

GOOD PRACTICE STORY BOARD

“CLA meet the Corporate Parenting Board”

1. What are we improving?

- Opportunities for engagement and participation of the Children in Care Council and Corporate Parenting Board
- The opportunity to fulfil the CPB Business Plan to meet the CiCC – meet members of the CiCC
- CLA understanding of the CPB roles and responsibilities and meet members
- Relationships with CLA, the CiCC and the Corporate Parenting Board

2. What has been delivered?

- One young person came to the CPB meeting 26/06/19 to hear about the developments of the Participation Service/meet the CPB members
- Members of the Corporate Parenting Board came to the CiC Council Meeting on 24/06/19 and engaged with the CiCC members
- 9 CLA met with Board members and they assisted CLA in creating a Logo for the CiCC and encouraged CLA to sign up to assist in staff interviews
- The Achievement Awards photographs were shared with CLA, the Corporate Parenting Board, carers and staff
- CLA have been consulted

3. What has been the impact?

- CLA/CiCC have met members of the Corporate Parenting Board
- The members have asked CLA/CiCC a number of questions to answer to help with their understanding of the experiences of CLA
- The Participation Team continues to build on relationships with CLA, carers, staff and Board members
- Evidence of the CiC Council meetings is being collated/minuted. Meetings are focused and engaging for CLA.
- The Achievement Awards photographs have been show cased to CLA, the CPB, carers and staff
- We now have additional six CLA who have volunteered to take part on staff interviews
- The CiC Council will now have its own logo and identity, designed by a CLA to assist in the promotion and ‘branding’ of the CiCC

4. What is the evidence?

- CLA Achievements Awards have been celebrated with the Corporate Parenting Board, staff and carers via the slideshow
- Two meetings have taken place; one with a CLA who came to the CPB meeting, and a group meeting with the CiCC
- The Corporate Parenting Board questions to CLA have now been answered.
- The answers will be included in the next CiC Newsletter and shared with staff
- On-going relationships have been strengthened through participation with the CiCC and the Corporate Parenting Board
- Attendance of the CiC Council continues to increase, 9 CLA attended this meeting

What one of our CiCC members thought of the Corporate Parenting Board meeting they attended in June 2019

'I was welcomed into the room. I thought they could have changed the language into young person friendly, they used big words. I learnt who else we can talk to if we have problems, learning who was there and who we can go to if we have a problem. The presentations could have been more like the Newsletter & Pledge – make colourful, easier to read, when in black and white I don't want to read it. I learnt about what is happening in Participation by seeing the slide show, who people are and what they do. Going helped me understand the politics of the board meeting as Councillors were there as well as staff. It was a long meeting with no break. When I used to go before we didn't stay for the whole meeting. It is interesting but I needed a break'.



Questions from the Corporate Parenting Board

What is life like for you?

"Life is better than it has ever been. I feel loved and cared for and also I'm treated correctly. I have also been selected for peer mentor because I have been given the option to change my life".

"Better when I am away from my carers. Normally life is stressful and hard but sometimes it can be nice. I have a really nice school".

"Better because I have more friends and better things to do".

"It has its up's and down's at present".

"I haven't known anything different. I have been in care since I was 4 year's old. This is my life. I am in a stable placement and have been there 5 years, it's my home. I call my carers grandson my nephew. We are a family. I have had three foster carers since being in care and they have all been long term placements. My brother has had lots of placements.

How happy are you on a scale to 1-10? "8/10. It would mostly be 10 but my carer and I have some arguments so its 8/9 out of 10".

"It's like a heart monitor there's ups and downs it's when the line goes ----- straight you should worry. My life's hard but it's just how I deal with it even if there is more downs that occur in my life it's a test".

"It is very stressful being away from my parents but at the same time a relief as I don't have to deal with drama anymore. Moving into Gary's house is a completely different way around life and also something new to get used to. I understand me and Gary have to get used to living with each other".

"Good because I feel like I'm in a safe environment and being allowed to do things I like such as football, golf, cricket, mountain biking, scooting".

"My life is amazing and I would hate for it to change".

"Now I want to learn how to understand my abilities". "I want to join some sports and gyms". "I want to be free to feel my better". "I want to be exposed to the internet to be able to learn and absorb social knowledge".

"Enjoy riding my bike to school". "Going out with friends". "Looked after really well".

"Confusing".

"Life at the moment is ok yet the smallest things that I do make me really worried and anxious. I am now finding more and more harder to concentrate and sleep at night. When I feel this way it makes me not ever want to have time to myself as it makes me feel worthless and sometimes when I feel like this I feel like I don't even want to be alive anymore".

"Good".

"Life is good of course there is some ups and downs because that's what life is like but overall I love life".

"My life is amazing being with my dog and brothers and sisters and Bev & Chris".

"Great because Bev & Chris give us lots of surprises and take us out to wonderful places" "Give nice/good presents".

"Fine".

"Amazing with my dad/Andy".

"Well I hate being in care it hard & painful I want to go home but at the moment I'm ok".

What are we as a Council doing right/wrong for you?

"They are there when I need it and whatever I ask for they make it happen e.g. me seeing my brother in prison".

"Listen well. Lots of people to talk to if I am in trouble".

"They are good at helping me talk about things".

"I don't know".

Right;

- I am in the right placement.*
- Education is positive. I will be going to College in September.*
- Contact could be better and arranging it takes a while. For example, two CLA Reviews ago it was agreed I could have contact with my younger siblings. I am still waiting.*
- Health, people come to see me at school to discuss health.*
- I have CLA medicals, yearly.*
- I get more than I am entitled to. For example, my carer rewarded me at exam time with new clothing.*

Wrong;

- No follow up after my CLA Review.*
- Not telling me my IRO had left again.*
- My PA, I saw her at a meeting when she introduced herself. I sent her a message about my National Insurance Number – she didn't contact me back or made contact with me. She left and I didn't know for 6 weeks that she had left.*
- The PA called my carers when she was at a funeral and kept calling. She didn't call me directly. My SW told me I now have a new PA but she hasn't contacted me.*

What could be better?

- SW leaving without taking the time to say goodbye. For example, when my IRO left (SH) she sent a letter to all her young people to say goodbye. SW's and PA's should do the same.*
- Some SW's don't turn up, don't say why or apologise. They should call in advance to cancel, there is a lack of respect and I have been left waiting, it's not Okay.*

"I believe you're trying to do what's best for me even if I don't see it but communication needs improving and let me know what's happening with decisions that have been made without me".

"The Council are doing the right thing by supporting me and doing their job as they should but also as the wrong side of it they do not help me as much as I need with some things and the boundaries are way too high and they expect too much most times".

"I think the council is doing everything correct, such as organising events for CiC, putting colours into the booklets, making people feel welcome to places even if they have never been there before".

"This is the first time I have had anything from the Council so there is no right or wrong at this moment in time".

"I am very grateful to everyone who supported me to have a good life here".

"I will feel good if I am more free".

"I don't want to be prohibited in too many things".

"I want to be exposed to society and information".

"Let us see our family".

"Make sure I am safe by social worker and IRO: Rose".

"Nothing".

"The Council have been doing a lot for me lately like getting in touch with my mum but last time I've spoken to someone privately was about two to three months ago and lately I've been bottling up my emotions and most days I feel like I want to non stop crying".

"Not enough contact/family visits".

"You support me and see me. Also you make sure I have a safe place to live and you make sure I'm happy".

"Too much meetings - then they leave this doesn't make me feel like a family".

"My schooling and the people I live with".

"Everything right, nothing wrong".

"Nothing you are doing everything wrong"



How could we improve our service to you?

"Nothing".

"It's ok now, I do ask for stuff and it happens but slowly e.g. trial back to dads, it took three years. I am having contact but I am not going back".

"Tell me when meetings are on in advance".

"Letter to us when staff leave, we are kept informed of a change in staff".

"Letting us have the telephone numbers of SW staff in case we need to contact them. I have JA's and know how to contact her".

"Telephone list for young people of the important contacts (IRO, SW, PA etc.). So, if we have a problem we know who to contact".

"Communication, share information that I want shared with mum and dad".

"The council could improve more by giving me more support and not come down on me like a ton of bricks. And also instead of rushing into things give me time to think about it".

"You can't".

"As said in the question above there is no improvement needed at this moment in time".

"By Sharon listening to me".

"Stop mailing me stuff if possible".

"You could send out my social worker every two weeks so that if I ever have anything to think about or say I could let it all out".

"More family visits".

"For meetings to be on time as me and my family might have plans for the rest of the day, also I don't really want to stick around answering questions I've answered before".

"Stick to appointments that we don't need".

"More choice for my parents to make without having to ask".

"I don't know".

"Not sure".

"You can't you're perfect".

"Move me to Swindon (but you wouldn't do that because ur stuck up)"

What do YOU feel we could do to support you better?

Three young people recorded that there wasn't anything they felt we could do to support them better.

"Meetings more often".

"Share information, keep telling young people about the CiCC".

"Prepare us for meetings so we know what to expect".

"Print the Participation Newsletter in colour, it's easier and more interesting to read".

"To provide a stable staff, SW are meant to stay but we know agency staff will may leave. Keep us informed".

"Start life Story when we first come into care. (I still don't know why I am in care, why I couldn't live with Dad. I have asked lots of time and am told 'he wasn't a stable parent'. My Dad has passed now, so I don't want to know now as this may affect my memory of him".

"Not let people throw me around from pillar to post care home to care home because of funding if you knew you couldn't fund it why put me there in the first place".

"Give me time to think about things and make decisions myself and be able to be more independent and free with my words instead of them being changed around and put into different words".

"Nothing".

"Handbook and possibly discount vouchers for doing things in the holidays".

"I want to learn and integrate with my new life better".

"I can have some money to spend and buy things for my life weekly more than £10".

"By Sharon answering when Terry emails her about family time".

"Help with anger, help understand".

"You could support me better by helping me handle my emotions so that every little thing gets to me and makes me feel like rubbish after everything and then it all gets to me and makes me feel like I don't want to live".

"Stop changing social workers as that does get on my nerves. Stop asking for contact because the answer is always going to be NO!"

"Nothing apart from don't make promises you can't keep (support worker)".

"Don't know".

"Don't keep changing social workers all the time".

"Nothing".

"Nothing because ur support is crap"

How is your life compared with other children you know who aren't in care?

"Still do the same things".

"I feel like it is a lot worse compared to some of my friends in school that are not in care".

"No difference".

"Life is different when you are care. Things with phones and what kids in care can't have. Kids not in care are allowed social media. I am not allowed Facebook/Snapchat as I am 'vulnerable', all my friends have them, I am 16 years old. It's so annoying".

"Not all kids in care are vulnerable and most would know what to do if they were being bullied. The Police gave a talk at school about bullying and the internet".

"They say I am not old enough to have Snapchat/Facebook, you have to be 13 years old to open an account. I am 16 years old and will be 17 years old next year".

"When in my last placement, as a kids in care the foster carer doesn't get that much money. There is a set amount for clothing which can be used for activities, but young people don't know that. I have to save to buy nice clothes and my foster carer gives me money to buy trainers. Trainers are expensive so we have to work out a way to buy trainers".

"If you're not a kid in care you get nice clothes and trainers. Kids in care are bullied because of what they wear, image is important as is peer pressure".

"More access to money".

"Foster carers have to check your phone. If my carer feels the need then she will check my phone".

"Don't really understand that question but it's very difficult to make friends or see family. When your in care there's restrictions on everything if I was in a relationship I couldn't keep it from them because they will find out in the end then run!"

"My life compared to other children who I know who aren't in care is completely different as they don't have a time to be in when they go out they can do things more often and be trusted".

"I think it is the same".

"Better behaved than them I don't do drugs or sell them. I also get treated the same as a person that isn't in care cause I get treated as family".

"I don't know who aren't in care".

"Good but I need more permission".

"Different with children in care and not".

"Rubbish because they can tell their parents everything and I feel that I can't trust my carers with everything and others can feel like if they are in a troubled or have something on their mind they can comfort you until you're better but I feel like I get comforted for a bit before being left alone".

"My life is good".

"My life is very similar compared to other children who aren't in care the only difference is they aren't in care. Sandra and Resh are basically my mum and dad at least I feel like they are".

"Same".

"Perfect, magnificent, sweet".

"Don't know, more rules to keep us safe".

"Same I'm treated the same anyway".

"Different".



Themes from the consultation are:

One young person wrote the following about how they feel - *"It's like a heart monitor there's ups and downs it's when the line goes ----- straight you should worry"*.

Children and young people feel that there are ups and downs

Amazing

Children and young people's care experience is mixed

Children and young people are offered good activities

Children and young people are happy with the opportunities and want more opportunities

Communication needs to be improved

We need to follow up on the actions following a CLA Review

Children and young people want to be informed when their Social Worker/PA/IRO leaves the Local Authority

Issues regarding contact with family

Share contact details of professionals

There is a demand on children and young people to attend meetings

Emotional support

Inequality in terms of access to internet, social media, phones, clothes and levels of freedom

Trust issues



Questions young people would like to ask the Corporate Parenting Board

“What are you going to do if I don’t feel comfortable in my placement, how can you support me?”

“How can I have contact quicker?”

“What is your role?”

“Can you explain what you do?”

“How are you going to include kids outside of Swindon in the things you do?”

“What is the corporate parenting board? (and do you actually agree in taking kids away from their familys for fun because it sure looks that way!?)”

“Why is the council so strict on care kids?”

“How long will I get support for?”

“What support will I get after I’m 18?”

“I can’t think yet, but I will ask when I have”

“Why do I have so many social workers?”

“Can I have a new bedroom?”

