



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

National Corporate Parenting Plan

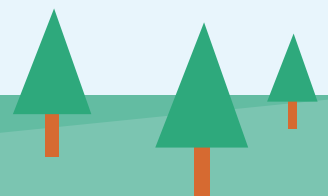
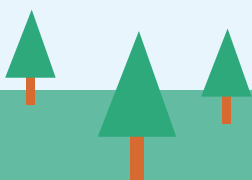
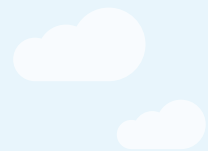
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Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the first Police Scotland National Corporate Parenting Plan. This follows the publication in October 2016 of our four year plan in relation to all children and young people, **Police Scotland, Children and Young People – Our Approach 2016/20** (hereafter referred to as Our Approach).

Our Approach sets out our commitments to all children and young people across the communities of Scotland. Those commitments are never more important than in relation to care experienced young people. Police Scotland recognises the importance of our work as a corporate parent. The basic principles of policing have always been consistent with providing the support, which is now set out in the **Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014** (hereafter referred to as the 2014 Act). There is a great deal of good work already undertaken across all of our communities to offer support and meet the needs of our care experienced young people. This Plan sets out some examples of that work.

Whilst we recognise the work that is ongoing, we are not complacent. We recognise there are challenges which we must face to improve the manner in which we deliver our services. A key facet of the forthcoming work will be building increased confidence and trust with care experienced young people. They must have confidence in the services provided by Police Scotland and trust in our genuine commitment to meet their needs as important members of the communities in which they live. Communication is key and we are committed to continuing to hear the voice of the child and more generally the opinions of children

about Police Scotland. This ethos is at the heart of policing in Scotland and is emphasised both in Our Approach and our long term **2026 Strategy - Serving a Changing Scotland**, which states:

“Central to our approach to all aspects of policing and working with partners across diverse communities, is keeping children and young people safe. Engagement with children in their early years will influence their perspective on policing for the rest of their lives.”

We can only achieve this through genuine collaboration at a local level. Police Scotland remains committed to working locally, in conjunction with all our partners, to support the needs of care experienced young people. We will work collectively to ensure we contribute effectively to their local corporate parenting plans.

The duties set out in Part 9 of the 2014 Act provide a foundation upon which Police Scotland can build on the work carried out to date. The purpose of this national plan is to support the contribution we make locally across all 13 Policing Divisions that serve 32 Local Authority areas. Coordination and management of the plan will be led by senior management across all departments.

Police Scotland looks forward to working with care experienced young people, and all those who support them, to ensure the organisation delivers the services and support we would expect for all our children and young people across Scotland.

Gillian MacDonald

T/Assistant Chief Constable
Crime and Protection



Background

Police Scotland was formally established on 1 April 2013 and is responsible for policing across the whole of Scotland. The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 provides the statutory basis for policing in Scotland. Police Scotland's vision is sustained excellence in service and protection. Our purpose is to improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland. Our focus is on Keeping People Safe, which is at the heart of everything we do.

To support the ethos of Police Scotland, a project team was created to work with Divisions and partners to develop national standards and processes for the identification, assessment and management of risk (protection issues) and lower level wellbeing concerns in a public protection environment, through management of Concern Hubs. It has delivered on its remit and Concern Hubs are supporting the delivery of parts of our legislative duties of the 2014 Act.

Our Concern Hubs have a critical role to play in assessing wellbeing concerns and sharing relevant information appropriately with partner agencies. This means we can focus on early intervention and prevention, to deliver better outcomes and maximise opportunities. This is consistent with the wider Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) principles.

When the 2014 Act was introduced, the need to make a commitment was recognised from the outset. This led to the formation of the Children and Young People Act Implementation Team (hereafter referred to as the 2014 Act Implementation Team). Their role was to provide dedicated resources to consider how, when and where we could support the needs of all children, consistent with the duties set out in the 2014 Act.

The 2014 Act Implementation Team developed Police Scotland's understanding of how the duties set out in Part 9 of the 2014 Act can be delivered.

This has been achieved through ongoing liaison, shared learning and collaboration with the national groups convened, including:

- The Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS);
- Who Cares? Scotland;
- The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland;
- The Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice (CYCJ).

This engagement and advice contributed greatly to the development of our National Corporate Parenting Plan.

Police Scotland continued its commitment to all young people by establishing the Children and Young People Business Area in 2016 as part of Safer Communities. The aim of Safer Communities is to protect those most vulnerable to harm and make the communities that we serve safer places to live, work and visit. The new business area was formed in recognition of the need to provide a greater focus on the service Police Scotland provides to approximately 1 million children and young people in Scotland (under 18's) of which 15,317 were looked after in 2016.

The main focus of the Children and Young People Business Area is to progress the priorities and commitments already set within Our Approach and to carry on the work already started in relation to the 2014 Act and in particular Part 9 - Corporate Parenting.

National Context

Police Scotland will generally refer to our looked after children and care leavers as care experienced young people as this is a term the young people prefer themselves.

Police are often the first point of contact with care experienced young people following difficult experiences in early childhood involving parents or other family members.

Research confirms that, generally, care experienced young people are much more likely to face poorer life experiences¹. They have greater emotional challenges, greater financial worries, a lack of family and friendship networks, and greater challenges around sustaining accommodation, further and higher education, and employment.

Care experienced young people have the poorest outcomes of all children in Scotland. Evidence suggests that:

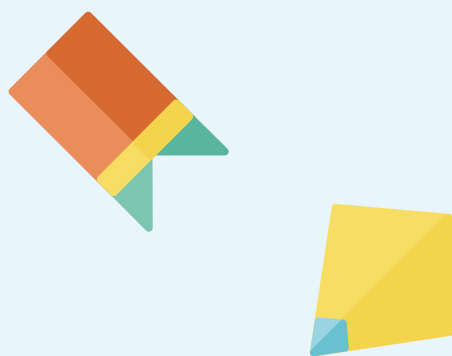
- 50% of the adult prison population had been looked after;
- 30% of looked after children become homeless;
- 50% of looked after children have a mental health issue;
- 85% of looked after young people leave school before the age of 16;
- 4% of care leavers go on to higher education.

Police Scotland is aware of the factors which affect care experienced young people including trauma, mental health, stigma, frequent placement moves and chaotic living arrangements. It has been estimated that care experienced young people are 20 times more likely to be dead at the age of 25 than anyone else. We understand many care experienced

young people don't get the same chances as other young people to get a job or go to college, and face many challenges. Although opportunities may be there, care experienced young people can't always identify and take them as they are still dealing with the emotional impact of being brought up in care and need continued support to take advantage of these opportunities.

In 90% of cases, young people are referred to the Children's Reporter on grounds of care and protection. Common circumstances include neglect, parental drug and alcohol addiction and parental mental health. It follows, that care experienced young people can be deprived of parental care through no fault of their own.

As a corporate parent, Police Scotland looks to support care experienced young people and improve outcomes. We will continue to work with partner agencies and other corporate parents as we strive to improve life chances of everyone who lives in Scotland.



¹*Review of Research on Vulnerable Young People and Their Transitions to Independent Living, Scottish Executive Social Research, 2007.*



Corporate Parenting Duties

Corporate parenting responsibilities extend to all care experienced young people aged from birth to when they cease to be looked after. This includes children in foster care, residential care, secure care, looked after at home (on Home Supervision Requirements) and those in formal kinship care. It also includes disabled children who are looked after during a short break provision. Corporate parenting responsibilities also apply to care leavers who were looked after on their 16th birthday (or subsequently) up to and including the age of 25.

On 1 April 2015, Police Scotland joined many other public bodies and organisations in Scotland to become a corporate parent under Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This places responsibilities on us to improve the lives and futures of Scotland's care experienced young people.

The duties under the 2014 Act mean that Police Scotland must:

- Be alert to matters which might adversely affect the wellbeing of care experienced young people;
- Assess the needs of care experienced young people for the services and support we provide;
- Promote the interests of care experienced young people;
- Provide care experienced young people opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing;

- Take action to help care experienced young people:
 - i. Access the opportunities we are providing
 - ii. Make use of services and access support available
- Take any other action we consider appropriate to improve the way we work with care experienced young people;
- Collaborate with other corporate parents.

Police Scotland is aware that meeting the requirements of Part 9 of the 2014 Act will affect all work streams and employees of the organisation, making it an important undertaking and cultural change. We welcome this as a positive improvement to the quality and impact of our work.

We embrace the obligations set out for corporate parents and are aware these duties can't be delegated to one individual or team - they are the responsibility of the whole organisation. Our staff will be supported at all levels and across every department in understanding and fulfilling these duties.

Police Scotland acknowledges that corporate parenting is not just a statutory duty but a real opportunity to improve the futures and outcomes of care experienced young people. This will include full consideration of the wider duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Management and Governance

As highlighted previously, Police Scotland has made a commitment through our 2026 Strategy – Serving a Changing Scotland and Our Approach, to keep our children and young people safe, work collaboratively with partners and ensure we comply with our duties under the 2014 Act.

To manage our corporate parenting plan, the following governance arrangements have been implemented.

The Commander of Safer Communities retains strategic oversight of our corporate parenting plan.

The Harm Prevention Group has responsibility for the progress and delivery of the commitments set out in our corporate parenting plan. This group meets every two months and is attended by representatives from Safer Communities, local divisional harm prevention leads and Specialist Departments.

The Safer Communities Children and Young People Business Area will take ownership for collating the work being undertaken locally and nationally to comply with our duty to report on our progress as a corporate parent and how we have met our duties.

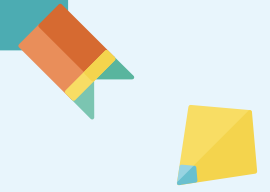
Police Scotland will listen to the opinions of care experienced young people and their thoughts and views will be considered by the governance groups. This will ensure that the voices of care experienced young people are heard, and our corporate parenting plan continues to develop through time.





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National Corporate Parenting Action Plan



Duty	How to Meet this Duty	Commitments	Timescale	Ownership
Section 58				
Be alert to matters which might adversely affect the wellbeing of care experienced young people	To meet this duty, Police Scotland will stay informed about issues that could have a negative impact on care experienced young people.	Police Scotland will: Work with Who Cares? Scotland to develop training for Police Scotland staff.	Summer 2018	Safer Communities / Leadership, Training and Development
		Form partnerships locally through participating in local corporate parenting planning groups to have an up to date knowledge of issues affecting care experienced young people in the local area.	Ongoing	Local Policing
		Attend national corporate parenting groups to have an up to date knowledge of issues affecting care experienced young people.	Ongoing	Safer Communities
		Engage with care experienced young people to advise and inform future police policy and practice.	Ongoing	Safer Communities / Local Policing
		Have local corporate parenting champions in each Police Division.	Spring 2018	Local Policing / Specialist Departments
Assess the needs of care experienced young people for the services and support we provide	To meet this duty, Police Scotland will have systems in place to assess the needs of care experienced individuals.	Police Scotland will: Review custody procedure for care experienced young people to better identify them and identify appropriate services for them.	Summer 2019	Criminal Justice Services
		Review practices for submitting wellbeing concerns to partners to better identify care experienced young people.	Ongoing	Safer Communities
		Engage with care experienced young people to review current police policy and practice with the aim of improving service delivery.	Ongoing	Safer Communities / Local Policing
		Review how we respond to care experienced young people reported missing from their care home.	Spring 2019	Safer Communities / Local Policing

Duty	How to Meet this Duty	Commitments	Timescale	Ownership
Section 58 (continued)				
Promote the interests of care experienced young people	To meet this duty, Police Scotland will look to benefit care experienced young people as individuals or as a group.	Police Scotland will: Endorse the principles of the Care Leavers Covenant and be in a position to sign the document to fulfil our responsibility as a corporate parent.	Spring 2019	Safer Communities
		Hold Choices for Life events providing education and information to allow care experienced young people to make decisions minimising risk factors in their lives.	Ongoing	Safer Communities / Local Policing
		Work collaboratively with other criminal justice partner agencies to keep care experienced young people safe, protected and where appropriate out of the criminal justice system.	Ongoing	Criminal Justice Services / Safer Communities
		Review our recruitment process to allow information to be provided and easier access to apply for positions available in our organisation including Police Officer roles, Special Constables and support staff.	Winter 2018	People and Development / PSYV
		Review how we respond to care experienced young people reported missing from their care home.	Spring 2019	Safer Communities / Local Policing
Provide care experienced young people opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing	To meet this duty, Police Scotland will help care experienced young people become successful learners, confident, responsible and effective contributors.	Police Scotland will: Identify and educate care experienced young people in HMYOI Polmont to allow them to make better life choices	Ongoing	Safer Communities
		Promote opportunities available to care experienced young people within the Police Scotland Youth Volunteer (PSYV) project.	Ongoing	PSYV
		Work with Foster Care providers to promote opportunities for care experienced young people in the Police Scotland Youth Volunteer (PSYV) project.	Ongoing	PSYV
		Work with the Prince's Trust to promote opportunities for care experienced young people.	Ongoing	Safer Communities / Local Policing

Duty	How to Meet this Duty	Commitments	Timescale	Ownership
Section 58 (continued)				
<p>Take action to help care experienced young people:</p> <p>i. Access the opportunities we provide;</p> <p>ii. Make use of services and support available.</p>	<p>To meet this duty Police Scotland will look to help care experienced young people overcome barriers so they will benefit from the opportunities, services and support we provide.</p>	<p>Police Scotland will: Hold Choices for Life events providing education and information to allow care experienced young people to make decisions minimising risk factors in their lives.</p>	Ongoing	Safer Communities / Local Policing
		<p>Engage with care experienced young people to discuss how we can improve the opportunities available to them.</p>	Ongoing	Safer Communities / Local Policing
		<p>Review our recruitment process to allow information to be provided and easier access to apply for positions available in our organisation including Police Officer roles, Special Constables and support staff.</p>	Winter 2018	People and Development / PSYV
<p>Take any other action you consider appropriate to improve the way we work with care experienced young people</p>	<p>To meet this duty, Police Scotland will keep the work we do with care experienced young people under review and look for ways to improve</p>	<p>Police Scotland will: Engage with care experienced young people to review our corporate parenting plan.</p>	Ongoing	Safer Communities
		<p>Review training that is provided to new police recruits and specialised courses to ensure material is included to address the needs of care experienced young people.</p>	Autumn 2018	Safer Communities / Leadership, Training and Development
		<p>Work with Who Cares? Scotland and care experienced young people to continue to review the national 'Code of Practice on the Exercise by Constables of Powers of Stop and Search of the Person in Scotland' and associated training.</p>	Ongoing	Safer Communities
		<p>Coordinate Safer Communities Local Days of Action to increase opportunities where we engage with care experienced young people.</p>	Winter 2018	Safer Communities / Local Policing

Duty	How to Meet this Duty	Commitments	Timescale	Ownership
Section 60				
Collaborate with other corporate parents	To meet this duty, Police Scotland will work with other corporate parents to benefit care experienced young people	Police Scotland will: Attend local corporate parenting planning groups to have an up to date knowledge of issues affecting care experienced young people in the local area and look for new partnerships which would benefit care experienced young people.	Ongoing	Local Policing
		Attend national corporate parenting groups for sharing best practice and using a partnership approach.	Ongoing	Safer Communities
		Participate in the Root and Branch Care Review and engage with other corporate parents to share information and look for new ways to work together to benefit care experienced young people.	Ongoing	Safer Communities
		Work with all 32 Local Authorities to review how we respond to incidents involving care experienced young people within local care homes.	Summer 2019	Local Policing / Specialist Divisions
		Review ongoing work within HMYOI Polmont and share best practice and lessons learned within other care/prison establishments.	Summer 2018	Safer Communities
		Work with Scottish Prison Service to identify care experienced young people when they enter HMYOI Polmont for inclusion in the Polmont Project.	Summer 2018	Safer Communities
		Work with Scottish Legal Aid Board to explore the feasibility of identifying care experienced young people in custody.	Autumn 2018	Criminal Justice Services

Contact Details / Further Information

For further information on Police Scotland's National Corporate Parenting Plan please contact: **SCD.ChildrenandYoungPeopleBusiness@scotland.pnn.police.uk**