

Southampton Children
& Learning Service

**Our Together Plan:
Southampton's
Corporate Parenting
Strategic Plan
2022/27**



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CANDIDATE
CHILD FRIENDLY
CITY



**Children
& Learning**
Making a difference





Our vision

We want all children and young people in Southampton to get a good start in life, live safely, be healthy and happy and go on to have successful opportunities in adulthood.

An introduction from Southampton's Children in Care Council

At Southampton Voices Unite we worked hard to help create this plan of how best to love us and keep us safe!

We think a corporate parent should help us and look after us in the same way that birth parents do. We would like to be well cared for and loved, given lots of opportunities to see our friends, and sometimes family members, and not have to change our social worker all the time – we like our social workers!

We hope that by giving you our dreams and wishes, that you can help make our lives happy and successful. Please do not promise anything that you cannot deliver!



A message from our Corporate Parenting Senior Leaders

Welcome to the Southampton Corporate Parenting Strategy for Children and Young People who are in our care or who are leaving our care. I want to start by thanking the children and young people who have supported the development of this strategy through their amazing work to develop the corporate parenting superheroes, and to tell us what good care looks like.

Our names are Councillors Daniel Fitzhenry and Peter Baillie. Councillor Fitzhenry is the leader of the whole of Southampton City Council and Councillor Baillie is the Lead Member of Children and Learning. We are the local political leaders who will do our very best to make sure Southampton City Council provides our children in care and those young adults leaving our care with a service that matches what they have told us that they need.

Southampton children and young people matter to us, and they matter a lot. None are more important to us than those who are in our care or are leaving our care, and we know that there is no greater responsibility for the council than being a corporate parent. We know that most of our children and young people have suffered neglect, abuse and trauma, or have joined our care following loss, or as unaccompanied

minors who have had traumatic journeys to reach safety. Whatever the cause for our children and young people needing us to be their corporate parents, we are committed to providing safe and caring homes and accommodation for our young people where they can recover, and then be helped to have dreams and aspirations that are successful.

We know that children and young people need strong and long-lasting relationships with carers and individual workers, who spend the time needed to get to know them, so that they can really understand them and make a difference to them. Every child, young person or young adult working with our service has individual needs, and we believe that they should have real involvement in their own plans and the plans for their service.

This means that we will listen to our children and young people, we will hear what they tell us about their care, and we will challenge ourselves and the service that support them to be better corporate parents to them every day. We therefore fully support and endorse this Corporate Parenting Strategy, and the resources needed to deliver it for our children.

With best wishes



Cllr Daniel Fitzhenry
Leader of
Southampton City Council



Cllr Peter Baillie
Lead Cabinet
Member for Children

A message from our Chief Executive and Executive Director



Hello, my name is Mike Harris and I am the Chief Executive of Southampton City Council. I am responsible for the delivery of all the council services to support our local community, including ensuring we provide the best and safest level of care and support to children and young people in Southampton.



Hello, my name is Rob Henderson and I am the Executive Director of Wellbeing, Children and Learning Services within Southampton City Council. I am responsible for leading the department that helps support, keep safe, and care for children and young people within Southampton.

Together we work closely with other senior leaders and elected members in the council as well as multiagency partners in our community (such as schools, health, and the police) to help us deliver our corporate parenting strategy. This means we explore how our service delivers our support, evaluate what we do well and what we could do better, and make sure we collectively work together in our aspiration to provide better and safer care and support for children and young people than they would have experienced if we were not involved in their lives.

This is a big responsibility and one we take very seriously. We recognise that we are in essence the parents to the children and young people in Southampton's care and like any parent this is both a challenging and rewarding experience to make sure we make sure we can help them aspire, achieve, and succeed in their own lives. Our collective goal is to help the children and young people we care for and support in Southampton to have a similar opportunities in their life to that of other children and families within the wider Southampton community, whether they remain with their birth family or another family we help to connect them with.

Our new corporate parenting strategy for the next five years explains how we would like to achieve these aspirations in a practical way and

to know what we and others need to do to make this strategy a success. Hearing from our own children and young people in our care and those who have left our care share what good support and care looks like for them was key in helping shape what our strategy will be going forward. We also listened to the hard working social workers and other support workers and professionals who work with our children and young people to make this as inclusive a strategy as possible.

We hope you will find it equally as ambitious as we do and that it is clearly laid out so you can understand what we aim to achieve so you can hold us to account to make sure we do what we said we will!

Rob Henderson will be mainly responsible for seeing this strategy through, and Mike along with council members will review, challenge, and revise this plan to give us the best chance of seeing this strategy become reality to help achieve our ultimate vision of Child Friendly Southampton!

With best wishes,

Mike Harris
Chief Executive
Southampton
City Council

Rob Henderson
Executive Director
Wellbeing, Children,
and Learning Services

What is Corporate Parenting?

Corporate Parenting is a way that explains the collective responsibility the council has alongside our partners in the police, education, and health services have in caring for children and young people who are looked after by or who have left the care of Southampton City Council.

Corporate Parenting is about how we care and show that we care for and about our young people, and how we demonstrate that we champion them, have high shared aspirations with and for them, and how we ensure that they special and important as individuals and as a group.

Good corporate parenting is ensuring that all our young people have all the chances that they need to be the best they can be, to recover from any previous difficulties they have faced so that they can achieve their goals as they grow. It is about positively discriminating for them in all we do as a council with our partners, so that they feel loved and part of our Southampton family.

Put simply, this is how we care for children and young people as we would expect any other good parent to care for their child, providing safer and better opportunities in their life than they would have experienced with their natural family.

WHAT IS A STRATEGY?

A strategy is a plan to deliver something important in a clear way that is ambitious, has clear goals, and that enables us to evidence the difference we have made.

OUR CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

This strategy comes from several participation events that have happened with groups of our looked after children, young people and care leavers, who have rightly told us what a Corporate Parenting Superhero should be. They have told us what good care looks like to them, and what they want from their social workers. We are grateful for their time in helping us understand what they need and want from us as their parents.

This strategy responds to their wishes and expectations from us, it also considers the Department for Education Corporate Parenting Principles, messages from the 2019 Care Experienced Conference and the messages that come from national Bright Spots Surveys.

Should it be Corporate Parenting is about the care we show the children and young people in our care and our young adults as they leave us?

This is not and should never be a process. It is simply the way we should be.

Our City Vision for Children

“We want all children and young people in Southampton to get a good in life, live safely, be healthy and happy and go on to have successful opportunities in adulthood.”

This is never truer than when we think of our own children who we care for as a city. Our Corporate Parenting Strategy is how we will make this vision a reality for children who are in our care and those young adults who are leaving our care.

What our young people have told us that to be a good corporate parent we should

- 1** Let us know what you are thinking
- 2** Show us that you care
- 3** Be approachable
- 4** Be there when we need you
- 5** Listen properly when we talk
- 6** See what needs to be done
- 7** Always tell us the truth however hard it may be for us hear
- 8** Carry our worries to support us
- 9** Show us respect by always being on time
- 10** Show you want the best for us
- 11** Give us opportunities in life
- 12** Prepare us to leave your care, but still be there for us as we do

Our children and young people have told us that good care looks like this

- 1** I know why I am in care
- 2** I feel listened to
- 3** People say goodbye properly if they leave
- 4** I feel you will stick up for me – even if I am not there
- 5** I know you will never give up on me and will give me a million chances
- 6** I have decent clothes, so I fit in
- 7** I feel people believe in me
- 8** I am taught about my hair, and self-care
- 9** My birthdays are remembered
- 10** People care if I go missing
- 11** I am helped through sad times
- 12** I am hugged if I ask to be
- 13** You listen to us when we tell you who we do and don't want to see in our families
- 14** When we leave you are there and we have good housing, we are financially secure, and have positive futures with high aspirations

Principles that are essential to making our corporate parenting approach

- 1** The voice of our children should be at the heart of all that we do. This includes their own individual plans, wider service design and strategic planning, and writing in clear jargon free language to help our children and young people understand what it is we do.
- 2** The responsibility for the safety, welfare and achieving positive outcomes for our children and young people falls across the whole council and our partners.
- 3** Stability for our young people, and strong enduring relationships are key. Stability makes for good care.
- 4** Our children should understand their journey and we should explain it to them to the best of our ability in a way they can understand; their recovery starts from understanding
- 5** We want the best for our young people, we will help them to be the best they can be!
- 6** When our young people leave our care, we do not leave them. We stand with them, we advocate for them, and we have high aspirations for them.

From the work we have done with our children and young people, and the Commitments written by Southampton Voices Unite, Southampton Children in Care Council our priorities are

- 1** Safe and Trusted Relationships – relationships with our children in care should be sustained caring and fun. Our children will understand what healthy relationships are. They will remain safely connected to their families where safe enough to do so.
- 2** Identity and recovery. Children and young people will understand their journey into and through care, why they are looked after, their history and heritage.
- 3** Opportunities. Being in care helps our young people to thrive, gives them chances, equality, and helps them identify and reach their personal aspirations and allows them a successful life.
- 4** Healthy life. Our children and young people will have support to be healthy and have the best health they can be both physically and emotionally.
- 5** Home and accommodation. Our children will have a loving home where they can grow roots and recover. They will have stable relationships with carers and these will be enduring. Their housing options when they are leaving our care will be individually right for them.
- 6** Do it together. We will work with our children and young people to jointly create plans for their care and when they leave our care. As any parent would, we have to act in their best interest, but always strive to work together to the greatest extent possible.
- 7** Prepared and supported. We will prepare our young people to leave our care, but will not leave them. We will ensure that they are safe and cared about.



Priority 1

Safe and Trusted Relationships – Relationships with our children in care should be sustained caring and fun. Our children will understand what healthy relationships are.

You said:

Help to keep me safe and to understand what safe relationships look and feel like.

I will make mistakes and take risks as all children and young people do. But I need you to help me make better choices and keep me as safe as possible from harm and neglect. We need you to build a bond with us so that we feel safe to talk about our feelings. I need you to build a bond with me and for you to be honest about the secrets you can't keep, like secrets which will cause me or others harm, but tell me clearly what you will do with my secret and who you will share it with.

You will help us nurture relationships with our previous professionals, carers, family, friends, and social networks so that we have help and support during and after we leave your care.

You will understand that I will have good and bad days, but what's important to me is that I always know you will be there for me, when I need you and be understanding of me when I don't want you there.



We will do all we can that our children have a stable a care journey as possible, by working hard to them the right long-term homes as soon as possible and reduce the number of social workers and other professionals that they have to meet and tell their story to.

We will work hard to increase our local networks of carers for our children and ensure that there are strong relationships between social workers and carers so that our carers feel supported to care for our children.

We will review how we manage our family time offer so that this meets the needs of our children and young people who are going to stay in our care. We will try to ensure that this family time feels safe and as natural as possible to help children in our care maintain their connections with their natural families and siblings.

We will help our children and young people understand what healthy relationships are, so that we prepare them for when they leave care and think about having families of their own.

Where safe change has been made, and it is the right thing to do, we will help our children return to their birth families or extended families.

We will listen to what our children tell us, be respectful to their views, and always do what we say we will do.

Key deliverables

1

Workforce stability in children looked after service so that children have consistent workers

2

Delivery of Southampton Residential Children's Homes Project so that young people who need care in a children's home can have this locally

3

Increase our local fostering resource so we have a greater say about the care our children and young people have locally

4

Implementation of the step-across programme to help some children exit residential care where this is possible and preferable for them

5

Implementation of the restructure of the Children Looked After Service to take out the transfer point of children between the Children Looked After Team and the Pathways Team at 14 years.

Priority 2

Identity and recovery – Children and young people will understand their journey into and through care, why they are looked after, their history, identity and heritage

You said:

Help me to understand why I am in Care

As I get older and when the time is right, it is important you help me understand why I am in care, where my family are, and how I can contact them if it is safe enough and in my best interest to do so. It is important for us to have a family tree, a life storybook with photos and text which will help us to talk when processing our past.

Help us to understand our history and how it is we came to be in our care. You would recognise that having our life story book, pictures and mementoes are all important to our recalling important people and events in our life. You will support us if we find this upsetting, and if we want to see our case files, you will make sure that our personal adviser, or a professional, family member or friend of our choice, is available to help us read through papers and to ask questions.

We will ensure that Social Workers and Carers have sufficient training to be able to deliver appropriate life story work with children and young people so that they understand their past experience and their journey into our care.

We will identify where there are specific therapeutic needs for our children and ensure that they have the correct support they need to overcome the past trauma and abuse they have experienced in order to help their recovery and better achieve and succeed in life.

We will ensure that our children maintain ties with their birth families to the greatest extent possible as long as it is a safe and positive enough experience for them.



Key deliverables

1

Ensure that all our social workers are trained in the narrative model which will help enable them to understand the importance of their lived experience and journey in a way they can best understand.

2

Develop and implement resources that we can use with children and young people, such as life story work, to help explain why we are involved in their lives and their life journey.

3

Embed a Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) offer within our looked after children's service that is specific to our children and young people

4

Ensure that we train our carers so they can provide the best care and support to help them support the children and young people understand why they are in their care and help overcome the impacts of any trauma they have experienced before.

5

Review of our family time offer in line with what children and young people across the country have said to CoramVoice about the importance of spending time with their birth families.

Priority 3

Opportunities and education – Being in care helps our young people to thrive, improves their life chances, supports equality, and helps them identify and reach their personal goals and aspirations to lead a successful life.

You said:

Help me succeed at school

My education is important to me being a successful adult. As I get older, I need your help to identify my future life and career goals, and how my education plans will help meet them. I need you to help me understand the plans for me, and that those plans will always reach as high as possible for my future. I need to know that you will always have my back through my education. It is important that the fact that I am Looked after is kept confidential from my school friends, unless I wish to share this.



We will ensure that all of our children and young people have access to play, fun, ability to socialise with others and to learn

We will work with our partners to ensure that educational and skills training are at the heart of planning with our children and young people to afford them the best options available to be the best that they can be

We will ensure that Personal Educational Planning and Pupil Premium funding is targeted to support our children directly in terms of their education attainment and attendance. We will challenge when we feel our children are not getting what they need

We will work with local further and higher educational establishments to create opportunities to enable our young people to interact with them from an early stage, so that engagement with these establishments is a norm not an exception creating stronger ambitions

We will establish and promote a range of mentoring and befriending offers to help our children and young people learn from the experiences of others to help inspire them to achieve and succeed

We will ensure children in our care and our care leavers have access to internet and devices such as computers to help them keep connected, promote learning, and to enjoy a similar experience to other children and young people.

Key deliverables

1

Timely, ambitious, and high quality Personal Education Plans that promote the learning and education of our children and young people to achieve their future life and career goals

2

Develop a programme of activities and events for our children and young people to enable them to socialise and develop friendships similar to what other children and young people would experience in life

3

Develop a care leaver first apprenticeship offer for our young people across the corporate parenting partnership so they can learn valuable life and employment skills to enable them to lead successful lives in adulthood

4

Develop a mentoring offer to include peer mentoring that supports the learning, skills and experience of children and young people

5

Develop a digital offer as part of our children in care and care leavers support to enable them to be connected to the internet, computers, and other digital devices to keep connected, promote learning and enjoyment, and that is a safe experience for them

Priority 4

Healthy life – Our children and young people will have necessary support to lead healthy lives in their physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing

You said:

Help me to understand why leading a healthy life is important to me.

Keeping as healthy and fit as possible is important to me. To help me I need to have regular health and dental check-ups and personal health care, a varied and balanced diet, and regular activities. I also need people talk to me about my health needs as clearly as possible according to my age and understanding, to allow me to make informed decisions about my healthcare as I get older.



We will improve on our performance in the quality and timeliness of health care assessments for children and young people to keep them healthy and identify and treat any health conditions as early as possible

We will improve our performance as a partnership in understanding and supporting our children's emotional and mental health by more effective use of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire

We will embed a specific CAMHS resource in our children looked after service which ensures that children and young people have access to mental health services to reduce the impact of previous trauma and abuse

We will work with our partners and young people to create a care leaver health offer which reduces barriers to accessing health and dental care for young people who are leaving care, and which ensures a smoother transition to adult services where required

We will ensure that young people who leave our care have access to adult health services, support, and activities which promote their physical, mental, and emotional health and wellbeing

Key deliverables

1

Improvement on timeliness and quality of health care assessment performance.

2

Improved SDQ performance, with training of Social Workers and other professionals on the importance of completing these.

3

Delivery of an embedded CAMHS offer to help support the mental and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

4

We will co-produce our health offer with young people and care leavers to help us understand what their health needs are and what works best for them.

5

Ensure our care leaver offer includes access to activities which can promote strong physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

Priority 5

Home and accommodation – Our children will have a loving home where they can grow roots and recover. They will have stable relationships with carers and these will be enduring. Their housing options when they are leaving our care will be individually right for them.

You said:

You should make finding and helping us keep a safe and welcoming home a priority.

You will make sure that we understand and help create our personal housing plan.



We will continue to develop our own local Southampton Residential Children's Homes so that when an alternative to family care is needed this is offered locally and to a high quality that we can directly manage and support

We will continue to develop our Step Across offer, where family carers have extra support to help those children and young people who can and should leave residential care can do so, when it is right for them, to live within a family

We will continue to increase our number of local foster carers, to include a focus on increasing the diversity and strength of this offer to reduce the number of our children who are placed in residential care, especially when this is not always best for them

We will ensure that our carers are well trained and well supported to help them meet the needs of our children and young people, supporting our carers own wellbeing and support needs in order to enable them to deliver this for our children

We will continue to support staying put arrangements for our young people after the age of 18 to help them remain living with the carers they know best and feel safest and supported with

We will also work on developing a staying close offer to help young people in residential care or living outside of Southampton live close and maintain their local links if that is what is in their best interest

We will work with commissioners and other fostering and residential care providers to ensure that there is a wider range of caring offers for our young people when they leave our care so that they are better matched to housing offers that best meet their independence needs.

Key deliverables

1

The Southampton City Council Residential Children's Homes Project which is an initiative in development that will provide local children's homes for some of our young people so that they remain local to the city.

2

Increase our fostering sufficiency strategy to make sure we have as many carers locally who can best meet the specific needs of our children and young people.

3

Increase our staying put offer to young people post 18 years old so that as many young people remain in their homes until they are ready to leave.

4

Increase the number of our children and young people cared for by carers, family and friends through a Special Guardianship Order, which makes those carers their legal guardians.

5

Increase our enhanced housing offer for young people as they move into adulthood.

6

Develop a staying close model to help young people moving into adulthood stay close to the residential or out of area carers if that is where they have established their local links to and wish to stay, or ensure that there is a stronger and supportive offer for them locally should they move back to the city.

7

Develop a specific wellbeing offer for our carers so that they feel supported to care for our children.

Priority 6

Do it together – We will work with our children and young people to jointly create plans for their care and when they leave our care.

You said:

I need to know what my rights and responsibilities are to make my own choices, as I grow older.

Even when we do not agree with each other, I still want my views to be heard. This means providing the right people, including the offer of an advocate to each child and young person, who can support me to say what my views are and that you do not get offended with me when you do not agree with me.



We will ensure that all children who are looked after have the opportunity to be involved and help make the plans for their care. Where we cannot do what they want us to do we will explain why we feel it is in their best interest to do something different.

We will involve children in our care and care leavers in designing plans for their service, and learn from what they tell us can improve what we do well.

We will involve children and young people in our training and recruitment of social care staff and foster carers. We will encourage and help support the members of our Corporate Parenting Partnership to do this too where practicable.

We will ensure all children and young people in our care have access to an advocacy service that can help support them to express their wishes and feelings should they wish to have this.

We will ensure that messages from our Bright Spots Survey of children and young people in care are shared across the Corporate Parenting Partnership and that we plan with our children and young people to celebrate our Brightspots and address areas of challenge that it identifies we can learn what they say we do well, what we need to do better, and their ideas on how we can help achieve this for them.

We will increase how children, young people, and care leavers can be involved participation activities by co-creating our participation strategy with them.

Key deliverables

1

Demonstrate children and young people's involvement in their care plans by exploring ways they can be involved in auditing their records in a supported way.

2

Demonstrate meaningful involvement of our children and young people in care and our care leavers in the development of our residential children's home project.

3

Create a training programme for social workers, corporate parenting partnership and foster carers that is informed by the views of our children and young people on what good care looks like for them.

4

Demonstrate involvement of our children, young people, and care leavers in our recruitment process, we will have a workforce of social work and support staff that is more stable and supportive of their safety and welfare needs.

5

Maintenance of our advocacy partner service that supports our children and young people to express their wishes and feelings in order to challenge us when we are not always getting things right for them.

6

Engagement with the Brightspots survey every other year and implementation of clear plans that are co-produced with our children in care council and care leavers which cover areas of improvement identified.

7

Implementation of our participation strategy to more directly involve children, young people, and care leavers in activities and fun events that help promote their life skills, build positive relationships with each other, and help them share their wishes and views with us on what life is like for them in care.

Priority 7

Prepared and supported – We will prepare our young people to leave our care and will not give up on them. We will ensure that they are can lead adult lives that are as safe and supported as possible.

You said:

You will help us to understand what we need to be able to successfully live on our own and to be happy.

You will also show us that we understand that leaving our care is a big step and that we need your patience and understanding, even when we make mistakes

We will help you with the changes that happen when you stop being a child who is 'looked after' and become a young adult 'care leaver'. We will do this in a supportive and positive way, making sure that you have the time it takes to be ready.

We will help you remain with your foster family for as long as possible after you turn 18 years old if this is your wish.



We will co-produce our leaving care offer that enables us to ensure that our young people have the best life skills possible to lead successful and aspirational lives in adulthood

We will continue to support staying put arrangements for our young people after the age of 18 to help them remain living with the carers they know best and feel safest and supported with

We will also work on developing a staying close offer to help young people in residential care or living outside of Southampton live close and maintain their local links if that is what is in their best interest

We will ensure that we have access to a variety of accommodation that can provide the right level of support that our young adults need to lead independent lives

We will ensure that our care leavers offer is of high quality, that our young people know what it offers them, and that this is reflected in their pathway plans according to their individual needs and wishes

We will develop a leaving care health plan with our young people to ensure that their physical, mental and emotional health needs are supported by adult services when they leave out care

We will develop a clear pathway for our young people that supports them with mentoring, apprenticeships, and education training and employment activity.

Key deliverables

1

Create a preparation for leaving care skills programme to be clear that young people have the life skills they need to live independently.

2

Improve our staying close offer to help more young people moving into adulthood stay close to the residential or out of area carers if that is where they have established their local links to and wish to stay.

3

Engage young people in reviewing local commissioned housing offers so that we understand their views on this provision and help providers improve in line with messages received.

4

Refresh and publish our care leavers offer, co-produced with them, and reviewed bi-annually to ensure it is kept up to date and meets the changing needs of young people and young adults leaving our care.

5

Co-develop a care leaver health plan with young people and our multi-agency partners that focusses specifically on the needs that our care leavers will have as they move into adulthood.

6

Develop a clear training and skills pathway specific to young people who are preparing to leave care, which includes various work experience, training, and apprenticeship offers.

7

Undertake the Leaving Care Brightspots survey bi-annually and coproduce and deliver on plans that implement changes based on what young people and young adults tell us we can do better for them.

How we will measure success

Priority 1 – Safe and trusted relationships

1. Average number of social workers a child or young person has annually after transfer to the looked after children service
2. Average number of personal advisors a care leaver has annually
3. Annual average number of care arrangements a child or young person has
4. Number of in-house foster carers

Priority 2 – help us understand why we are in care

1. Number of social workers and personal advisors trained in narrative model and trauma informed practice
2. Number of Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire assessments in timescale

Priority 3 – Opportunities and education

1. Number of Personal Education Plans in timescale
2. Number of looked after children and care leaver events run and attendance levels

Priority 4 – Healthy Life

1. Timeliness of initial and review health assessments
2. Timeliness of Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaires

Priority 5 - Home and accommodation

1. Number of in-house foster carers
2. Percentage of looked after children placed within and 20-mile radius and 50-mile radius of Southampton
3. Number of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation
4. Number of special guardianship orders per quarter

Priority 6 – Do it together

1. Number of looked after children and care leavers attending participation events
2. Number of looked after children and care leavers engaged in annual Brightspots survey

Priority 7 – Prepared and Supported

1. Number of care leavers in touch
2. Number of care leavers in suitable accommodation
3. Number of care leavers who are in education, training, or employment

Appendix: Our Focus and Approach

Our vision for all children and young people

We want all children and young people in Southampton to get a good start in life, live safely, be healthy and happy and go on to have successful opportunities in adulthood

Child friendly Southampton

Southampton's vision is to become a Child Friendly City starting in 2021 and working towards the goal of accreditation with UNICEF UK by 2024/25. Our values as a Child Friendly City are to:

Be inclusive – by becoming a participative city in which children experience meaningful engagement in the design, delivery and place shaping of Southampton;

Listen – by implementing a participation framework for children within Southampton City Council's democratic processes within which consultation with children takes place;

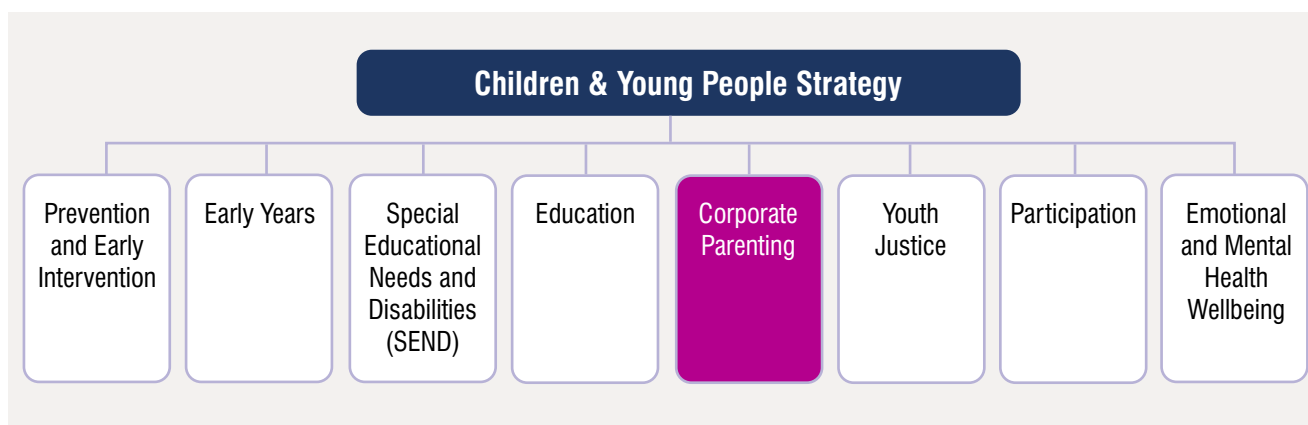
Learn - by ensuring all strategy and policy is informed by the active engagement of children, with new strategic commitments expressed in child friendly terms to support children's inclusion and participation in civic policy creation.

Raising living standards and confronting deprivation

Southampton is a relatively deprived city, with children and young people disproportionately affected. About one in five children are in low-income families and will experience poor housing, family debt and financial anxiety, and food insecurity. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an exacerbation of deprivation and inequalities. This plan contributes to a robust strategy which will steer local services in their work to raise living standards and confront deprivation.

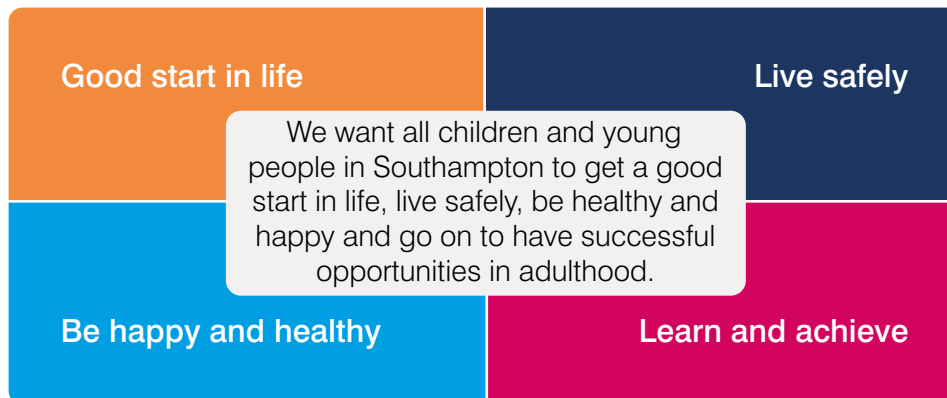
Southampton Children and Young People's Strategy 2022 – 27

Southampton's overarching Children and Young People's Strategy is underpinned by eight strategic plans; alongside a range of service delivery and improvement.



FOUR KEY PRIORITIES

This Children and Young People Strategy has four key priorities:-



Each underpinning strategy or action plan supports the achievement of these priorities either directly or indirectly through service specific goals and actions.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS

The overarching principles that we are working to and which you will see in this plan are:

Early intervention, prevention, and inclusion

We will invest in prevention, working with schools and communities to identify needs and deliver services as early as possible, to meet needs at the right time, in the right place and in the right way. We will promote educational inclusion and focus on preparing children for transitions and independence.

Relationship based work

We will build and sustain relationships of trust to build on successes, strengthen the quality of practice and make change together with: All children, young people, families and carers; Each other; Schools and colleges; Partners (health, police, voluntary and cultural sectors) and local communities.

Locality working

We will bring our services closer to the communities they serve by changing how and where we work. We will use local knowledge and intelligence (e.g. data and feedback) to ensure communities can access the services they need from us and partners, closer to home.

A skilled and stable workforce

We will build and develop confident, multi-skilled teams and future leaders through a strong learning and development offer and “high support, high challenge” culture, enabling more consistent relationships with children, families, schools and partners.

