

Corporate Parent Panel Report June 2022

Blackpool Council



Overview of Panel

Blackpool Children's Services hold four Corporate Parent Panels (CPP) and a take-over meeting by our children and young people each year. The Justuz Children in Care Council start every meeting to update the Panel on their ongoing work, activities and events they have attended as well as raising any new issues and share positive experiences.

What children and young people bring to CPP is decided by the young people themselves either following wider consultation with other children and young people in our care what they have decided as a group need to be discussed or improved. Justuz will also feedback on the work they are involved in for specific areas of services provided to our children and young people including their views and co-production of possible solutions/ changes required to improve outcomes for children and young people. Justuz are actively encouraged by panel members to be open and honest about their experiences as children and young people cared for by Blackpool Children's Services.

The Corporate Parent Panel is chaired by Cllr Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Schools. The Director of Children Services, Vicky Gent, also attends along with representatives from the Justuz group, Elected Members representing all parties and all Heads of Service for Children's Social Care.

The Corporate Parent Panel continues to work to a Plan which outlines the reports that are required for consideration by panel members, to monitor annual progress and supports the development of children's services.

At each Panel meeting individuals representing Children Services teams and partnership organisations are invited to present their Annual Reports, which give detailed accounts of the work being done to deliver support and services to our children and young people. Justuz members are presented with the reports and invited to give their feedback prior to each Panel and asked to comment, raise concerns on any progress made or ask questions. Their feedback is included in the finalised reports, to ensure we capture the views and opinions of our children and young people and ensure that these influence actions required.

It is an expectation that all reports submitted to the Panel will have had consultation with our children and young people and their views incorporated into the report.

There are other set agenda items which includes monitoring the progress of the action tracker. Individuals are tasked with actions to complete and report back on at the next Panel. It is imperative that tasks are completed in order to continue to improve the services delivered to our children and families.

Following the ongoing review of the Corporate Parent Panel, the membership has been extended to include representatives of partner agencies, including Housing, Health and Education and Lancashire Constabulary.

The 5 Promises

One of the tasks of Panel is to continue to monitor the delivery of **The Pledge** making sure at all times we are fulfilling the commitment and promises made to our children and young people.

Following the results of the Annual Survey which was based on The Pledge and through discussions with Justuz it was agreed that our pledge needed a revamp. Our new 5 Promises needed to be incorporated and it was felt that a younger version needed to be created so our children under the age of 8 know what promises we have made to them too.

A Co-Production Group was created from Justuz members, the Participation Service and Stephen Donnelly who is a graphic designer with our Communication Team. The co-produce group met over several sessions to look at the content and to create a new brighter, colourful and fresh design and give the pledge a new look.

The children and young people decided to re-name The Pledge to **The 5 Promises!**

They said “Everyone understands what a promise is and it isn’t something that should be broken unlike a pledge”

The younger version of the 5 Promises will feature our very own Blackpool Bear, Benny as chosen by our children.



Benny will feature on every page of the story book as we explain how we promise to care for him, keep him safe, help him learn, be happy and healthy, make sure he see his family and support him as he grows up to be whatever he wants to be in the future.

The 5 PROMISES

Blackpool's Pledge to Our Children and Young People

As your corporate parents, we want you to know that we will keep you safe, treat you with care and respect, support you to have meaningful relationships, have a good education and make sure you are happy, healthy and ready to make your way in the world so you can go on to achieve all your hopes and dreams.

1. Care & Respect

WE PROMISE to CARE about you, so you feel safe and loved and we will always treat you with RESPECT.

- Listen to you
- Keep you safe
- Be honest and open
- Involve you in the decision made about your life
- Talk to you and write about you with care and respect and in a way that you can understand
- Come and see you when we say we will and be on time
- Return your calls and messages and
- Be there when you need us
- Do the things that we say we will
- Celebrate your Successes
- Spend time with you so we get to know you really well
- Never give up on you



Friendships

2. Your Relationships

WE PROMISE to build a trusting RELATIONSHIP with you and makes sure you see and spend time with the people who are important to you.

- Make sure you live with people you like and who really care about you
- Make sure you keep in touch and see the people who are important to you as long as it is safe
- Continue to work together with your family to look at ways that you could return home safely in the future
- Make sure you spend time with your brothers and sisters if you can't live with them and keep working to bring you back together whenever possible
- Work really hard to make sure you don't have lots of changes of people who support you
- Support you to build a good network of people around you who you like and trust
- Spend quality time with you so we get to know you really well
- Come and say goodbye if we have to leave



Included

3. Your Health

WE PROMISE to make sure you are HAPPY & HEALTHY

- Make sure you have the right support to meet any health needs you have
- Make sure we arrange your health check with you
- Make sure you understand the reasons why you are in our care
- Make sure you know your family's history in a way that you can understand
- Make sure you get the right support around your mental health
- Help you to make and keep friendships
- Give you opportunities to learn new skills to keep fit and healthy within your local community
- Make sure you have your passport to leisure
- Make sure you know your health history when you turn 18



WE PROMISE to care about your EDUCATION and give you every opportunity to learn and achieve.

- Make sure you attend a Nursery/School/ College where you are happy and able to achieve
- Make sure you get the right support around your learning if and when you need it
- Give you lots of opportunities to learn new things and take part in after school activities
- Try our best not to move your school unless it really isn't working for you
- Make sure you don't get taken out of your lessons just because we need to see you
- Provide opportunities for you to come and work with the council if it is right for you
- Support you to achieve your goals and career path whatever you choose to do
- Give you opportunities to have meaningful work experience
- Make sure you have the right equipment to support your learning

4. Your Education

Happiness

5. Your Future

WE PROMISE to help prepare you for the FUTURE and support you to fulfill your hopes and dreams

- Support you to learn life skills so that you can be independent in the future
- Be ambitious for you and encourage you to dream big
- Make sure you know how much money you are entitled to and learn how to manage it
- Make sure you know and understand your rights as a child/young adult who has experienced care
- Help you to find a good home when it is time for you to live independently
- Support you to stay with the people you live with at 18 with if it's what you both want
- Work with you to create the right plan for your future
- Support you into education, training or work so you can achieve your goals
- Continue to work with the Care Leavers Covenant
- Listen to you and your experience so you have a voice in how our services continue to develop
- Keep the door open for you so you can come back if you need us



Each Elected Member on the Panel has agreed to be the champion for each one on the promises.

- Care and Respect (overarching theme) – Cllr Hobson
- Your Relationships – Cllr Burdess
- Health and Happiness – Cllr Scott
- Your Education – Cllr Stansfield
- Your future – Cllr Critchley

Alongside the 5 Promises, work is also being undertaken to develop a new Corporate Parenting Strategy. Several workshops and consultation events have taken place, to gain views and ideas of current members, as well as identify any gaps in membership. The Strategy will support the Panel's governance and will identify key activities that will formulate a delivery plan for each of the 5 themes. Some of this will be delivered and monitored by other services and partnerships so there will be some alignment of governance structures, reporting and monitoring arrangements. It will also identify performance indicators for each theme that will form a corporate parenting dashboard.

An event is being planned to take place during September, to support our Blackpool partners to sign up their commitments regarding our new 5 Promises.

Celebrating Our Children's Achievements

Our **You Rock Awards** took place on Friday 12th November '21 in The Empress Ballroom, Winter Gardens. It was amazing to be all back together following Covid preventing us from holding the awards earlier in the year. 165 of our children and young people were nominated by their Social Workers, Personal Advisors, Independent Reviewing Officers, Foster Carers, Teachers and Support Workers. 105 of these children and young people came to collect their awards in person on the night. They were all given an invite to bring several guests of their choice to come along and celebrate with them, as well as the person who nominated them. The event was supported by our Elected Members from Corporate Parenting Panel, as well as Cllr Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council. Officers from Children's Services also were in attendance and our DCS, Vicky Gent, did a wonderful job of hosting the event.

It is always a great sense of pride and privilege to hear what our children and young people have achieved over the past year, however it was especially poignant this time, as they had all managed to continue to achieve and do some amazing things despite dealing with the Covid restrictions, being in and out of lockdown, not attending school, not being able to see their family and friends, as well as coping with life in general. It was a brilliant night and the feedback from our children and young people was extremely positive and something they say they look forward to each year.



This year awards will be held on **Friday 25th November 2022**



War Against Words and Blackpool Families Rock

Justuz have created a poster to promote and highlight the importance of the use of language when we speak and write about our children. It has been brilliant to see the progress we have seen over the last two years. The way our practitioners, Social Workers, IROs, PAs and Family Support Workers are recording on their children's records shows real awareness of the language they use when speaking to them and about them. The electronic recording system Mosaic records for our children will soon be changing to reflect this and the old language is due to be removed from the electronic forms which social workers use for our children's report, reviews and assessments etc.

Justuz will continue to remind us and promote their war against words to ensure we continue to show them how important they are to us by using a language that cares.

WAR AGAINST WORDS

JUSTUZ

The Children in Our Care Council on behalf of all the children we care for.
Have asked us all to stop using these words and phrases and speak to them and write about them in way that shows we really care.
No social work jargon, No abbreviations, No formal language, nothing that highlights us as being in care, just plain simple language that we all understand.

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE THE CHANGE! Let's show our children and young people how important they are to us by using a LANGUAGE THAT CARES!

LAC CIOC's, SOC's or CLA's BANNED
Dont abbreviate us, we dont LAC in anything we arent CIOC's or SOC's or CLA's. We are children and young people who are in your care. So claim as yours, talk about us collectively as being our children and young people. Or maybe call us by our names !!

STAT VISIT BANNED
Just tell us... You are coming to visit us and see how we are doing. We dont need to know about Stat visits, this make us feel you are only coming to see us because you have to.

PLACEMENT BANNED
just say or write our home or where I live.
Living in a placement makes us feel like it is not our home and not somewhere where we can settle and belong. We don't want to live in placements we want to live in homes with people who care about us. So when you are looking for a home for us , or if things are not working out for us where we are, don't talk or write about it being a placement that is breaking down, or searching for a new placement, find us a new home or somewhere for us to live.

BEING DESCRIBED AS A CASE BANNED
Makes us feel like we aren't a person and that we aren't cared about, just part of your job.

CONTACT BANNED
Just say or write... you are making plans for us to see our family, you are going to see your Mum, Dad, Nan or your brother and sisters...

HEALTH ASSESSMENT BANNED
We prefer it to be called a HEALTH CHECK it doesn't sound as formal or scary and we understand what it means.

THE LAC REVIEW BANNED
Just call it MY REVIEW

CARE PLAN BANNED
We know we have to have a plan but its name highlights us as being in care! Just call it MY PLAN.

RESPITE BANNED
This can make us feel like we are an inconvenience and not a part of the family. We prefer SLEEPOVERS or STAYOVERS as everyone has them!

REMEMBER YOU ARE SPEAKING AND WRITING ABOUT OUR LIVES. THIS NEEDS TO BE DONE IN A LANGUAGE THAT SHOWS US YOU CARE.

**PAST
PRESENT
FUTURE**

Illuminate Project with Blackpool Grand Theatre



The project is now in its 2nd year and so far we have 35 of our children age 8 to 13 years take part in the sessions that have been held for two days every school holiday. It has been amazing to watch our children grow in confidence, stand up and perform in front of others, express their thoughts and feelings, make new friends and create some brilliant artistic creations. We have more sessions planned during the summer holidays and then will preparing for our finale in October half term with a Premier showing of **Illuminate The Movie!** All the children's work and performances has been recorded over the 2 years and will be showcased at the theatre at a red carpet event.

Watch out for your invite!

JUSTUZ - TRAINING FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Two young people from Justuz have created their own training programme for newly qualified social workers. They have used their knowledge and expertise of what it like to be in care and receive social workers support. They know first-hand what makes a good social worker and what it takes to build meaningful relationships so they can build trust which they have told us is the most important thing to have.

With support from our Children's Services Practice Development Team and the Participation Team they will be delivering the training to 15 Social Workers in June. We will report back at Panel and hopefully they can let you know how they got on!

YOUNG INSPECTORS

The Young Inspectors Programme continues to evolve and develop, being co-produced with our Young Inspectors. They have now created a short training session for any new inspectors joining the scheme. Through consultation with our young people, workers and semi-independent providers a charter mark has now been developed.

This list of Standards is what our young people tell us what makes a good home and what support it is that they need to move on successfully and become independent. The Charter Mark is now being used during inspections to measure the home and if all standards are met the home will receive the Charter Mark. Homes can also apply to be considered for a Gold Charter Mark if they can evidence how they go above

and beyond what's expected. A Panel of Young Inspectors and Commissioners will together award the Charter Mark and Gold Mark if deserved. We hope that all our Semi-Independent Homes will strive to make the improvements necessary to gain the Charter Mark and then go on to push for the gold mark, so continually driving up the standards for our young people and creating a consistently excellent offer of care and support whichever home they live in.

THE CHARTER MARK FOR SEMI INDEPENDENT HOMES

THE PLACE

Standard Required
The home is decorated and maintained to a high standard, it feels warm and welcoming. (decoration/furnishings) any damages are repaired quickly
I can walk to the local shops and local services
I have good links to public transport
I have a say in how my bedroom is decorated and I can contribute to the general appearance of the home.
I was given a Welcome Pack which includes new bedding, towels, and basic toiletries.
I feel safe in the home
There is access to a communal space where I can spend time together with other people and staff in the home.
I have access to a house computer/laptop for my studying
I have access to free wifi
I have access to Netflix, TV package
My friends and family can visit in the communal space. There are Clear Rules on visitors and overnight stays.
I have access to an outdoor space and I am encouraged and supported to spend time outdoors
I can have time out in my room and my privacy is respected.
The use of CCTV has been discussed with me and is only used to monitor entrance/ exits to the home. (or in exceptional circumstances to safeguard an individual) YP to be discussed and agreed with YP and SW)
I have a key to the front door and my room
I have access to a fully equipped kitchen at all times and lockable storage.
There is a place to wash and dry my clothes. I have access to an iron, ironing board and outdoor drying space
I am supported to eat a healthy diet, I am given choices on the food I eat, I have access to basic food essentials in the kitchen at all times.
I understand the rules of the home, they are clear and fair. They are regularly reviewed so everyone knows what the expectations are. They are clear and realistic. They also are flexible and can be changed to meet the needs of the current group.
I know what money I have to pay each week.

The costs are reasonable and I understand what I am paying for?

Home is clear on any extra cost that I have to pay, this needs to be clearly stated, easy to understand and YP aware of what they are paying for before they move in.

THE PEOPLE

I feel like the staff care about me.

I get to spend time with staff and they are there when I need them

I know when staff will be out of the home and I can get hold of staff when if I need them.

I have built trusting relationships with staff and know I can go to them if I need any support.

The staff have a variety of skills and abilities so they are able to support me

The staff are empathetic and have a good understanding of my past experiences

The staff are responsive to me if I am having a difficult time, they can see when I am upset/overwhelmed and will actively offer support.

Staff are proactive and can manage situations and make decisions with me without always relying on the support of SW/PA

Staff work well together with other people who support me, they will advocate for me if I need them to

Staff are enthusiastic and motivated, the staff stick around so I don't keep having to get used to new workers all the time

Staff are positive and creative, they can think outside the box and will go the extra mile to support me

I believe the staff are positive role models and act like a good parent to me

The staff appear resilient and confident, I can trust them to support me

I am involved in the recruitment of new staff with other young people in the home.
I can help to interview new staff , together we are able to have the deciding vote and feel fully involved in the whole process

ME

Staff understand that I am learning to become independent and that I still have things to learn.
I am working towards being independent by the time I leave.

I am supported to learn about my own emotional wellbeing and ways to become more resilient

I am supported to learn about healthy friendships/relationships.

I am supported and encouraged to see my family and friends, staff understand that I may need help in maintaining and understanding these relationships

I am supported to create good support networks around me

I know and understand my individual support plan. I have been fully involved in the writing of it and it is the right plan for me

I am supported to learn independence and skills for life which are individual to me and the areas I need support in

I am supported to be healthy and make good choices
I am encouraged to be ambitious
I am supported to make plans for my future
I am encouraged and supported to try new things and get involved in my local community.
The level of support is individual to what I need, it is recognised that I may need more support when I first move in.
My successes and special occasions are celebrated
There are fun activities to do and I am given choices about what we do.
I am supported to access any support services that may help me.
I am supported to move on and helped to settle in my new home. Staff will keep in touch and check in on me to see how I am doing

Young Inspectors remit already is being widened to look at Residential Children’s Home, they have recently being approached by Commissioning Service to support the setup of a new Children’s Home in Blackpool who wants to care for children. They have been to visit the property being proposed and given their views and expertise on what makes a good home. They made such a good impression that they have been asked if they will support the recruitment of staff for the new home to make sure they employ the best possible people.

SHAKE IT UP 2022



The invites have now gone out for our 2nd Annual Children in Our Care Conference SHAKE IT UP 2022.

The conference will take place on Monday 25th July at

The Winter Gardens in Blackpool. We have a great day planned which hopefully will allow our children age 10 and above to come together and give them the opportunity to tell us about the things that really matter to them, spend a fun day together with their social workers, IRO’s, support workers etc., meet some of the decision makers in Children’s Service, share their voice and of course a have a really good time.

Engagement Lead overview of partnership update provided to the Corporate Parenting Panel

Over the last 12 months the Corporate Parent Panel has received assurance from a number of services about the work with they have been undertaking with our children and young people who have left our care, to fulfill the commitment and promises we have made within our Pledge. Justuz have been consulted on all of these reports. These reports have included:

- Educational Achievements & Destinations for Our Children
- Co-Production of Health Assessments for Our Children
- Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Annual Report
- The Care Leaver's Offer
- Youth Justice Annual Report
- Regulation 44 Visits including Young Inspectors
- Virtual School Annual Report
- Adoption Services Annual Report
- Fostering Services Annual Report
- Opportunities Update for Our Children.

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