

One minute guide

October 2016

Corporate Parenting

What is it?

When a child's parents or family cannot provide appropriate care for them and the child becomes looked after, the Local Authority assumes parental responsibility for that child when a care order is made. Corporate parenting is the term generally used to describe this legal responsibility, but the concept is wider than that; good corporate parenting emphasises that we should have the same interest in and aspirations for children and young people in care (or leaving care) as we would for our own children. The term corporate parenting appeared in legislation for the first time in the [Children Act 1989](#).

We know from national research that children and young people in care can be vulnerable to poorer outcomes than their peers. Corporate parents champion the rights of young people in care and care leavers and support the practitioners working with those young people to help improve outcomes and 'narrow the gap' between young people in care, care leavers, and their peers.

Who are corporate parents, and what are their responsibilities?

Everybody working with or representing the interests of children and young people in care is a corporate parent, and should be aware of their responsibilities. In practical terms, being a corporate parent means advocating on behalf of children and young people in care to ensure they get the support they need to achieve the best outcomes, and challenging any poor practice.

Corporate parenting responsibilities are not limited to the Children's Social Care; the whole of the local authority, as well as relevant partner agencies, have a duty to ensure that children and young people in care have their needs recognised and appropriately met, in a way which does not disadvantage them in relation to their non looked after peers.

With thanks to Leeds Social Care

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