

leavers are given the same level of care and support that their peers would receive from a reasonable parent and that they are provided with the opportunities to help them move successfully into adulthood. On average 200 young people leave care in Birmingham in any one year.

2. IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 2.1 Children and young people in care have the right to expect the same outcomes that we would want for every child. However, the past circumstances and experiences of children and young people in care mean that they are often disadvantaged from the outset. As a result, many have experienced poorer outcomes than their peers across a range of measures including health and education.
- 2.2 Committee Members were privileged to be invited to the elections of the Children in Care Council (CiCC) which took place in the Council Chamber on the 27th October 2011. The CiCC has a membership of fifteen children and young people who have experience of growing up in care in Birmingham. The CiCC's aim is to improve the experiences and life chances of children and young people by letting those in charge know what life in care is really like for them.
- 2.3 Until recently there were two Corporate Parenting Boards within Birmingham City Council, a strategic board and an operational board. Over the last few years, these two bodies have ensured, amongst other things that all children in care have free passports to leisure facilities in the City and have produced a number of policies and guidance documents. Most notably, in 2010, taking into consideration the views and experiences of children and young people in care, the Council made a pledge to children in care (attached) which made a number of commitments to children and young people living in care in Birmingham.
- 2.4 2.3 umber

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 When the former Secretary of State Frank Dobson MP, launched the Quality Protects Programme in 1998 he sent a letter to all Councillors which said that:

Elected Councillors have a crucial role. Only you can carry it out. You can make sure that the interests of children come first. You bring a fresh look and common sense. As councillors you set the strategic direction of your council's services and determine policy and priorities for your local community within the overall objectives set by Government.'

- 8.2 We all have responsibility for the welfare and safety of children and young people in Birmingham. If you are interested in taking a greater Corporate



**Children, Young People and Families Directorate –
Councillor Visit (Reg 33) to a Children’s Home.**

Name of Home.



Guidance Notes

<p>General</p> <p>The purpose of the visit to a Children's Home is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide a sense of what is like to live in a Children's Home. ○ Explore the conduct of the home rather than its implementation of policy and procedure, guidance and regulations. ○ Explore the culture and atmosphere of the home, ○ Seek young peoples experience of living in the home, ○ Explore how the home is managed and staff approach to young people. ○ Make a judgement on how well the home is meeting the needs of the young people living there. <p>Councillors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are not expected to have special skills to enable them to recognise abusers. ○ Should hold no allegiance to adults who work in the home and focus of the visit is on the quality of care. ○ Are free to ask naïve questions and explore the way the home is run.
<p>1. Comments from Young people.</p> <p>Is there evidence (directly from Young People) to support that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people know that their views, wishes and feelings are taken into account in all aspects of their care including any reviews. ○ The wishes feelings and view of young people are taken into account in developing the home and the recruitment process. ○ A wide range of activities both inside and outside of the home is available. <p>The discussion with the young person should be around what it is like living at the home, how their views are taken into account in planning their care and the running of the home. Discussions should not be about why they needed to come into care and their personal circumstances.</p>
<p>2. Comments on observations of the homes environment.</p> <p>Is the home (including bedrooms) is homely, welcoming and in good state or repair (e.g. flowers, plants, pictures / photographs and ornaments)?</p> <p>Can young people personalise their own space, have a safe place for personal possessions and have a key to their bedroom?</p>
<p>3. Comments on care to young people and interaction with staff.</p> <p>Do young people living in the home feel safe and are safe?</p> <p>Are staff able to protect individuals from abuse and other forms of significant harm (i.e. Bullying)?</p> <p>Is there evidence of positive relationships between staff and young people which generates a culture of openness and trust?</p> <p>Are staff aware and feel confident to implement the 'Whistle Blowing' Policy?</p>
<p>4. Comments on current education placements for young people.</p> <p>Are there suitable arrangements made for the full time education, training, or employment of all young people who live in the home?</p>



Corporate Parenting Interest Form

Name.....

Contact details

Telephone.....

Email.....

Address.....

Ward.....