

Scottish Prison Service (SPS)

Corporate Parenting Plan - 2016/2018



“I was mightily impressed by both the power and impact of the presentation and similarly the stories told. I think there is a truly important message that more of us need to hear, particularly those working in the environment that I do.”

CEO, Scottish Prison Service, Colin McConnell in response to Mr Dunlop’s (CEO, Who Cares Scotland) presentation, ADSW Conference, October 2013

Introduction

On 1st April 2015, Scottish Prison Service on behalf of the Scottish Ministers joined many other public bodies in Scotland to become a national corporate parent under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Part 9 (Corporate Parenting) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places responsibilities on SPS to improve the lives and futures of Scotland's looked after children, young people and care leavers. In practice, this means we must listen to the needs, fears, challenges and wishes of these groups and be proactive in our approach to improve outcomes and wellbeing.




This Corporate Parenting Plan sets out how SPS will deliver its statutory obligations as Corporate Parent. In developing the Plan valuable contributions were made by partner agencies including the Centre Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland (CELCIS) and the Centre for Youth & Criminal Justice (CYCJ). Both agencies have been commissioned by Scottish Government to support Corporate Parents. The development of the Plan was led by a short term steering group established with representation from key policy areas within SPS including the Operations and Strategy and Innovations Directorates, establishment representation and priority population groups (women and young people). This led to a wider consultation with service users including a group who identified as being "care experienced".

Corporate Parenting is defined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 as:

“an organisation's performance of actions necessary to uphold the rights and secure the wellbeing of a looked after child or care leaver, and through which physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational development is promoted”

(From Draft Guidance on Part 9 of Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014)

The [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) puts Corporate Parenting on a statutory footing and introduces a new framework of duties and responsibilities for the 24 public bodies listed in Schedule 4 as corporate parents (see below). The term “Scottish Ministers” refers to the Scottish Government and its Executive Agencies which includes Scottish Prison Service (SPS).

					
Scottish Ministers	A local authority	National Convener of Children's Hearings Scotland	Children's Hearings Scotland	Principal Reporter	The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
					
A health board	A board constituted under the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978	Healthcare Improvement Scotland	Scottish Qualifications Authority	Skills Development Scotland	Social Care & Social Work Improvement Scotland
					
The Scottish Social Services Council	Sport Scotland	The Chief Constable of the Police Service of Scotland	Scottish Police Authority	Scottish Fire & Rescue Service	The Scottish Legal Aid Board
					
Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People	The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland	The Scottish Housing Regulator	Bòrd na Gàidhlig	Creative Scotland	A “post-16” education body

The [statutory guidance for Corporate Parenting](#) provides corporate parents with information and advice about how they should fulfil the duties set out in Part 9 (Corporate Parenting) of the 2014 Act. The guidance sets out the parameters within which corporate parents should develop their own approaches, either individually or in partnership. Those approaches should also be shaped by the corporate parent's primary functions, and informed by the needs, views and experiences of looked after children and care leavers.

Summary of SPS duties in relation to Corporate Parenting:

- SPS should collaborate with each of the other Corporate Parents to promote the wellbeing of looked after children, young people and care leavers in their care and enable them to achieve the best outcomes;
- SPS must prepare, publish and regularly review their Corporate Parenting Plan detailing how we will fulfil our duties under Section 58 (Corporate Parenting Responsibilities); and
- SPS must provide information on progress made against the SPS Corporate Parenting Plan by 31st March 2018.

In particular, Section 58 (Corporate Parenting Responsibilities) of the Act states that every corporate parent must:

- Be Alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of looked after children, young people and care leavers
- 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
- Take appropriate action to help eligible young people access those opportunities
- Keep their approach to corporate parenting under constant review, seeking to improve wherever possible

Application of Part 9 - who does this apply to?

Looked after Children:

Being a 'looked after' child or care leaver is a formal status given to young people. It means that the child is in the care of the local authority. A child may be looked after if they:

- Live in foster care; a residential unit or school; or within a secure care setting.
- Formally live with friends or relatives (e.g. in a kinship placement).
- At home, subject to a Compulsory Supervision Order through the Children's Hearing System.
- They might be looked after on a voluntary basis (with their parent's agreement); via an Order made through the Children's Hearings System; or certain types of Court Order.

Care Leavers:

- A young person is a care leaver if they were looked after on their 16th birthday or any time up to the age of 26.

Why do we need to identify Care Leavers?

Corporate parents have a duty to work with partners to uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of Care Leavers.

- Care Leavers are also eligible for aftercare services up to (and including) the age of 25.
- Aftercare is 'advice, guidance and assistance', which may include helping a young person to secure accommodation, education and employment opportunities.

Local authorities have:

- A duty to provide 'aftercare' support to all care leavers under 19 years of age, unless they are satisfied that the young person's welfare does not require it;
- A duty to assess requests for assistance from all care leavers aged 19-26. If the care leaver is assessed as having eligible needs which cannot be met by other means, the local authority must provide them with 'such advice guidance and assistance as it [the local authority] considers necessary for the purposes of meeting those needs' and can provide aftercare beyond the age of 26.

What do we know about this group in custody?

The following information is taken from 'Prisoners who have been in Care as Looked after Children Survey 2015:

Care Leavers

Overall, over one quarter of those reporting (26%) indicated that during their up-bringing they had been in care at some point and one in six (16%) had been in care at the age of sixteen.

A third of young offenders (33% n=109) reported being in care as a child and almost a quarter (24% n=73) were in care at the age of sixteen. Just over one quarter (26%) of female prisoners had been in care as a child and one fifth (21%) of those reporting in the survey were in care at the age of sixteen.

Custodial History

Young offenders who had been in care were most likely to report having been on remanded in custody, between 1 and 5 times (59%) compared with those who were not in care (55%), and less likely to report having 'never' previously been on remanded in custody, (25%) compared with (33%) for those who were not in the care system.

Mental health & well-being

Prisoners were asked questions on mental health through an instrument known as the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS). Two thirds of prisoners who were in care as children reported dealing with problems well (68%) and feeling optimistic about the future (66%) compared with a higher percentage of those who were not in care (77% and 70%).

Literacy & Numeracy

More prisoners who were in care indicated that they had problems with writing (20%), reading (18%) and numbers (13%) compared with other prisoners who were not in care (11%, 9% and 9% respectively).

In the region of one fifth of young offenders who had been in care reported that they had difficulty with writing (19%), reading (19%) numbers (17%) which is higher when compared to those who were not in care (15%, 13% and 15% respectively).

In line with Scottish Government statistics and research into the outcomes and lives of young people with experience of care, this is further evidence that these individuals are disadvantaged in a number of ways, and require the support of Corporate Parents to improve their outcomes and life chances.

Scottish Prison Service Corporate Parenting Plan 2016-2018:

Corporate Parenting Responsibilities: Alert, Assess, Promote, Opportunities, Access & Improve.

Alert:

	Objective:	Actions: to be completed by 31 st March 2018	By Who?
SPS understands and is alert to the needs of care leavers and those who have experience of care to inform its policy, planning and practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of care leavers through Case Management processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate the wording for the Looked after Children and Care Leavers question as per the protocol designed by CYCJ and Care Leavers to ensure consistency and understanding for Care Leavers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead Case Management Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PR2 to be updated to include a marker to record when individuals identify as a care leaver. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case to make the required changes to PR2 to record this information with the relevant policy holders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead Operations Directorate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate the voice of those who have had experience of care and care leavers to inform policy, planning and practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include care leavers and those who have had experience of care within the development of the Users Voice Framework for the SPS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead Head of Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine our prisoner survey to capture information about care history. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct focus groups to inform the prisoner survey around care leavers and those who have experience of care. Work with the SPS research team and relevant partners to develop the prisoner survey for 2017 for these groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead SPS Research Team
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All our staff and managers understand corporate parenting duties and the needs of young people and care leavers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver awareness sessions to be delivered to Throughcare Support Officer's, Heads of Offender Outcomes, Heads of Operations in the first instance. Develop an e-learning pack for roll out across the organisation with an implementation plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead Representative from the SPSC - H Matheson
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our duties within the Corporate Parenting Plan are referenced within the SPS Corporate Planning processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Corporate Planning Team to ensure our Corporate Parenting duties are referenced in SPS Corporate Planning processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead SPS Corporate Planning Team

Assess:			
Care Leavers and those who have experience of care are assessed to ensure that their wellbeing needs are met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure consistent wellbeing assessment of care leavers and those who have experience of care across the SPS to inform a plan for custody and re-integration to communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an assessment of Wellbeing within the Case Management tools. Develop an e-learning pack for roll out across the organisation with an implementation plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead Case Management Lead
Promote:			
The needs of care leavers and those who have experience of care, recognise and uphold the additional rights and entitlements of care leavers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate and share best practice in relation to care leavers and those who have experience of care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with our partners and establish a National approach to sharing best practice and promoting the needs of care leavers and those who have experience of care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead Identified establishment leads
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the needs of care leavers with our partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continually building on current evidence and research SPS should seek opportunities to promote the needs of care leavers with our partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to the needs of individuals who are care leavers and those who have experience of care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continually build on current evidence and research in reviewing and develop opportunities that respond to the needs of individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead Relevant Policy Leads
Opportunities:			
Seek opportunities to improve outcomes for children, young people and care leavers within the SPS and beyond to improve outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making opportunities available to support wellbeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop opportunities which support wellbeing across the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead Relevant Policy Leads
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities to work with policy leads to develop policy and practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with colleagues in developing their understanding of the needs of care leavers and those who have experience of care in improving our policies and practices. Work with other Corporate Parents to develop policies and practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead Identified Policy Leads
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Community Planning Partnerships in developing key messaging around the common challenges faced by these groups through the SPS Governors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an SPS Core Brief for Corporate Parenting to provide information to Governors and key policy leads. Deliver a presentation at the GIC meeting to raise awareness of Corporate Parenting duties and the SPS Corporate Parenting Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families Policy Lead

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communications with care leavers so that they are aware of their rights and entitlements from corporate parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the awareness of staff through awareness training so that they are informed to support care leavers. • Develop various communications to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ an accessible SPS Corporate Plan for families and those in our care to be published on the SPS website; ○ leaflets, posters; and ○ Include within the current national induction programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families Policy Lead
Access:			
All relevant SPS staff and managers are aware of the SPS's corporate parenting responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant staff who work with care leavers are aware of the rights and entitlements of care leavers and act as their advocates in accessing services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver awareness sessions to be delivered to Throughcare Support Officer's, Heads of Offender Outcomes, Heads of Operations in the first instance. • Develop an e-learning pack for roll out across the organisation with an implementation plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families Policy Lead
Improve:			
SPS to consider where we could improve on processes and service provision for care leavers and those who have had experience of care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on current research for care leavers and those who have had experience of care to improve policy and practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continually building on current evidence and research SPS should seek opportunities to improve policy and practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families Policy Lead • SPS Research Team • Relevant Policy Leads
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corporate Parenting Plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure continuous improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SPS Corporate Parenting Plan will be reviewed in Spring 2018 and annually thereafter to ensure continuous improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families Policy Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPS sign up to Care Leavers Covenant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SPS should consider following in the steps of our partners in supporting how we work in partnership to improve the outcomes and life chances for Care Leavers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families Policy Lead • SPS Executive Team