

Corporate Parenting Newsletter



December 2018

Our Promises to Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers

Bury Council and Partners promise to care and support children and young people in their care as they would their own children. What this means is set out in **Our Promise to Children and Young People in Care** and the **Care leavers Charter**.

Responsibility for meeting the promises rests with all Council Members and officers of the Council and partner agencies (set out in Children & Social Work Act 2017) and is monitored by Corporate Parenting Board in consultation with the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum.

Bury Corporate Parenting Strategy 2017-2020

This is an important document which details how Bury Council, the health service and all our partners, will act as responsible parents to children and young people in care, as well as those who have left our care and are entitled to our support. Find all this information at www.bury.gov.uk/childrenincare

Christmas Gift Campaign

Bury Council employees were asked to donate a gift to enable all Care Leavers to have something to open on Christmas Day. The Campaign was highly successful with lots of gifts received. Thank you to everyone who donated.

Council News:

The Council have confirmed the permanent appointments of Geoff Little to the role of Chief Executive of Bury Council / Accountable Officer of Bury CCG and Karen Dolton to the role of Executive Director of Children and Young People

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Chair of Bury Corporate Parenting Board



Corporate Parenting Week in Bury

The first Bury Corporate Parenting Week was held from 10-14 December. The aim was to raise awareness and understanding across Bury Council Employees, Councillors and partners of their responsibility and role as a corporate parent. This awareness campaign will be an annual event managed by the Corporate Parenting Board.

Believe and Achieve Awards Ceremony and Greater Manchester Care Leavers Awards

The Believe and Achieve Awards was held at the Elizabethan Suite on 17th October to celebrate the achievements of children in care and care leavers. The event was a great success with many young people and guests in attendance. There were 128 nominations for awards across a number of categories including education, employment, training, sports, personal achievement, and creative arts. Well done to everyone who was nominated and those who received awards.

At the Greater Manchester Care Leaver Awards, Bury Young People had received the second highest number of nominations for awards. Two young people from Bury gave speeches at the event and all those in attendance received a goody bag and certificate.



Fostering Team

The Foster Carer Forum took place on Monday 15th October which was an opportunity for the senior management team to share news, service developments and updates with Foster Carers. It was a good opportunity for the carers to network and share ideas with the team.

The team have been raising the profile of the Supported Lodgings service via the Facebook page. The aim is to publicise the recruitment strategy and increase the number of Supported Lodgings providers.

www.facebook.com/fosterwithbury



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Corporate Parents can access online training with the Bury Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCB). Please follow the links for more information as to the courses available.

<http://courses.buryscbglobal.net/AvailableCoursesList.asp>

<http://www.safeguardingburychildren.org/>

Total Respect Training-

Total Respect Training is a one day course which is delivered by care experienced young people. The aim of the training is to give professionals and corporate parents a greater understanding of what it is like to be a young person in care and to make sure that a young person's views, wishes and feelings are central. To book a place contact Mike Nichols: m.nichols@bury.gov.uk

Summer events

The Fostering Team held their annual Summer Party for looked after children and Foster Carers on 15th August. The children thoroughly enjoyed the event where they got involved with football coaching skills, circus skills workshop, bouncy castle and also had face painting and glitter tattoos.

Throughout the summer holidays, the Fostering Team held various family friendly events in the parks across Bury. They did "pebble painting" activities where children decorated the pebbles and then hid them around the park for others to find. They publicised these events on the Facebook page (www.facebook.com/fosterwithbury) where members of the public messaged us to say they had found the pebbles too!

Christmas Party

The Foster Carer Christmas Party took place on 10th December 2018 at the Elizabethan Suite. The fostering service hold a Christmas party every year for Foster Carers and children, the party is a celebration of not only Christmas but of all the hard work Bury Foster carers do in looking after children who come in to Bury local authority care. The party consist of party food, a Childrens entertainer, dancing and a special visit from Father Christmas. Here are a few positive comments from foster carers of how much the party was enjoyed:

"I would just like to say big thank you to Paul, Emma, Sonia and the team for the Christmas party. It was amazing seeing the children's faces when they saw the teletubbies, it was a special moment that I will never forget. A big well done to you all and Merry Christmas"

"I just want to express my thanks to you all for the brilliant Christmas party last night, it was a huge success and the Children and young people had an absolute ball. It was a great night and thanks for all your hard work and efforts organising this and all the gift donations".

A selection of toys were donated by local business Woodcocks, Howarth and Nuttall solicitors – the team would like to thank them for this kind donation.



Good news story – there are 16 Care Leavers from Bury being supported to attend University in 2018

Take Over Day 23 November 2018

Secondary schools were asked to nominate young people in Bury's care to this full day event, which was held in the Bury Council Chambers. Seven schools nominated 14 young people aged 11 to 14 years. This year's theme involved taking over the Corporate Parenting Board. This is an important issue for the young people of the Children in Care Council, who attend all Board meetings to provide the voice of children and young people in care to discussions at the Board. Ten members of the Corporate Parenting Board plus 3 Independent Reviewing Officers attended the afternoon session.

Take Over Day gave the young attendees an opportunity to understand more about the role of the Corporate Parenting Board and to think about how they could more effectively influence change. This event enabled members of the Board to gain a better understanding about the issues that young people in care are struggling with and a chance to have a longer discussion about these issues.

The young people gave feedback to the Corporate Parenting Board on:-

- What qualities and skills the young people think Corporate Parents' should have.
- Through drama, young people highlighted issues that affect them: the difference between the way foster carers treat their own children compared with the ones who are looked after, having different Social Workers and not being introduced to new ones and the number of placement moves.
- A pictorial display of the life of a child in care from birth to 18 and some of the issues that affect them during their life. Again, placement moves and changes in Social Worker were a key point.

The Corporate Parents were invited to take part in a full question and answer session with the young people. Questions and discussions were along the themes of:-

- The role of a person on the Corporate Parenting Board
- Placements and the stability of them.
- The location of foster placements
- Changes in Social Worker
- Education support

Children in Care Council Trip to Donkey Sanctuary

On Wednesday 1st August, young people from CiCC set out on a reward trip to the Donkey Sanctuary. The Donkey Sanctuary offers Donkey Assisted Therapy sessions for young people. This was asked for as the young people have expressed an interest in getting a greater understanding of mental health so they can raise awareness on this topic in Bury.

Our young people arrived at the Sanctuary and were introduced to some of the keepers who worked there. They were taken into the area where the donkeys are trained and were given a 20 minute presentation on the donkey's lives. They were told about the sad and neglected donkeys that were rescued by them and how they had helped them recover and become the happy, friendly donkeys that we all saw. Our young people then had a chance to groom the donkeys, all of them got involved, some brushing their coats. Our young people really enjoyed it. Find out more at www.burychildrenincarecouncil.gov.uk



Children in Care Council Residential Trip to the Lake District



Care Leaver Offer

Bury's Care leaver Offer is now in its final draft format. This will form a firm Local Offer for Care Leavers which sets out the services available for all care leavers available in Bury. The six main areas to be covered in which councils should assist care leavers are:

- Health and Well-being
- Relationships
- Education and Training
- Employment
- Accommodation
- Participation in Society

The responsibility of the offer sits with the council's Chief Executive and Leader both to ensure the document reflects the breadth of services offered by the council and partners and demonstrates corporate parenting leadership. The Care Leaver Offer will be launched in January 2019.

Children in Care Council:

Our young people wanted to give a little back to all professionals who they feel have helped them while being in care. They designed Thank You Postcards to send to professionals. Our young people feel that this has been successful and they really enjoy writing the postcards to them. The post cards were made for the recognition of school teachers, social workers, IRO's, Family Support Workers. The post cards have been printed and are regularly being sent to professionals.

Another idea from CiCC were business cards, our young people believed the Children In Care Council was not promoted as much as it should be and felt something needed to be done about this. They decided on business cards which they all helped to design, they are being distributed and then will be promoting CiCC hopefully bringing in more attendees.

Dear Corporate Parents,

Everyone who works within Bury Council, NHS or a partner agency is our corporate parent and should take seriously the following that we wish to highlight.

We only get one chance at life and so we need guidance, support and an extra boost to help us achieve the aspirations we all aim for individually. We need all professionals to be consistent and reliable when building a trustworthy relationship with us.

We want a safe, fun and co-operative place to live with people who really care about us. However, it is important to emphasise that we do not get to live with our own families, they are still apart of us and are loved dearly. Therefore, we tend to worry and wonder what they are doing but also what may happen to them.

We are all unique so when it comes to school or college sometimes it may be difficult to concentrate, motivate and progress. This may be due to multiple factors such as not being academically strong, we have a lot of things happening in our lives compared to other kids and we may just simply not want to go. So we need this to be understood and we need help dealing with this. It is vital that you look from our perspectives as much as your own and place yourself in the positions we have been placed into, sometimes unwillingly. This will help you to understand that yes we do not want to be treated differently and want to be considered "normal" but under certain circumstances our behaviour may be due to reasons why we aren't like other kids.

We worry about what may happen in our futures and fear that we may not be as successful as those around us. We need support in finding jobs, finding accommodation and the ability to become completely independent if need be. More than anything we need to be cared for, respected and appreciated no matter what. If you don't than who else will? We are not just stats on a piece of paper, we aren't lacking in opportunities and we aren't considered as much as we should be. Every complaint, every promise and every aspiration should be taken seriously because it is what we deserve and what we should be getting from every corporate parent.

Thank you,

Claudia (age 17) Harley (age 17)

