

Our Promise to You

Corporate Parenting Pledge

1. We promise we will care for you and help to keep you safe

- When you first come into care we will explain why, and be honest and clear about the plans for you including whether or not you are likely to be returning home
- We will make sure you live in a safe place where you are cared for and that is as near as possible to your family and friends
- We will help you to keep in touch with friends and family and if this is not possible we will give you a reason why
- We will make sure you know your social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer, how to contact them and that you see them regularly and in private. We will only change your worker when it is absolutely necessary and we will make sure that they say goodbye to you if they leave.

2. We promise you a good education and to help you achieve your hopes and dreams for the future

- We will listen to your views on school and respond and act quickly if we need to make changes to keep you safe and able to learn
- We will help you grow in confidence and make positive choices and decisions
- We will make sure you don't have to change school wherever possible, particularly not in Years 10 and 11
- We will work with school to help you do your best and help you catch up with school work if you fall behind or miss any days
- We will make sure that you have access to a computer to help you with your learning
- We will make sure you have a copy of your Personal Education Plan (PEP) and understand what it is trying to help you achieve
- We will provide you with opportunities for work experience and apprenticeships within the Council.
- We will celebrate your achievements and help you achieve things that are important to you.
- If you want to stay on in further education, we will support you to find the best course for you and help you financially

3. We promise to help you have good memories, positive relationships and places to go and things to do

- We will help you to find hobbies, clubs and social activities that you enjoy.
- We will provide you with a free leisure pass so you can access sports and other positive activities
- We will help you keep in touch with your family and friends and other people who are important to you wherever it is possible and safe for you to do so
- We will celebrate your birthday and cultural events that are important to you
- We will tell you about things you are entitled to like pocket money, savings and money for clothes
- We will help you build a 'life story' of the important people in your life, the places you have visited and the things you like to do

4. We promise to ensure that you are listened to and take part in things that affect you

- We will support and encourage you to be fully involved in your care plan and reviews. We will always ask you for your views and listen to them. We will make sure you can give your views in lots of ways – speaking, writing, drawing – however you choose to.
- We will always take your views into consideration when decisions are being made about you. If we can't do what you have asked, we will give you an explanation why.
- We will help you to make a complaint if we cannot sort something you are unhappy about. We will make sure you can contact an independent advocate to help you do this.
- We will give you the opportunity to have your voice heard and make suggestions about how to improve the services that children and young people receive.

5. We promise to support your health and wellbeing

- We will help you have access to clear and age appropriate information about your physical and mental health
- We will make sure you are able to attend all of your GP, dentist and hospital appointments
- We will let you know how and where to get access to confidential help and advice
- We will help you to keep fit and healthy by having opportunities to play, have a hobby or play sports

6. We promise to help you prepare for adult life and to live independently

- We will provide you with a Personal Adviser from the age of 15 ½
- We will make sure you have a passport, national insurance number and birth certificate
- We will help you open a bank account or savings account
- We will support you financially until you start work or are entitled to claim benefits
- We will help you to learn about how to manage your money
- We will provide you with opportunities for work experience and apprenticeships within the Council
- We will help you apply for college, apprenticeships or jobs
- We will help you to fill out forms with other agencies and support you in any discussions you might need to have with them
- We will provide you with a grant to help you settle into your own accommodation when you leave care
- We will support you if you want to go to college and university
- We will always be there for you if you make a mistake and will help you get back on track

7. We promise that we take our role as corporate parents very seriously and will do everything we can to champion you, uphold your rights and ensure your needs are met

- We will do everything we can to make sure that you have the best possible opportunities in life
- We will make sure that listening to you and taking your views and experiences into consideration is part of everyday life in Stockton-on-Tees
- We will offer you the opportunity to meet with us on a regular basis and want you to tell us if you think our promises are not being kept.