

# Care Leaver Strategy 2020-23

## Salford City Council

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## **Our Vision**

In its role as a Corporate Parent Salford City Council wants to achieve the same good outcomes for our looked after children and care leavers as any parent would wish for their children. We want our looked after children and care leavers to have similar opportunities and chances in life to those of children growing up in their own families.

We will seek to provide looked after children and care leavers with the support and help they need to reach their potential during childhood and into adult life. This includes the provision of good quality placements and access to good education and high-quality health care.

Planning for gradual development to independence should be age appropriate and be throughout any child's life. There is no difference for a young person who has been brought up in care, and the expectation that each child/young person will be supported in acquiring and developing independence skills across all aspects of their life.

Like any good parent we will assist our young people through Further and Higher Education or into employment or training opportunities, and ensure that they have somewhere suitable to live once they leave their care placement. To do this we provide every young person aged between 16 and 25 who have eligibility for leaving care services with an allocated worker (all those under 18 and a looked after child will be allocated to a qualified social worker).

It is expected that all young people eligible to access the leaving care service will be offered support and guidance, and work with other agencies to help the young person gain access to wider support services. These services may include assistance from adult social care and health services for care leavers who have learning difficulties or mental health problems.

## **Our Objectives**

- To embrace the Care Leaver Charter.
- To motivate and assist each young person to reach their full potential for education, training and employment so that they can achieve independence.
- To promote their good health by encouraging a healthy sexual, emotional and physical lifestyle.
- To facilitate and support them to access and sustain suitable accommodation.
- To help them to maintain positive family and social/friendship relationships.

- To assist them to be financially independent, and be able to budget, and to save and manage their money.
- To provide them with an allocated worker to support them with their aspirations
- To take on board and act in response to the messages young people expressed at the regional Care Experienced Conference in April 2019

## **Salford's looked after children and care leavers**

Until recently Salford's looked after children population had seen a steady increase to a high in 2015 of 589. This increase has been reviewed and audited to establish what this trend was. There are a number of reasons for this rise including increased national awareness of children's safeguarding, an increasing birth rate and more general demographic changes.

Salford has a higher than average profile of looked after children within the older age range; these figures include Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers and an increase in young people coming into care through the Southwark Judgement.

## **Our Corporate Parenting responsibilities**

Effective corporate parenting requires knowledge and awareness of the needs of children and young people who are looked after and the services they receive. This is a shared responsibility for the Council as a whole. The role of the corporate parent is to:

- a) Receive and consider accurate and timely management information reports on the numbers, characteristics and needs of looked after children and care leavers
- b) Receive briefings on new national and local initiatives designed to improve children's and young people's life chances
- d) Gain knowledge of services based on direct involvement and listen to the views of young people looked after and members of the Children in Care Council (Known in Salford as 'Fight For Change')
- e) Monitor and review progress on the delivery of the care leaver Pledge
- f) Ensure that decisive action is taken to address any shortcomings in the services provided to children and young people

### **NOTE:**

The Children in Care Council (known in Salford as the 'Fight for Change Council') directly supports the Corporate Parenting Board to measure and monitor the effectiveness and quality of 'Corporate Parenting' in Salford. The group meet on a fortnightly basis; they have a young person chairing the meeting and each member of the Fight for Change Council meet regularly with senior managers to discuss important issues affecting children and young people in care. The Fight for Change Council meets with the Corporate Parenting Board four times per year.

# The Legal Context

## Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

This Act provides the legal framework for the policy and arrangements for young people leaving the care of the local authority, and after care services. The local authority has a duty to prepare looked after young people for the time when they leave care. Children's Social Care has a range of duties and powers to provide after care advice and assistance to those eligible. Good Corporate Parents will provide young people with help and support to access education, employment and training opportunities and to find accommodation suitable to meet their needs.

## Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and Care Leavers' (England) Regulations 2010

The 2010 Regulations clarified the requirement of the 2008 Act for looked after children moving from accommodation regulated by the Care Standards Act 2000 (or semi-independent accommodation) into other accommodation to have a statutory review chaired by their Independent Reviewing Officer. It also introduced the requirement for local authorities to pay a Higher Education Bursary for *former relevant* young people and the right of care leavers under 25 years of age wanting to access education or training to resume support from a personal advisor.

## Children and Social Work Act 2017

Extension of the support available to all care leavers under 25 years of age regardless of their education, employment or training status. It also introduced the requirement for local authorities to publicise their 'local offer' to care leavers and to encourage annual contact up to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## Definitions

### a) Eligible Young Persons

These are young persons aged 16 or 17 years who have been looked after for a period or periods totalling at least 13 weeks starting from their 14th birthday and are still looked after children. The Council has a duty to support these young people up to the age of 18, wherever they are living, and beyond into independence.

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 (Volume 2) requires that a thorough assessment of the young person's needs is undertaken to inform the actions for achievement in the Pathway Plan, that this plan is reviewed, and that a worker is appointed to the young person.

### b) Relevant Young Persons

These are young persons aged 16 or 17 who have already left care but were previously looked after for a total of at least 13 weeks from the age of 14, and at some time during their 16th or 17th year. A young person is also *relevant* if, having been looked after for three months or more, he or she is then detained after their 16th birthday either in a hospital, remand centre, young offenders' institution or in a secure training centre. There is a duty to support *relevant* young people up to the age of 18 years, wherever they are living. The Care Leavers Regulations 2010 require the Council to remain in contact with relevant young people, and to undertake the responsibilities outlined in a) above.

#### c) *Former* Relevant Young Persons

These are young people aged 18 to 25 years who have been *eligible* and/or *relevant* and were placed in care subject to a Care Order, or remanded into care, or accommodated by voluntary agreement. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 enables these young people to continue receiving a service beyond their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and in some cases until they are 25. In setting out goals and actions for achievement, the Pathway Plan should also set out timescales for completion. This means it will be clear when the Plan will expire and therefore leaving care services can lawfully cease.

*Former relevant* young people aged between 21 and under 25 years of age remaining open to Salford Leaving Care Service will be allocated a worker based on the assessment of their needs and circumstances. The Pathway Plan will be updated to reflect the support to be provided.

## Care Planning

Transition to adulthood for looked after children should not just start on their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday; preparation for a time when they will no longer be looked after should be integral to the care planning process throughout their entire time in care.

The 1989 Act requires that a pathway plan must be prepared for all eligible children and continued for all relevant and former relevant children. Each young person's pathway plan will be based on and include their care plan and will set out the actions that must be taken by the responsible authority, the young person, their parents, their carers and the full range of agencies, so that each young person is provided with the services they need to enable them to achieve their aspirations and make a successful transition to adulthood.

The needs assessment is the basis for the Pathway Plan and should be concluded within three months of the young person's 16th birthday. As well as starting to plan for the future, including Higher Education and career ambitions, this will be an opportunity to establish whether the young person has special needs that ought to be considered as they enter adulthood and to ensure that other services such as Adult Social Care and Housing can begin their planning. The assessment of needs should address the following:

- The nature and level of contact and personal support to be provided to the young person.
- Details of the accommodation the young person is to occupy.
- A detailed plan for the education or training of the young person.
- How the responsible authority will assist the young person in relation to employment or other purposeful activity or occupation.
- The support to be provided to enable the young person to develop and sustain appropriate family and social relationships.
- A programme to develop the practical and other skills necessary for the young person to live independently.
- The financial support to be provided to the young person, in particular where it is to be provided to meet his accommodation and maintenance needs.
- The health needs, including any mental health needs, of the young person, and how they are to be met.
- Contingency plans for action to be taken by the responsible authority should the Pathway Plan for any reason cease to be effective.

The views of the young person must be recorded and incorporated into the Pathway Plan and a copy of the plan must be given to the young person.

The Pathway Plan and the needs assessment is reviewed by a statutory review chaired by the young person's Independent Review Officer until the young person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The partnership working between social worker, family members, carers, Virtual School, designated LAC nurse, and other relevant professionals is vital if actions and outcomes are to be achieved. If the young person remains placed in non-regulated accommodation, the Pathway Plan should be reviewed within 28 days of that placement, then after 3 months, and thereafter every 6 months.

### **Relevant and Former Relevant Review**

It is important to ensure all care leavers are receiving the appropriate support. This support can be identified within their pathway plan. The Relevant and Former Relevant Review Officer will chair a Relevant and Former Relevant Review and have access to the pathway plan. An opportunity will be given to the young person to chair their own review.

Young people will be encouraged to attend their Relevant and Former Relevant Review, with their allocated Next Step worker and significant others. The discussion will focus upon service delivery and how the young person's needs are being met, e.g. their welfare and progress.

This includes establishing that the young person has settled into their accommodation and accessing the community/specific support available.

We will endeavour to organise a review to take place within 28 days of any relevant young person's placement move.

## Education

A good standard of education is a key driver towards achieving positive employment outcomes in adulthood. However, nationally there remains a significant gap between the educational achievements of care leavers and their peers.

All leaving care services are required to report their EET and NEET figures to Central Government and these are published in the National Tables. Reporting requirements cover care leavers who are 17 - 25 year of age. Destinations are reported within a window around young people's birthdays (3 months before and 1 month after).

The Salford figure for those engaged in some form of education, employment and training was 76% (November 2019). This compares favourably to the national figure of care leaver at 49% (Source: National tables).

18.5% (44 out of 238) of care leavers from Salford go into Higher Education compared with a National percentage of 6% (Source: Leaving Care destinations: December 2019)

A priority for Salford City Council is, therefore, to ensure that children in care and care leavers get the support they need from schools, colleges and universities to maximise their educational attainment and employment opportunities.

## What we have done

- The Virtual School, Corporate Parent Officer and leaving care service support care leavers placed in and out of Borough to access further and higher education courses.
- The Virtual School, Corporate Parent Officer and the leaving care service work closely with neighbouring colleges and universities to help them to understand the needs of care leavers
- At Salford College, bimonthly meetings take place to discuss attendance and attainments of Salford children in care and care leavers.
- The Corporate Parent Officer helps young people prepare CV's and provides support with job search and applications. He also assists with study skills and interview preparation.
- To incentivise young people to continue in Further Education the leaving care service will ensure students obtain access to their bursary and those in Higher Education to receive the incentive currently at £15 per week
- All workers are aware of the support available for care leavers' and are utilising this to support care leavers to understand Higher Education options and the range of support available. Salford Leaving Care Team received a development presentation delivered by MMU and Salford University to the staff group (January 2020)

## **What will we do:**

- Develop planning pathway for SEN/EHCP
- Develop a mentoring scheme for care leavers thinking about going into Higher Education.
- Establish a monthly meeting to review the NEET cohort.
- Recognise and celebrate the achievements of care leavers in Salford.

## **Impact of Measures**

- 74.9% of care leavers reported to be in some form of education, employment and training. (Source: National tables December 2019)
- 31.5% (109 of 345) Lac and care leavers in Further Education (Source: Leaving Care destinations: December 2019)
- 18.5% (44 of 238) care leavers in Higher Education (Source: Leaving Care destinations: December 2019)

## Employment

The ability to successfully progress into appropriate education, employment or training (EET) opportunities is an important factor in maintaining stability in looked after children and care leavers' lives. The benefits of participation in positive activities are much wider than just monetary reward. Studies show how it can provide structure, a sense of purpose, achievement, self-confidence and personal responsibility for young people.

Salford has traditionally had a strong record in supporting their looked after children and care leavers into EET provision. However the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is still a concern and an area of our work where we want to make further inroads. Long term unemployment is a particular issue for some of our young people who are unable to compete for mainstream opportunities and lack the motivation to participate in 'personal development' to prepare them for the labour market.

Next Step is working with colleagues within the Council and partner organisations (including Jobcentre Plus and local learning providers) to improve the range of provision looked after children and care leavers can access. Furthermore, we will explore new ways of encouraging some of our most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people to take part in activities to improve their life chances.

## What we have done

- We have developed a field on CareFirst to record and monitor all the education, employment and training destinations of post-16 looked after children and care leavers.
- A joint-working protocol between Next Step and Jobcentre Plus has been agreed to focus on care leavers claiming state benefits.
- A 'Single Point of Contact' for care leavers has been established at Salford Jobcentre plus Offices to ensure a consistent and good quality response.
- A Salford Jobcentre Plus Officer is now stationed within the leaving care service a minimum of one day per week.
- Ensured all care leavers claiming Jobseeker's Allowance and Universal Credit are identified with the Jobcentre Plus marker.
- The leaving care service employs a Corporate Parenting Officer who is a qualified Careers Adviser.
- We have a qualified Connexions Careers Advisor based at the leaving care service for 2-days per week to work with LAC and care leaver cohort.
- GMYN continue to provide a range of activities to increase Salford care leavers' confidence, self-esteem and independent living skills. Furthermore, GMYN provide an additional part-time member of staff to offer help with employability skills and sourcing suitable opportunities.

- Salford Leaving Care Service currently has three care leaver graduates working within the team. Another care leaver graduate is currently on placement with Salford LAC Team to increase her chances of employment with a local authority.
- Salford LAC and care leavers are referred to Salford Futures where appropriate to access in-house Traineeships and work experience placements.
- Salford City Council currently has eight LAC and care leavers employed through its Apprenticeship programme. Three of these will be progressing into permanent positions in January 2020 (two being with the new Route 29 service).
- Salford Leaving Care Team regularly carries out an analysis of its NEET cohort to help with matching to opportunities and sourcing suitable provision.

## **What will we do**

- Continue to develop a strategy for increasing the number of in-house Apprenticeships and work experience opportunities for LAC and care leavers.
- Ensure Jobcentre Plus staff are aware of those care leavers claiming Universal Credit and other state benefits. This will help avoid sanctions and other problems with payments.
- To produce monthly destination statistics to help identify gaps in provision throughout the year. These will be accompanied by regular updates of risk factors to help with analyses of our NEET cohort.
- Develop and deliver workshops on employability skills, the world of work and what employers are looking for.
- Encourage local employers to provide opportunities (i.e. employment, Apprenticeships, Traineeships and work experience) through Salford City Council's commissioning and procurement arrangements.

## **Impact of Measures**

- 99.6% of care leavers in contact with the Next Step service (December 2019)
- Increasing number of young people attending employability skills workshops
- Number of LAC and care leavers in Apprenticeships (17 in December 2019)
- Number of LAC and care leavers in Traineeships (3 in December 2019)
- Number of in-house Council Apprenticeships accessed by LAC and care leavers (8 in December 2019)
- Number of LAC and care leavers in Further Education (109 in December 2019)
- Increasing numbers of young people in Higher Education (44 in December 2019)

- Satisfaction of care leavers in Apprenticeships (Source: Leaving Care destinations: December 2019)

## Financial Assistance

When you do not have the support of family to fall back on, particularly when having to meet the challenge of independent living at a much younger age than your peers, having access to timely financial help is crucial.

Salford City Council are committed to ensuring that care leavers are adequately supported financially in their transition from care to adulthood to enable young people leaving care to have the same opportunities to fulfil their potential as their peers.

## What we have done

- We have developed a 'Guide for Care Leavers' and 'Local Offer' to support Looked After Children and care leavers to better understand their financial entitlements. The guides are also an information tool to support young people as they work towards independence.
- The Next Step worker will use the expertise of the DWP 'single point of contact' to undertake financial assessments for all Salford care leavers.
- To incentivise young people to continue in education, employment and training post 19.
- The Pathway Plan has been revised to ensure a more focused and personalised approach to budgeting.
- We have undertaken work with Salford Jobcentre Plus to develop a joint working protocol specifically in respect of care leavers.
- A 'Single Point of Contact' for care leavers has been established at Salford Job Centre plus offices to ensure a consistent and good quality response.
- The Corporate Parent will record referrals and data relating to care leavers as a specific group to support future analysis and understanding of service demand. This will also support us to track outcomes for our care leavers.
- The City Of Salford has signed up to the Care leavers Charter (2012) and the Setting Up Home Allowance (leaving care grant) payments of at least £2,000.

## What will we do

- We will embed the joint working protocol with Salford Jobcentre Plus
- Ensure the finance policy is accessible and online.
- All young people are provided with a 'young person's guide' and 'local offer' when introduced to the Next Step Leaving Care Service.
- We will undertake an annual review of the Financial Provision document.
- We will offer 1:1 sessions to care leavers to support them to develop their budgeting skills.

- Undertake an audit of the support and service delivery available to young people in 2020.

## **Impact of Measures**

- Care leavers report they are confident in managing their income and reduce the risk of falling into debt.
- There is good sign up to the 1:1 sessions offered by the Salford DWP single point of contact to maximise income.
- The OFSTED inspection (2015) reported care leavers have a good understanding of their financial entitlements and feel supported in learning budgeting strategies.
- The relevant and former relevant review process indicates young people are informed about their entitlements.

## Health

Children often enter the care system with a poorer level of physical and mental health than their peers, and their longer-term outcomes remain worse.

Care leavers require encouragement and support to access appropriate health services, particularly in respect of mental health. Care leavers also face difficulties around the transition from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to adult services.

## What we have done

- We have a well established substance misuse worker based within the leaving care team on a full time basis. This provides direct support to our care leaver cohort in respect of drug screening and substance misuse interventions.
- Close links with the Teenage Pregnancy Team to support expectant care leavers.
- Close links with the Teenage Pregnancy Worker for fathers to support males with parental responsibilities.
- A weekly drop in session with the Looked After Children Health Nurse for support and advice.
- All leaving care staff have been trained about Early intervention and Prevention resources particularly for young parents.
- Young people are able to access a health information booklet on reaching 18 years.
- Ensure care leavers have access to a GP.
- Ensure care leavers are encouraged to enrol with a dentist and optician.

## What will we do

- Ensure all care leavers receive a copy of their health summary when they turn 18.
- Review the protocol and guidance for transitions to adult mental health.
- Consider specific mental health provision for care leavers.
- Include care leavers as a specific cohort in the LAC Health Strategy Meeting.
- Provide GP access to a resident GP based at Next Step
- Provide free prescriptions to all Salford care leavers

## **Impact of Measures**

- Care Leavers now receive a Health Summary (health passport) when aged 18
- All care leavers are annually screened by the substance misuse worker

## Housing

Care leavers are a vulnerable group of young adults who have particular needs in relation to housing and homelessness. Around a quarter of those living on the streets have a background in care.<sup>6</sup> Nationally the majority of care leavers leave care by the age of 18 and rising demands on social housing and other accommodation is making it increasingly difficult for young people to find suitable accommodation as they enter adulthood.

Becoming independent is a challenge for all young people as they take on responsibility for themselves. Care leavers are leaving a comparatively supportive environment earlier than other young people and are less prepared to leave and often have little support managing their new lives. In some cases care leavers move to independence at the age of 18 compared to their peers who on average leave home at 27<sup>7</sup>.

Historically in Salford a mechanism known as 'continuing care' had been in place for care leavers to remain with their former foster carers post 18 while in education. Since July 2014 with the introduction of "staying put", arrangements are in place to ensure that care leavers can continue to live with and get support from their former foster carers.

In Salford the percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation was 95.6% in 2018/2019.

Statutory guidance is already clear that B&B accommodation is not considered to be suitable accommodation. In Salford no care leaver will be placed in a B&B by the leaving care service however social housing may use emergency B&B placements in exceptional circumstances and limited to no more than 2 working days.

The legal framework for care leavers aims to make sure that they receive the right support and services in their transition to adulthood, including access to accommodation. General homelessness legislation also provides a safety net for young care leavers experiencing homelessness.

The legislation most relevant to care leavers' accommodation needs is the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, which imposes accommodation duties on local authorities to support certain categories of looked-after children and care leavers.

In providing accommodation for young care leavers, the regulations and guidance stipulate that local authorities should:

- Avoid moving and disrupting young people who are settled
- Assess young people's needs and prepare them for any move
- Offer a choice of accommodation (where practicable)
- Provide a support package to go with the accommodation
- Have a contingency plan in case accommodation arrangements break down

For many young people, moving straight from care to independent living is too big a step. A young care leaver may be able to make a more successful transition if there is a choice of returning home for a short time, remaining with a former carer, or moving to supported lodgings or to a semi-independent option with some support, depending on the young person's needs.

## What we have done

- Maintained and commissioned a 16+ accommodation facility and a specialist vulnerable unit.
- Replaced the continuing care policy and developed and launched the Staying Put Policy.
- Worked with the Salford Family Placement Team and Foster Care Forum to raise awareness within foster care circles and sessions on Staying Put.
- Developed twice a year training sessions for staying put carers.
- Developed and re-launched the Joint Protocol for Homeless 16 & 17 year olds.
- Looked after children and care leavers receive the necessary housing points to secure appropriate social tenancies.
- Make representations at the Homeless Strategic Monitoring Group.
- Established a dedicated Tenancy Support Worker to work with young people leaving care and setting up home.

## **What will we do**

- Monitor the broad menu of housing options available to care leavers.
- Review the implementation of 'Staying Put'.
- The leaving care service will ensure they do not place care leavers in bed & breakfast accommodation, however under exceptional circumstances social housing will use bed and breakfast accommodation on an emergency basis for no longer than 2 days.
- Monitor the safety of accommodation being offered by the 16 + framework

## **Impact of Measures**

- The leaving care service do not place looked after children or care leavers in B&B
- Benchmark figure from 2018-19 – 95.6% young people were in appropriate accommodation.
- Increasing numbers year on year of care leavers in Staying Put arrangements (36 November 2019).
- The relevant and former relevant review monitoring system reports that the majority of young people are happy with their accommodation offer and feel safe in their accommodation.

<sup>6</sup> Source: CRISIS: [The hidden truth about homelessness: Experiences of single homelessness in England](#)

<sup>7</sup> Office for National Statistics: Young adults living with parents in the UK.

## **Justice System**

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and Home Office (HO) recognise that young adults who have been in care can be particularly vulnerable as they transition into adulthood, particularly if they are in the criminal justice system. They are also a particularly vulnerable group that are at risk of being drawn into crime. Equally we know that care leavers can be particularly vulnerable to becoming a victim of crime, including in some cases falling victim to grooming and exploitation.

- Children in care and care leavers account for less than 1% of the wider population.
- Over 25% of the adult prison population has previously been in care.
- 49% of young men under the age of 21 in the Criminal Justice System have spent time in care.
- 27% of young men in custody have spent time in care.
- 40% of girls in the 15-18 age group in custody have spent some time in local care<sup>8</sup>

### **What we have done**

- LASPO policy and process has been developed
- Established and maintained links with the Salford Youth Offending Service (YOS), Salford National Probation Service (NPS) and Cheshire and Greater Manchester Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) Local Delivery Unit.
- Develop a working protocol between Salford Leaving Care Service, YOS, NPS and CPC. This encourages the sharing of information between services and joint approaches.

### **What will we do**

- Ensure the sharing of information when a young person receives a sentence or placed on remand with the courts, NPS, CRC and the prison. This includes any risk assessment and pathway plan.
- Ensure robust multi-agency exit plans are in place for all care leavers at point of discharge from custody.
- Ensure that the voice of the young person in custody is heard (Pathway Plans, risk assessments, Detention/Community Plans and relevant and former relevant reviews).

### **Impact of Measures**

- A constant challenge is to reduce the number of young people entering custody
- Care leavers in custody are supported when discharged in to the community and offered the opportunity to engage in purposeful activity.

<sup>8</sup>Source: Contact: [Care Leavers, LAC and the Criminal Justice System](#)

### **Ongoing Support**

Care leavers require support and guidance before and after they turn 18. Care leavers unlike their peers may not have networks of support outside of their local authority. We know that

young people leaving care frequently feel isolated, lonely and lacking the safety net of someone to talk to and advise them in a crisis.

## **What we have done**

- Developed a financial policy to clarify care leaver entitlement.
- Launched the Looked After Children Care Leaver Pledge.
- Pathway Plans explore positive activity and social engagement.
- Maintain contact and visit all care leavers on a bi-monthly basis as a minimum.
- The Pathway plan is updated as a minimum of 6 monthly or due to a significant change/event.

## **What will we do**

- Develop a reporting mechanism to ensure the Director of Children's Services scrutiny of the discharge of 16 and 17 year olds leaving care.
- Review the Looked After Children and Care Leaver Pledge on an annual basis.
- Update and inform the Children in Care Council known as 'fight for Change' to appraise policies and support available for care leavers.
- Develop the 'champion' model to match care leavers with a suitable champion to provide a consistent and stable relationship in their lives.
- Hold regular social and positive activity events for care leavers while celebrating their achievements.
- Provide continuing advice and support to all of our care leavers whenever it is required.

## **Impact of Measures**

- Maximise and aim for 100% of care leavers in touch
- Embedded within the Salford Leaving care Service is a culture to maintain regular contact with care leavers and establish purposeful relationships
- Feedback from the Relevant and Former Relevant Review system regarding social work intervention and leaving care support

## **Voice of the Care Leaver**

The 'Voice of the Care Leaver' has been highlighted as a priority area in all Children's Social Care Service Plans. For children and young people to become involved, practitioners need to

be able to work in a way which enables participation and ultimately affects change or improvement within the organisation.

## **What we have done**

- Worked with young people to develop and launch the Looked After Children and Care Leaver Pledge.
- Gathered and reviewed informal feedback from care leavers.
- Run drop in sessions for looked after children and care leavers.
- Audit of Pathway Plans to review the participation of young people.
- Involved care leavers in training for foster carers.
- Involvement of care leavers during the interviewing process of leaving care staff and key local authority professionals.
- Involved care leavers in the development of local protocols (Staying Put and Homeless Protocol).
- Involvement of care leavers in the development of strategies and materials including the care leaver health passport and homelessness strategy.

## **What will we do**

- Ensure the voice of the young person is evidenced during their pathway review.
- Ensure the voice of the young person is evidenced in all Pathway Plans.
- Ensure all care leavers have signed their Pathway Plan and offered a copy of the plan.
- Ensure care leavers are made aware of their rights and entitlements.
- Respect the hopes and wishes of all of our care leavers and to take their views and suggestions seriously.

## **Impact of Measures**

- High % of signed Pathway Plans by care leavers.
- Attendance at Child in Care Council (Fight for change).

- 79.93% (2019/2020) Attendance at their relevant and former relevant review.
- 97.91% (2019/2020) Provided a response following their relevant and former relevant review