commission. This activity provides us with a different perspective from visiting and can raise questions which might prompt further work by ourselves or give insight into practise that affects large groups of individuals in the population and form the basis of responses we might make to inform national policy or strategy.

The Children and Young People's group in the Commission continues to monitor work carried out in relation to children and young people in the Commission, including those who have care experience. The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 (MHA) placed a duty on health boards to provide sufficient services and accommodation for young people up to the age of 18 who require inpatient treatment. Monitoring the admission of young people to non-specialist settings, such as adult wards, and monitoring features of their inpatient care and treatment have been priorities for the Commission since the legislation came into force. In carrying out this work, we endeavour to speak to as many young people as we can about their experience of inpatient care and treatment, some of whom will be, or have been, care experienced children.

At present we are unable to collect information about how many individuals detained under the MHA or subject to guardianship orders under the AWIA are care experienced or care leavers. We have however amended our data collection process regarding the children and

young people admitted to non-specialist wards for treatment of their mental health difficulties to find out whether the young person is looked after. We report on these findings in our annual young person's monitoring report. Our data shows that since we began to collect information in 2017, care experienced young people represent a substantial minority of children and young people admitted to non-specialist wards for their mental health. In 2019-2020 for example, we were notified about 103 admissions of young people aged under 18 to non-specialist wards in Scotland involving 88 young people. We received further information about 89 of these admissions. 22% (20 out of 89) of these admissions were for young people who were care experienced, seven were aged 15 years and under, and 13 were either 16 or 17 years old. Interestingly of the 15 young people who we were told had been admitted to adult intensive psychiatric care wards (IPCU) during their hospital stay, a third of these (five out of fifteen) were for young people who were care experienced. The Commission continues to raise concerns with Scottish Government about the lack of specialist inpatient services and accommodation available for young people in Scotland and we will continue to monitor the care provided in non-specialist admissions in the future.

In 2019 we started to monitor the admissions of mothers to hospitals for their mental health shortly after their child's birth; our monitoring focus relates to where the admission is not to a specialist mother and baby unit. Many of these mothers or babies are not care experienced, however, a proportion of them are.

When a mother, who has a baby under the age of 12 months, requires inpatient mental health treatment, there is a legal duty in Scotland under the MHA to provide for joint admission, where this is in the best interests of mother and child. Scotland has two regional mother and baby units designed to care for mother and babies in this situation. In 2015 we carried out a national perinatal themed visit and made recommendations to the Scottish Government, including a call to establish a national managed clinical network for perinatal mental health. The Scottish Government established the network in 2017, and together with the Perinatal Mental Health Network the Commission now monitors perinatal admissions across Scotland with the aim of identifying barriers to mother and baby unit care, informing national service development and improving women's access to inpatient perinatal care, wherever they live in Scotland. Our monitoring work routinely gathers information as to whether the mother is care experienced, to explore whether there are any particular patterns in the way services are accessed. In 2019 we received 17 monitoring forms completed by the consultant or senior nurse regarding mothers who had been admitted to hospitals that were not mother and baby units. Less than five of these mothers were under 18, all of whom were care experienced (actual number suppressed to prevent identification). The first year's perinatal monitoring results were reviewed in spring 2020 as part of ongoing monitoring work of the Commission.⁶

When the Commission learns of difficulties in the care and treatment of people, we might make further enquiries and recommendations about their care, in order to support and protect their rights. Most of the time this activity can be described as 'active intervention' or less intense investigation work; at other times when there are particularly significant concerns and there is an indication that learning from a case would be helpful to share with services or professionals on a wider basis, we may undertake a full investigation into the care and

⁶ https://www.mwscot.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-11/MWCS_Annual%20Report_2018-19.pdf

treatment and report on our findings. Since 2018 the Commission has become aware of a small number of cases where young care experienced people have had significant difficulty accessing secure care provision in Scotland and are then admitted to a mental health ward as a place of safety . We have started gathering information about these cases to learn more about the difficulties experienced by these young people and to ensure their rights have been protected. We continue to explore whether there are any common themes that might indicate that further work would be helpful.

A strand of outcome 2 of the 2018-2021 action plan was ensuring access to our services by care experienced children and young people. A key way in which the Commission fulfils its duties towards individuals and in supporting their rights, is by giving information about the use of mental health legislation. We have a lot of information on our website which is freely available for individuals, carers and professionals and we also provide a telephone advice line which responds to calls on a daily basis during the week. After a review of the Commission telephone advice line in 2015/16, we wrote to agencies that support young people with mental health issues or learning disabilities to publicise the advice line to them, and to ask them to highlight it to the children and young people they work with. We will be writing to these agencies again by way of a reminder of our service.

The Commission also publishes good practise guidance on various topics that we know from speaking to people are complex and pose challenges to the provision of good care and the protection of rights. In 2019, we published good practise guidance on the complex area of capacity and consent to treatment in young people with features of emotionally unstable personality disorder⁷. This work followed a recommendation made in a case review regarding a young person who was care experienced. The guidance aims to support decision making in the appropriate use of mental health legislation by professionals and to safeguard the rights of individuals.

⁷ <https://www.mwscot.org.uk/news/capacity-consent-and-compulsion-young-people-borderline-personality-disorder>

Third theme

- We will periodically contact agencies that support young people with mental health issues or learning disabilities to publicise our advice line to them, and to ask them to highlight it to the children and young people they work with.
- We will ensure Commission staff are aware care experienced children and young people may call the advice line.
- We will ensure Commission staff on any local service visits ask that individuals with care experience are given the opportunity to meet with them.
- We will review information relevant to this in the pre visit preparation to services.
- When on any visits, staff will ensure that they ask if the individuals being visited have care experience and record this to ensure reporting in the Commission's annual reports.
- We will include visits to individual young people subject to guardianship orders in our guardianship visit programme, as young people can be subject to guardianship orders after their 16th birthday.
- We will ensure that all visit activity (local, themed or guardianship) gathers information in relation to care experienced young people routinely.
- We will raise any concerns or views we have about looked after or care experienced children and young people with relevant services and policy makers.

A third theme in our 2018-2021 Corporate Parenting Plan reflected our commitment to influence and challenge in order to promote the interests of care experienced children and young people in relation to their mental health and in line with our duties (outcome 3). We do this on an individual basis when we raise concerns about the care and treatment of an individual through our visits or through our investigations activity. Another way we do this is by responding to consultations or inquiries regarding national policy or strategy. A key way we have done this in 2019 was to provide written evidence⁸ to the Inquiry into Secure Care places for children and young people in Scotland undertaken by the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee⁹. This inquiry considered issues relating to secure care and published a report about their findings in November 2019¹⁰.

We also continue to participate in and respond to consultations on policy and strategy relating to the mental health needs of children and young people, including looked after children and young people. Most recently we responded to the consultation undertaken as part of the Mental Health Act review in May 2020¹¹. In our response we raised a number of concerns about the experience of children and young people including concerns about the experience of individuals across the age range who are not able to access appropriate services in the community due to lack of service provision by local authorities. Section 25 of the MHA requires local authorities to ensure that care and support is provided for people who have a mental illness and who are not in hospital, with the aim of minimising the effect of the mental

⁸ https://www.parliament.scot/S5_JusticeCommittee/Inquiries/SCCYP-Mental_Welfare_Commission_for_Scotland.pdf

⁹ <https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/111909.aspx>

¹⁰ <https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/Committees/Report/J/2019/11/26/Secure-care-and-prison-places-for-children-and-young-people-in-Scotland>

¹¹ <https://www.mwscot.org.uk/news/mental-health-act-review-mental-welfare-commission-response>

illness on the person and supporting them to lead as normal a life as possible¹². Unfortunately this does not always happen and our response raised awareness of the various difficulties experienced by a number of individuals, including care experienced children and young people, in accessing appropriate services provided by the local authority on a regular basis.

Further steps

- We will continue to highlight to the Scottish Government the improvements needed in mental health services with regards to the care and treatment of all children and young people, including the care experienced population.
- We will challenge service providers on their delivery of mental health care to children and young people where necessary. We will also bring any poor practice to the notice of service providers, service regulators and where appropriate local and national government.
- As we gather more information and experience of the looked after population, we will make specific recommendations, where appropriate, to services and policy makers.
- We will continue to be active participants in groups and networks which work to improve understanding of how services can best respond to the mental health needs of children and young people, some of whom may be care experienced.
- We will continue to share intelligence with the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland to ensure that any concerns about services can be acted upon in a responsive, co-ordinated and proportionate way.
- We will continue to respond to national policy direction and formal consultations and share our experience of the promotion of the rights of care experienced children and young people.
- We will report statistics around care experienced young people we come in contact with in order to inform future work by ourselves and wider agencies.
- We will work to improve our data collection in relation to care experienced young people through the upgrading of our data management systems in order to enable collection of information as part of improved equalities data.
- We will continue to review the information and guidance we provide to include matters that support and promote the rights of care experienced young people.
- We will consider investigations into issues brought to our attention regarding the mental health care and treatment of individual care experienced children and young people whenever such work would lead to wider learning across agencies and professions.

¹² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2003/13/section/25/2015-04-01>

Collaboration with other Corporate Parents

The Act places a responsibility on Corporate Parents to collaborate with one another in the planning and implementation of their Corporate Parenting plan and activities. As an organisation that provides limited direct services for children and young people, we recognise the benefit that the Commission receives from collaborating directly with other Corporate Parents who, like ourselves, either do not provide or provide limited direct care services to children and young people.¹³

We meet on a regular basis with the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland to share information about our work and any concerns we might have about services.

In 2017, we became part of a national collaborative group of Corporate Parents. The group comprises 17 Corporate Parents and we meet three times a year to discuss our work, share experience, share learning and explore ways we might collaborate and further our shared corporate aims to bring benefit to care experienced children and young people. We have found that collaboration has helped to stimulate ideas for our own work and maintain our awareness of the work that others are doing in regard to care experienced children and young people. We shared this report during its preparation with this national Corporate Parents group and requested feedback on its contents in order to help to shape the report's development.

Importantly within this collaborative approach, we recognise the critical need to ensure we have the input of young people to make sure we are working in a way they can engage with, is responsive to and effective in meeting their needs. We have developed links with a group of young people, some of whom are part of the Champions Board and Youth Council in Dumfries and Galloway and sought their views in the preparation of this report. 6 young people kindly gave us feedback on the contents of the report and overall their response to the report was positive telling us that they thought our focus and direction of work was good. We are aware we have much more to do to engage with young people and hope to strengthen these links further in the future and extend our abilities to involve and consult with care experienced young people about the work that we do on a regular basis.

Throughout all areas of work undertaken by the Commission that focuses on children and young people, we endeavour to be alert to the need for improvement and change. We will continue to consider how to use our remit to improve the experience of children and young people with mental health issues and learning disabilities, as we carry out our duties both in our statutory work and in collaboration with others.

¹³ Other Corporate Parents in the Corporate parenting group include the Care Inspectorate, Fire Service, SportsScotland, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Qualifications Authority, Scottish Children's Reporters Association, Health Improvement Scotland, Scottish Social Services Council, Police Scotland, Creative Scotland and Children's Commissioner (host).

Further steps

- We will continue to actively collaborate with other Corporate Parents in the Corporate Parenting network, sharing and learning about good practice from others.
- We will learn from other Corporate Parents how we can improve our involvement with care experienced young people in our work.
- We will build on relationships with groups of care experienced children and young people and strengthen opportunities to gather their views about our work on a regular basis.
- Through collaboration with other Corporate Parents the Commission will participate in information sharing and will identify opportunities for collaboration which will strengthen Commission activity and perspective.
- In any reviews undertaken of Commission information specifically designed for children and young people, where appropriate, we will endeavour to consult with young people, including looked after young people, to ensure information is accessible for them. We will do this in partnership with third sector organisations.

Action Plan 2021-2024

Theme	Outcome	Actions	Owners	Date
We understand our duties as Corporate Parents which form an integral part of decision making on Commission priorities and activities.	MWC will ensure that all staff, including Board members, understand and are aware of the needs of care experienced children and young people, and of our corporate parenting responsibilities	We will provide opportunities to refresh knowledge and ensure awareness of the current Corporate Parenting Plan with Commission staff and inform good practise in our work	Executive Lead (CYP) & Children & Young People's Group	2021 onwards
		We will develop induction materials and Qs and As in relation to common questions about Corporate Parenting and make them available to Commission staff	Executive Lead (CYP) & Children & Young People's Group	2021 onwards
	MWC will ensure that our Corporate Parenting responsibilities remain a corporate priority.	Strategic and Business plans will signpost to the corporate parenting plan as a standard item.	Head of Corporate Services	Ongoing
		Ensure governance of corporate parenting duties is overseen by the executive leadership team and children & young people's group.	Head of Corporate Services	Ongoing
	The Commission will ensure the needs of care experienced children and young people are considered, including being alert to matters which may affect their wellbeing.	When setting out our business plan for coming years we will ensure we consider the needs of care experienced children and young people in our planning activity and when deciding priorities for monitoring and themed visit programmes.	Executive Lead (CYP) & Children & Young People's Group	Ongoing

<p>We will continue to learn about the needs and the rights of care experienced children and young people and about how our work can support them</p>	<p>We will ensure access to our services for care experienced children and young people.</p>	<p>We will periodically contact agencies that support young people with mental health issues or learning disabilities to publicise our advice line to them, and to ask them to highlight it to the children and young people they work with.</p> <p>We will ensure Commission staff are aware care experienced children and young people may call the advice line.</p> <p>We will ensure Commission staff on any local service visits ask that individuals with care experience are given the opportunity to meet with them. We will review information relevant to this in the pre visit preparation to services.</p> <p>When on any visits, staff will ensure to ask if the individuals being visited have care experience and record this for reporting in the Commission's</p>	<p>Executive Lead, (Advice Line)</p> <p>Executive Lead, (Advice Line)</p> <p>Executive Lead (CYP)/Executive Lead (Visits) /</p> <p>All practitioner Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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		<p>annual reports.</p> <p>We will include visits to individual young people subject to guardianship in our guardianship monitoring visit programme, as young people can be subject to guardianship orders after their 16th birthday.</p> <p>We will ensure that all visit activity (local, themed or guardianship) gathers information in relation to care experienced young people as standard</p>	<p>Executive (Visits) Lead</p> <p>Executive (CYP), CYP group, Executive (Equalities) Lead</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>We will promote the interests of care experienced children and young people in Commission work around mental health and will raise any concerns or views we have with relevant services and policy makers.</p>	<p>We will ensure we remain engaged with national work around mental health for children and young people</p>	<p>We will continue be active participants in groups and networks which work to improve understanding of how services can best respond to the mental health needs of children and young people some of whom may be care experienced.</p> <p>We will continue to share intelligence with the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland to ensure any concerns about services can be acted upon in a responsive, co-ordinated and proportionate way</p>	<p>Executive (CYP), Children & Young People's Group Lead</p> <p>Executive (Sharing Intelligence) Lead,</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

	<p>We will report our findings regarding our monitoring activities on a regular basis and make recommendations about difficulties in accessing services whenever relevant</p> <p>Our guidance includes the needs of children and young people who are care experienced when appropriate</p>	<p>We will continue to respond to national policy direction and formal consultations and share our experience in the promotion of the rights of care experience children and young people</p> <p>We will report statistics around care experienced young people we come in contact with in order to inform future work in this area by ourselves and wider agencies.</p> <p>We will work to improve our data collection in relation to care experienced young people through the upgrading of our data management systems in order to enable collection of information as part of improved equalities data</p> <p>We will continue to review the information we provide and our guidance to include matters that support and promote the rights of care experienced young people</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Group</p> <p>Children & Young People's Group</p> <p>Head of Corporate Services</p> <p>All staff, Executive Lead (Guidance) /CYP group</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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	We will promote good practise in the care and treatment of care experienced children and young people and in the protection of their rights	We will consider investigations into issues brought to our attention regarding the mental health care and treatment of individual care experienced children and young people whenever such work would lead to wider learning across agencies and professions.	All, Staff, Executive Lead Investigations	Ongoing
We collaborate with other corporate parents and improve the way we collaborate with children and young people who are care experienced	<p>The Commission is aware of how other corporate parents are meeting their duties and can apply relevant learning to its own response</p> <p>The Commission will seek to provide opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote the wellbeing and opportunities of care experienced children and young people.</p>	<p>We will active collaborate with the Corporate Parenting network by both sharing and learning from others regarding good practise</p> <p>We will learn from other corporate parents how we can improve our involvement with care experienced young people in our work</p> <p>We will build on relationships with groups of care experienced children and young people and strengthen opportunities to gather their views about our work on a regular basis</p> <p>Through collaboration with other corporate parents, the Commission will participate in information</p>	<p>Executive (CYP) Lead</p> <p>Executive (CYP) Lead</p> <p>Children and Young People's Group</p> <p>Executive (CYP) Lead</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2021 onwards</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

		<p>sharing and will identify opportunities for collaboration which would strengthen Commission activity and perspective</p> <p>In any reviews undertaken of Commission information specifically designed for children and young people, where appropriate, we will endeavour to consult with young people, including looked after young people, to ensure information is accessible for them. We will do this in partnership with third sector organisations.</p>	<p>Executive Lead (CYP)/ Children & Young People's Group</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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