



Bridgend Corporate Parenting Strategy

Our Plan for you..

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol





Foreword

Care experienced children, young people and care leavers have the right to be safe, healthy, to learn, have a wide range of opportunities and experiences offered to them and to thrive just like other children and young people. In Bridgend County Borough, we are committed to working collaboratively with all organisations to fulfil our corporate parenting responsibilities and support our children and young people so they feel respected, valued, cared for, and can reach their full potential in what they choose to do.

Our strategy has been co-produced with a group of our care experienced young people called the Bridgend Youth Voice Forum. They have been fully involved in selecting our priorities, what we will focus on improving, along with the design and content of the strategy. Our underpinning principle is 'nothing about you without you' and we are committed to ensure meaningful participation in all aspects of our corporate parenting work.

I am really pleased that corporate parenting is a priority for so many statutory and non-statutory partners in the county borough. As a council, we may be the lead agency for corporate parenting strategy in Bridgend, but we are only one partner who can positively impact on our children's lives. I am really pleased that our partners fully own the strategy and are ensuring that the priorities in the strategy are reflected in their individual organisational plans.

There are lots of plans and strategies that guide our work and that of partners. Some of these are national and come from Welsh Government, others are agreed and published by the organisations who are the corporate parents in Bridgend. They include some of our Welsh laws like the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (Wales) Regulations 2015 and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. There is lots of statutory guidance too.

As a council our top priorities have been published in *Delivering Together: Our Corporate Plan 2023-28*. One of those priorities is to help people meet their potential. One of the ways we will do that, is by being the best parents we and our partners can be, to support our children and this strategy will help us to do that.

I am especially pleased that this strategy has been led by our children and they will let us know how well we are doing in delivering the priorities therein.

Councillor Jane Gebbie, *Deputy Leader of Bridgend County Borough Council, Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help, Chairperson, Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting, Chairperson, Bridgend Corporate Parenting Board*





What is Corporate Parenting?

When a child or young person enters the care of the Council, the role of being a parent is taken on by the local authority and some of the responsibilities are also shared with other organisations such as health or learning - this is known as Corporate Parenting.

A child or young person (aged 0 – 16 years old) who is or has been in the care of a local authority (e.g. foster care or children's home) is known as '*care experienced*'. A young person aged 16 – 25 who is or has been care experienced is known as a '*care leaver*'.



Who We are...

In Bridgend County Borough, we are the leaders and managers from different departments and organisations who are the corporate parents that meet regularly, in a meeting called the Corporate Parenting Board. We discuss how we can work together to provide care experienced children, young people and care leavers (our children and young people) with all the things they need to live happy and healthy lives.

We, the Corporate Parenting Board, have agreed to focus our work on a list of the most important topics, known as Priorities, that were decided by our children and young people:

Our Priorities	1	<i>Having a voice.</i>
	2	<i>Good health and well-being.</i>
	3	<i>A comfortable, safe, stable home whilst in care and afterwards.</i>
	4	<i>Educational achievement, training, and employment.</i>
	5	<i>Getting ready for independent living.</i>
	6	<i>Celebrating our children and young people's important achievements and events.</i>

How will we do this ...?

We have a group of champions that will look at the priorities in detail and they will agree on a plan of action to make sure that the work gets done properly.

How will we know if we're getting it right ...?

We will measure the work we do on each priority with targets and these will include involving our children and young people's ideas and opinions. A report will be written every 12 months to show the progress we have made with our targets and what our children and young people say about what needs to be improved.





Our Plan For You

The plan of action will involve what we, as corporate parents, will do for our children and young people and it has been written for our children to read and hold us to account:

What we will do for you ...

- We will listen to your views, wishes and feelings and do what we can to make things better from what you tell us, and work with you to make decisions that are about you.
- We will support you to get the most out of as many opportunities and experiences as we can and help you to reach your full potential.
- We will recognise and praise you for your achievements, and we will support you to celebrate events that are important to you.
- We will make sure that you are given all the information you need to know about your rights and that you are able to access this information from a range of places.



I will promote your voices, support how you are cared for, and ensure you have equal opportunity to enjoy a creative, active life.

Richard Hughes, Chief Executive, Awen Trust



I promise that I will promote your voice getting heard and I will champion your views to make positive changes in how you are cared for. I also promise that I will remind everyone of their responsibility to give you the best care that you deserve.

Steve Berry, Corporate Parenting and Participation Officer, Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council

“ I will provide effective leadership of the council to ensure that throughout the organisation, our collective role as corporate parents is prioritised, and that everyone is supported to ensure the best possible outcomes for you.

Mark Shephard, Chief Executive,
Bridgend County Borough Council

I will promise that we will do ‘nothing about you, without you.’ We will hear what is important to you and act on it in our strategies and plans, in our practice. I will support the training and development of our workforce so that they have the skills and time to spend with you so we can support you well.

Claire Marchant, Corporate Director of Social Services & Wellbeing,
Bridgend County Borough Council

How we will care for you ...

- We will keep you safe, give you somewhere comfortable to live where you are cared for properly and make sure you have all that you need.
- We will make sure that all of those that work with you and support you are well trained and treat you with dignity and respect.

“ I will treat every child / young person with respect, show them their worth and make them feel loved and wanted within our family. I will be patient and understanding to their background, experiences of life and beliefs, and I will do my utmost to help them through the challenges life brings, and get them to be the best version of themselves. I will believe in them and be their biggest cheerleader for as long as they need me.

Rebecca Walsh, Liaison Foster Carer

I will pledge to offer a supportive and nurturing environment where you can learn how to keep yourselves safe and have the opportunity to grow and develop in a safe space.

Matthew Bradford, Station Manager, Operations,
SW Fire and Rescue Service



“ I will champion the cause that everyone will be treated fairly, treated with respect and dignity, and given every opportunity to thrive and flourish to reach their personal goals and ambition.

Councillor Martyn Jones, Mayor of Bridgend County Borough

“ I will commit and listen to each young person I meet and support. To ensure that they feel valued and respected.

Dale Llewelyn, Social Worker, Care Experienced Team, Social Services & Wellbeing,
Bridgend County Borough Council

“ I will support and champion the right to have equitable access to health services, and where there are identified gaps, endeavour to provide strong leadership to work with health services, to listen and to act upon your views and wishes.

Claire O’Keefe, Head of Safeguarding, Patient Safety, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

“ I will continue to listen and promote your voice, and where possible to champion your views. To make positive change to your care and not to make promises that I can’t keep, and to continue to recognise your achievements.

Pat Whitehouse, Social Worker, Care Experienced Team, Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council

How we will consider your health ...

- We will support and encourage you to access all the health, fitness and wellbeing services, activities, and opportunities that you need or choose to explore.
- We will let you and the people that care for you know about all the information you need to have a healthy life.
- With your consent, we will support you to manage your own thoughts and feelings and give you the option to have extra help relating your mental health and wellbeing if this is what you want.

“ I will ensure staff have the appropriate awareness of the needs of care experienced young people, to afford those young people the time and space to share how they are feeling and what support they need. I will ensure staff communicate with wider support teams to advocate for those young people.

Samantha Gunnarsson, Wellbeing and Safeguarding Manager, Bridgend College

“ I will ensure that myself and my team view your life through a trauma-informed lens so that we can understand how we can support you in living a life free of crime whilst helping you to fulfil your potential.

Kevin Reeves, Youth Justice Service, Education & Family Support, Bridgend County Borough Council

“ I will help you and your family achieve better mental health.

Adam Stevens, Intervention Specialist, Education & Family Support, Bridgend County Borough Council

“ I will ensure that the school nursing team supports your health and wellbeing by delivering health promotion to empower you to make the best choices for you as you grow.

Victoria Powell, Senior Nurse for School Nursing, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board





To ensure that children and young people are able to access support information that can help them achieve their desired outcomes, I promise that I will hold schools to account to provide education in a safe environment that will help children flourish.

David Wright, Group Manager – Vulnerable Groups Support, Education and Family Support, Bridgend County Borough Council



I will work tirelessly to ensure you are given the best possible learning opportunities and you benefit from high-quality, personalised support to provide you with appropriate skills for the future.

Lindsay Harvey, Corporate Director, Education and Family Support, Bridgend County Borough Council



I will promote your voice within the *Employability Bridgend Team* (along with other teams), to support you to develop an action plan to increase your chances of gaining employment, vocational qualifications, and work experience to help you set up a sustainable future.



Gemma Hayne, Employability Bridgend Team Leader, Communities Directorate, Bridgend County Borough Council

What we will do for you in education, training and employment ...

- We will support you to engage and succeed in education, training, apprenticeships, and employment of your choice.
- We will provide you with alternative education opportunities when you need them and support your achievement and engagement for you to reach your full potential.
- We will make you aware of the different opportunities and choices in education, training and employment at a time that is relevant to you and we will support you to access these.



I promise that I will look for work experience opportunities throughout the council to help you gain an insight into your potential career pathway. I also promise to get you apprenticeship-ready by delivering workshops to guide you through the job application and interview process.



Nikki Flower, Learning & Organisational Development Manager, Chief Executive's Directorate, Bridgend County Borough Council



I will ensure that you are aware of the opportunities to access support to help you progress and succeed at college. This includes any financial, wellbeing and learning support that you need to enable you to be all that you can be.

Joe Baldwin, Vice Principal, Senior Leadership Team, Bridgend College





I promise we will work with our partners to develop the right services to meet your needs within the right time by exploring the most appropriate housing option suitable for you. I promise to try and prevent you from becoming homeless by working with others to prevent you from having to access homeless services.

Martin Morgans, Head of Partnership Services,
Chief Executive's Directorate, Bridgend County Borough Council



I will support your mum and dad when you can't live with them. I will help your parents to be able to contribute to a positive experience when you're spending time with them.

Kayleigh Roper, Edge of Care Social Worker, Education & Family Support,
Bridgend County Borough Council

What we will do for you to help you live independently ...

- We will work with you to understand your housing needs and make plans so that we can support you.
- We will help you with the skills and information you need and develop a clear pathway of support for you to live independently.
- We will strengthen the support given by all of your corporate parents; improve the contact we have with you, and we will keep in touch to see how you are doing after you are 18 years of age.



I will continue to bring together all organisations to work on your behalf to ensure that you have the best opportunities and feel valued with whoever you are living with.

Councillor Jane Gebbie, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for
Social Services & Early Help, Bridgend County Borough Council



I will do my best to give you more choice about placements, support stability in placement, and enable you to have permanence at the earliest opportunity.

Alex Fitzpatrick, Principal Officer Placements & Provider Services,
Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council



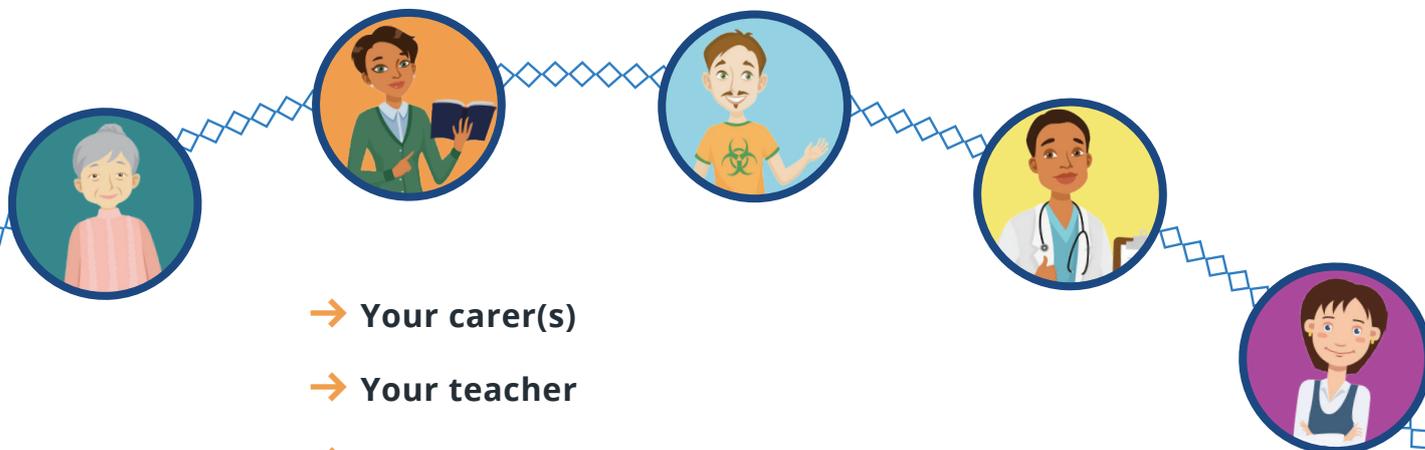
I will make sure you have the right people to support you, celebrate your achievements, develop your own interests / hobbies, support you through education / work / training for your future, and above all, support you to stay safe and be healthy.



Dominique Lima, Personal Advisor, 16+ Team,
Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council

What if you are not happy with the care and support that we offer ...?

You have a right to speak up and speak out about anything you want stopped or changed. You can do this by speaking to any of the below people:



- Your carer(s)
- Your teacher
- Your youth worker
- Your nurse / doctor
- Your key worker, social worker or personal advisor

If you feel you want to speak to someone who is independent from the above people and will only work to your views, wishes and feelings, you can ask to have an independent advocate from **TGP Cymru**.

You can ask any of the above people to arrange for you to have an *independent advocate*, or you can contact TGP Cymru directly yourself:

Freephone number: 0800 4703930

Website: www.tgpcymru.org.uk

Telephone: 01443 805940

Email: cwmtafmorgannwg@tgpcymru.org.uk



Our Additional Promises to you ...

We, the *Corporate Parenting Board*, arranged a **Promise Event** in March for corporate parents to make their promises to their children and young people.

The following are more Promises made by corporate parents from different organisations across Bridgend County Borough:



I will try and think about care experienced children and young people in every big decision that we make as a council.

Councillor Huw David, Leader,
Bridgend County Borough Council

I will always advocate and support children and young people to achieve their potential

and access all of the opportunities available for this while making progress and improving outcomes.

Gail Biggs, Education Engagement Team,
Education and Family Support Directorate,
Bridgend County Borough Council



I will support our care experienced children and young people to be more life experienced in the things that matter to them... connecting them across our communities and supporting them to own their wellbeing.

Andrew Thomas, Prevention & Wellbeing Group Manager,
Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council

I will promote the engagement of care experienced children and care leavers in the democratic process to ensure their voices are heard and listened to, to inform the larger decisions that affect them.

Rachel Keepings, Democratic Services Manager,
Bridgend County Borough Council

I will facilitate a forum for care experienced children, young people and care leavers in Bridgend, and give you a space to meet with others to ensure you can share your views, wishes and feelings, and share your ideas about how to make things better. I will also ensure that I tell you what has been done with your information and what has been changed.

Zoe Morgan, Participation Worker, TGP Cymru



I will make sure care experienced children and young people in Bridgend, along with care leavers, are able to access good quality and responsive advocacy services at a time and place that suits them.

Megan Davies, Advocacy Service Manager, TGP Cymru



“ I will promise to always be approachable and understanding at all times to help you and guide you in any situation you face. I promise to be inclusive and open-minded towards you and give you the best support possible.

Jessica Haskins, Police Community Support Officer, Neighbourhood Policing, SW Police

I will be a positive role model in your life. I will listen and encourage you. I will support you in making positive choices and your voice to be heard.

Rhiannon Shearon, Senior Residential Care Worker, Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council

“ I will make sure our staff have the correct information in order to give consistent advice and support so that our young people receive the best opportunities to succeed and be all that they can be.

Matthew Rees, Assistant Principal, Senior Leadership Team, Bridgend College

“ I will champion youth voice on behalf of all young people and provide support and needs lead services accessible for the young people of Bridgend making sure that there are safe spaces for young people to socialise and have a say.

Lois Sutton, Children's Rights and Participation, Youth Development Team, Bridgend County Borough Council

“ I will support my team to listen to you, to provide support so they have time to spend with you and understand what you want from our services. I will involve you in developing our service to make sure the support we offer is what you want and need.

Alex Williams, Edge of Care Team Manager, Education & Family Support, Bridgend County Borough Council

“ I will ensure that I promote positive outcomes in your life and make everyone aware of your wishes and wants. I will listen to your views and implement plans to support you to reach your targets. I will make sure that all staff are aware of our outcomes and they support you to reach your full potential.

Debra Evans, Residential Childrens Services Manager, Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council





I promise to engage with young people, listen to their concerns, and do my best to help anyone who needs it.

Ashleigh Ogston, Police Community Support Officer, Neighbourhood Policing, SW Police



I will ensure we have policies in place that address your needs and that we deliver on what we say. I will ensure we provide resources to meet your identified need and ensure your voice is heard when agreeing policies.

Councillor Neelo Farr, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Bridgend County Borough Council



I will listen and champion views to make positive changes while I care for you. I will also help others with their responsibilities to get you what you deserve.

Kerry Galton, Liaison Foster Carer



I work in a child-centred approach and ensure I provide equal opportunities for children's wishes and feelings to be heard, and their voices are central to all assessments to be completed. I will continue to work in co-production with children, families and key agencies to promote children's welfare and positive outcome for children.

Gemma Doherty, Social Worker, Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council



I will listen actively to the voices of our care experienced children, young people and care leavers, giving a safe space and opportunity to express their concerns freely without judgement. I want to give them the confidence that their complaints will be taken seriously and will be fully considered.

Sarah Tripp, Compliments & Complaints Resolution Manager, Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council



We will listen to, involve and engage children and young people to help design and procure high quality services, getting it right first time, on time, every time.

Jade Jones, Cheryl Thomas, & Darcy Grave, Commissioning Team, Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council





“ I will make sure that my team captures your voice in all the work they do. I also promise that my team will try their hardest to provide you with the best support, advice and guidance and help you achieve the best possible outcomes. ”

Stuart Osbourne, 16+ Team Manager,
Social Services & Wellbeing,
Bridgend County Borough Council

I will co-design provision with care experienced children, ensuring their voices are heard and that they have an impact on the services I provide that affect them. ”

Lily Gallagher, Disability Sport Development Officer, Prevention and Wellbeing,
Social Services & Wellbeing, Bridgend County Borough Council

“ I will support and encourage any child in our care to achieve the best / appropriate outcomes for them. We are always there for them no matter what! ”

Rose White & Graham Clifford, Foster Carers

“ I will commit to raise the profile and awareness of the key role the Corporate Parenting Board plays in the lives of children and young people. ”

Nicola Fedyszyn, Interim Communications and Marketing Manager, Chief Executive's Directorate,
Bridgend County Borough Council

I will always promote and be a champion to all our young people allowing them to achieve their goals. ”

Councillor Jon-Paul Blundell, Cabinet Member, Education,
Bridgend County Borough Council

“ I will ensure to listen, ensure you have access to the best possible opportunities - the same as any other child, and I promise to celebrate all of your achievements – whether they are big or small. ”

Nic Morgan, Social Worker,
Social Service and Wellbeing Directorate,
Bridgend County Borough Council

I will support my team to ensure that you are listened to and advocated for. I will ensure that all options are explored and that everything is done to ensure that you are aware of the financial and wellbeing support available. ”

Caroline McCarthy, Student Services Manager,
Bridgend College





I will use my role to raise awareness of care experienced children. Happy to provide farm / lambing experience day to any care experienced child.

Councillor Hywel Williams, Cabinet Member for Resources, Bridgend County Borough Council



I will promise to make you aware of your rights and promote children's rights. I will promise to support you to access opportunities to have your voice heard and views acted upon.

Claire Davies, Children's Rights and Participation, Youth Development Team, Bridgend County Borough Council

I will commit to providing / facilitating long term wellbeing and future of all the children looked after not only in Bridgend but Foster Wales by promoting, supporting, tutoring and being there when needed to fulfil my promise.



Ian Suggitt, Liaison Foster Carer



I will support my team to ensure that you are listened to and advocated for. I will ensure that all options are explored and that everything is done to ensure that you are aware of the financial and wellbeing support available.



Caroline McCarthy, Student Services Manager, Bridgend College



I will engage and listen to young people; I will try and understand the needs of the person and help them as I can in my role as a police officer.

Andrew Purser, Police Officer, Neighbourhood Policing, SW Police

