



Dorset Children's Trust

**Dorset County Council - Children's Services  
Directorate (in partnership with other organisations)**

# ***“The world at their feet?”***

**Framework and strategy for delivering effective services for children and young people in the care of Dorset County Council and for those who have left care**

**July 2010**

**(replaces previous versions April 2007, April 2008)**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This document is intended to be read by a wide range of people. 'The Pledge' at Section 2 has been amended and approved by children and young people and is available separately. Each child and young person in care or leaving care has been given a copy of The Pledge.
- 1.2. The document talks about the services which Dorset provides to the children and young people who are in care of any age up to 18, including those who are in care through an agreement with their parents, and those who are in care because of an order by the Court. It also talks about services to young people who have left care after the age of 16, and are still under the age of 21, or 24 if they have remained in full time education (see Appendix 1 for more detailed definitions).
- 1.3. The purpose of the document is to write down what we intend to do now and in the future to help and support children and young people in care and those who have left care. It includes a 'pledge' (that is a promise) listing the things that we will try to do, and a section explaining what we are doing and are going to do in the future.
- 1.4. A group of professional managers from different organisations who work with children and young people in care and those who have left care will meet four times a year to check on progress in keeping to the pledge. This group is the 'Strategy Group for children and young people in care and those who leave care'. The Strategy Group will report to the Children's Trust Board, which is a group of senior managers of all the organisations working with children and families.
- 1.5. The Strategy Group will work closely with three other groups:
  - The 'Practice Forum for children and young people in care and those who leave care', which is another group of professionals including those who work more directly with children and young people.
  - The 'Corporate Parenting Panel', which is a group of Councillors and managers in Children's Services.
  - The 'Children in Care Council', which is groups of children and young people in care and those who have left care who give feedback on how services are working, and what could be done better.
- 1.6. Services for children and young people in care and those who have left care are based on legislation (laws) passed by the government. The most important pieces of legislation are the Children Act 1989, the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, and the Adoption and Children Act 2002. The government regularly produces amendments to this legislation and regulations and guidance to explain how the legislation should be carried out in practice. The Every Child Matters guidance provides a structure for measuring outcomes for children in five key areas: be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and

economic well-being. The 'Care Matters' publications provide guidance on how services should be improved.

## **2. The Pledge to children and young people**

- 2.1. Dorset (through the Children's Trust Board) has a 'vision' of how they would like it to be for all children:

*" that children and young people in Dorset will be happy and safe and will have the opportunities to reach their goals as responsible members of their community. We will make Dorset a better place for all children and young people. We will ensure that children and young people are at the heart of all we do".*

- 2.2. We especially want children and young people in care and those who have left care to have the same or better experiences as other children and young people. We want them to feel that they have **'the world at their feet'**.
- 2.3. The views and wishes of children and young people in care and those who have left care are very important in helping us to decide what services should be provided, and in checking how well those services are working. Our pledge has been written taking account of what children and young people have said to us that they want. Children and young people from the Children in Care Council have chosen the language and style of the pledge.
- 2.4. We make the following pledge to all children and young people in care and those who have left care.

## Dorset's Promise to children and young people in care and to care leavers

We promise to do our best to ensure that:

### Working together

- the *professionals* and carers that you have contact with work well together to look after you as well as possible;
- professionals and carers follow their own *policies and guidelines*;
- professionals and carers take time to get to know you in person as well as reading information about you;
- professionals and carers treat you as well as they would treat their own children;

### Staying safe

- you can keep in regular contact with family members if you want to and if it is *safe*;
- you can return to live with a member of your birth family if you want to and if it is safe;
- if you have a particular need, because, for example, you are disabled, you get an equal standard of service;

### Keeping our word

- professionals and carers actually do what they say they will do;
- professionals and carers only make promises that they can keep;
- professionals and carers give you reasons for their actions and decisions;
- you know what you are entitled to and what is available for you;

\* words in *italics* - see glossary page 8

### Listening to you

- your views and wishes are listened to and *respected*;
- your views and wishes make a difference;
- you can talk to someone who will give you *independent advice*;

### Living your life

- you have a *secure* and *stable* home;
- you are given lots of warning about changes;
- you get an amount of pocket money that is right for your age;
- you can meet other children and young people in care if you want to;

### Enjoying and achieving

- you are able to get involved in sport, art, and *culture* in your spare time;
- you have a settled education, moving school only when absolutely necessary;
- you are able to continue in training or education or get work when you leave care;

### Moving on

- if you leave care after the age of 16 you will be well prepared for it;
- you can stay with your carers after the age of 18 if you want to;
- you will be helped to move to more *independent housing* only when you want to;

## Being healthy

- you are *physically* and *emotionally* healthy;

## Looking to the future

- you are treated as an *individual* and encouraged to become the person you want to be;
- you are properly supported to help you to achieve whatever you want to achieve in life.

## Glossary

professionals	-	for example, social workers
policies and guidelines	-	rules and regulations
safe	-	no risk of physical or emotional harm
respected	-	thought about carefully
independent advice	-	advice from someone outside the social care system, for example, an advocate or a connexions worker
secure	-	reliable and safe
stable	-	long-lasting, not changing
culture	-	for example, music, dance, drama, religion
independent housing	-	living on your own or with friends
physical	-	about your body
emotional	-	about your feelings
individual	-	unique, special person

### **3. How we are working to keep the pledge**

- 3.1 The professionals and carers that you have contact with work well together to look after you as well as possible.
- The Strategy Group and Practice Forum for children and young people in care and those that have left care both include professionals from all of the main organisations that work with these children and young people. This helps us to make plans for the services we provide together.
- 3.2 Professionals and carers follow their own policies and guidelines.
- All professionals and carers receive supervision and training to help them follow policies and guidelines.
- 3.3 Professionals and carers take time to get to know you in person as well as reading information about you.
- Social workers and other professionals are expected to see children and young people on their own, and to listen to what they say.
- 3.4 Professionals and carers treat you as well as they would treat their own children.
- We support the Total Respect training provided by young people in care and those that have left care, designed to help us understand what it feels like to be in care. We encourage professionals, carers, and Councillors to undertake this training.
- 3.5 You can keep in regular contact with family members if you want to and if it is safe.
- We encourage children and young people and their birth families to keep in regular contact with each other, and give practical help to make this happen, provided that the contact is safe.
- 3.6 You can return to live with a member of your birth family if you want to and if it is safe.
- We will always try to support families so that children and young people do not have to come into care, if it is safe for them to stay with their parents or other members of their family.
  - When children do come into care, we will try to support families so that they can return as quickly as possible, and if that cannot happen, we will continue to check whether things have changed at every statutory review.



- 3.7 If you have a particular need, because, for example, you are disabled, you get an equal standard of service.
- Special attention is always given to the ethnic and cultural needs of children, needs associated with disability, religion, gender, and sexual orientation, and any other needs which mean they are in a minority and are at risk of disadvantage or prejudice.
- 3.8 Professionals and carers actually do what they say they will do.
- Professionals and carers are expected to do this by the organisation they work for, and there are complaints procedures if there is no good reason why they have not done what they said they would do.
- 3.9 Professionals and carers only make promises that they can keep.
- Professionals and carers are expected to do this by the organisation they work for, and should be challenged if they don't.
- 3.10 Professionals and carers give you reasons for their actions and decisions.
- Professionals and carers are expected to do this by the organisation they work for. The statutory review meeting should be able to explain reasons for actions and decisions if children and young people feel they haven't been explained before.
- 3.11 You know what you are entitled to and what is available for you.
- Organisations should write down the main things that children and young people are entitled to and what services are available.
  - Children and young people should always have what they are entitled to in particular circumstances explained to them.
- 3.12 Your views and wishes are listened to and respected.
- Independent reviewing officers chair statutory reviews at regular intervals and ensure that the views of children and young people are taken account of.
  - The Children's Rights Service provides the chance for children and young people to say what they want about the service they get from carers and professionals, and provides advocates to support them in doing this. They help to interview staff that are being employed to work with children and young people.
  - The Children in Care Council helps children and young people to give feedback on the service they get, and makes it easier for us

to ask them about things we plan to do. The Children in Care Council will help those children and young people who have previously found it difficult to have their voice heard, including children who are disabled and younger children in care.

3.13 Your views and wishes make a difference.

- It is the job of the independent reviewing officer to ensure that the views and wishes of children and young people are acted on.
- The Children in Care Council will get feedback on any suggestions it makes.

3.14 You can talk to someone who will give you independent advice.

- The Children's Rights Service provide advocates to give independent advice and support to any child or young person who needs it.

3.15 You have a secure and stable home.

- We try to ensure there are enough foster carers and places in residential homes so that children and young people might be able to choose the placement that suits them best.
- We try to place children and young people as close to their home and friends as possible.
- If children and young people cannot return home, we find a permanent placement where they can stay until they are adults.
- We help children and young people to enjoy their leisure time, to be able to stay with friends, take part in sport, and do all the things that other children and young people do.
- The Children's Rights Service provides all children and young people in care and those that have left care with a 'Max card' to give them free or cheaper entry to leisure activities.
- We provide help and support to children and young people who are at risk of committing criminal offences.

3.16 You are given lots of warning about changes.

- We try to avoid emergency changes of placement or other important arrangements if possible.
- Big changes should usually be planned, and children and young people should be involved in making those plans.
- Children and young people should always be told about changes that have to take place at the earliest opportunity.

- 3.17 You get an amount of pocket money that is right for your age.
- The amount of pocket money at a particular age is not fixed, but it should always be fair and if possible agreed between the child or young person, carer, and social worker.
- 3.18 You can meet other children and young people in care if you want to.
- The Children's Rights Service and sometimes other organisations arrange meetings or activities for children and young people in care. Carers and social workers should support children and young people to attend if they would like to.
  - Carers should encourage informal contact with other children in care, as long as it is safe.
- 3.19 You are able to get involved in sport, art, and culture in your spare time.
- Carers and social workers will actively encourage and suggest such activities, and will help with the cost.
  - All children and young people in care will receive a Max card which gives free entry to some local leisure facilities.
  - Independent Reviewing Officers will always check that children and young people are being encouraged to develop their interest in sport, art, and culture.
- 3.20 You have a settled education, moving school only when absolutely necessary.
- We will try to keep children and young people at the same school when they come into care if possible, and will try to avoid changes of school whilst they remain in care.
  - Every child and young person in care of school age will have a 'Single Learning Plan' where we will write down what help and support we will provide to make school as successful and enjoyable as possible.
- 3.21 You are able to continue in training or education or get work when you leave care.
- We will help and support young people when they leave school to continue their education, and get work experience and a job or apprenticeship which suits them. We are part of the 'From Care 2 Work' scheme which helps to find extra jobs.
- 3.22 If you leave care after the age of 16 you will be well prepared for it.
- All young people who leave care will have a 'pathway plan' which will explain how they will be prepared and supported to

become more independent, and then to obtain suitable accommodation.

3.23 You can stay with your carers after the age of 18 if you want to.

- The 'Staying Put' scheme means some young people can remain in their foster placements after they are 18.
- Young people who have to leave their foster placements but are not ready to live independently will be offered somewhere to live where they can receive the support that they need.

3.24 You will be helped to move to more independent housing only when you want to.

- Young people who are not ready to live independently will be offered somewhere to live where they can receive the support that they need, and will only move to more independent accommodation when they are ready.

3.25 You are physically and emotionally healthy.

- We encourage all children and young people in care to have a health assessment at least once a year, and ensure that they can continue to get good health care when they leave care.
- We make sure that children and young people's emotional health needs are taken care of, and that they can get counselling or specialist mental health services if they need them.

3.26 You are treated as an individual and encouraged to become the person you want to be.

- Children and young people can talk about their hopes and fears with their carer, social worker, advocate, Independent Reviewing Officer or other professional, on their own if they wish.
- Children and young people will always be listened to, and supported to reflect on their lives and make unique choices about their lives.

3.27 You are properly supported to help you to achieve whatever you want to achieve.

- We will always help children and young people to think about the long term future and have a clear idea of what they would like to do and where they would like to be when they are older.
- We will provide support to help children and young people achieve their long term goals as well as their short term goals.

#### 4. Profile of children and young people in care and care leavers

Some children and young people in care are looked after continuously. Although they might stay with members of their family for short periods, they are referred to below as in care full time. Other children and young people in care are looked after through a series of short breaks with carers, and usually spend more of their time with their families than they do in care. Most of these children and young people are disabled. They are referred to below as in care through short breaks. The figures are correct as of 31 March 2010. Figures marked \* may be estimated.

##### All children and young people

In care full time	274
In care through short breaks	70
Care leavers (excluding those who are still in care)	156

##### Children and young people in care full time

Voluntary accommodation	133
Subject to a Care Order	98
Subject to an Interim Care Order	31
Subject to a Placement Order (for adoption)	12
Living in foster placements	207
Living in residential placements	34
Placed with parents (and subject to a Care Order)	26
Living in supported independent accommodation	7
Aged under 5	40
Aged 5 to 9	42
Aged 10 to 12	46
Aged 13 to 15	78
Aged 16 to 17	68
Disabled	26*
Ethnic or cultural minority background (ie not White British)	30

**Children and young people in care through short breaks** (all are in care through a voluntary arrangement and most are disabled and are placed with foster carers)

Aged under 5	1
Aged 5 to 9	7
Aged 10 to 12	17
Aged 13 to 15	27
Aged 16 to 17	18
Ethnic or cultural minority background	0

### Young people who are eligible for a service as care leavers

Aged 16 to 17 and no longer in care	13
Aged 16 to 17 and still in care	68
Aged 18 to 21	131
Aged 22 to 24 and in full time education	12
Disabled	18*
Ethnic or cultural minority background	6*

## **Appendix 1. Definitions**

**Children in care.** This term is used in this document to refer to all children and young people who are looked after by the Council, whether via a Court Order, or through an agreement with a parent. Children and young people can remain in care until they are 18.

**Voluntary accommodation .** Children or young people who are in the care of the County Council under a voluntary agreement with their parents or someone who holds parental responsibility (Children Act 1989 Section 20). Parental responsibility does not pass to the Local Authority. This includes children looked after under a series of short breaks.

**Care Order.** Children or young people who are in the care of the County Council under a Court Order (Children Act 1989 Section 31) or Interim Care Order (Section 38). This order gives the Local Authority parental responsibility which is then shared with parents. The Local Authority has the final say if there is a disagreement with a parent, and only a Court has the power to revoke a Care Order.

**Placement Order.** This is a Court Order (Adoption and Children Act 2002 Section 21) which can be made when there is already a Care Order, and it enables the child to be placed for adoption.

**Care Leavers.** This term is used in this document to refer to all young people who are eligible for a service from the leaving care team. There are 4 different categories of care leaver under the law, which are legally known as:

- **Eligible.** Young people, aged 16 and 17 who have been in care for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who are still in care.
- **Relevant.** Young people aged 16 and 17 who were 'eligible' but have now left care.
- **Former relevant.** Young people aged 18-21 who were previously eligible or relevant, or both.
- **Qualifying.** Young people aged 16 to 21 who were in care after they were 16, but not for long enough to fit in to any of the other categories.

'Eligible' young people who are 16 or 17 and still in care receive a combination of services as a young person in care and as a care leaver.

'Relevant' and 'former relevant' young people receive the full range of services provided by the Leaving Care Team.

'Qualifying' young people also receive 'advice and assistance' from the Leaving Care Team, but not the full range of services.

There are others who have not been in care but are also 'qualifying' young people entitled to the reduced level of services, for example young people who were previously privately fostered, or who were living in a specialist health establishment between 16 and 18. Young people who are 'former relevant' or 'qualifying' can continue to receive services from the leaving care team through until they are 24 if they are still in education or training.

## **Appendix 2. Terms of Reference**

### **a) The Strategy Group for children and young people in care and those who leave care**

1. To take a strategic lead in identifying priorities for service improvements, based on evidence of need and the views of children, young people and their carers.
2. To take a strategic lead for ensuring that services in Dorset for children/ young people in care and who have left care are coordinated effectively on a multi-agency basis.
3. To promote the educational achievement of children in care.
4. To monitor current performance measures and targets which relate to these children/young people and their potential to achieve the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes
5. To identify additional local performance measures, relevant to service improvements.
6. To support sound commissioning and planning processes for children who are looked after and care leavers
7. To ensure that priorities for work are reflected in the Children and Young People's Plan and related plans.
8. To ensure that there are effective links with all working groups of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board and the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board, as relevant.
9. To report to and raise issues with the County Council's Corporate Parenting Panel
10. To ensure that the views of children and young people in care or who have left care are known to the Strategy Group and reported to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board, either by direct involvement or through representation of their views.



**b) The Practice Forum for children and young people in care and those who leave care**

1. To ensure that the 'voice' of children and young people is sought and incorporated into all practice and planning.
2. To promote the educational achievement and placement stability of all children and young people.
3. To provide regular reports to the Strategy Group of issues identified and respond to proposals from the Strategy Group.
4. To identify practice and procedural issues that support or prevent effective inter-agency work with children looked after or care leavers
5. To identify the direct impact of local practice and procedures on identified performance measures, and to find ways of improving performance through joint working.
6. To recommend effective approaches and improvements for services to the Strategy Group, and highlight any obstacles to change.
7. To promote the interests and needs of children who are looked after and who have left care to relevant organisations represented within and outside of the organisations represented by the group.

**c) The Children in Care Council**

**The Vision**

The Dorset Children in Care Council (CiCC), also known as *Dorset Kidz: stand up, speak up*, aims to reflect the views of all children and young people in care and of care leavers in Dorset. The CiCC will strive to achieve positive change and better outcomes for all young people by working in cooperation with Dorset County Council and other partners. The CiCC will forward its views, ideas and recommendations to the CLA/care leaver strategy group and DCC Corporate Parenting Panel, with the aim of ensuring that all policy matters are informed by the views of children and young people in care and of care leavers.

**Objectives**

- The CiCC will operate as a consultation group for managers, policy makers and councillors.
- The CiCC will operate as a lobbying group for the promotion of the rights of children and young people in care and for care leavers across Dorset.
- The CiCC will operate as a think-tank, developing young person-led ideas and initiatives.

- The CiCC will operate as a champion for children and young people in care and for care leavers, making links with other sections of the council and other local organisations.
- The CiCC will operate as a key communication channel, helping information to travel between senior management and children and young people in care.

### **Participation**

- All children and young people in care and all care leavers will be encouraged to participate in the CiCC, in person or by post, text or e-mail.
- Every child or young person who enters the care system will be formally invited to participate in a CiCC meeting on at least two occasions.
- Children and young people can start to participate whenever they wish to do so.
- Children and young people *aged 9 or over* will have the opportunity of attending at least four meetings a year.
- *Children under the age of 9 will have the opportunity of attending at least one meeting a year.*
- Professionals will be expected to promote participation in the CiCC.
- Every child and young person in care and every care leaver will receive a CiCC update mailing at least once a year (normally in March).

### **Governance and Communication**

- Administration and facilitation of the CiCC will be carried out by Action for Children.
- Themes for CiCC meetings will broadly reflect the Every Child Matters agenda but will be tailored to meet the specific requests and requirements of CiCC participants.
- Matters for consultation will be agreed between Action for Children and the Head of Children and Families.
- Important issues raised by the CiCC during CiCC meetings will be noted by the participation worker and forwarded to the Head of Children and Families, who will direct issues to the appropriate DCC officer/member. Written responses will be provided to Action for Children within a maximum of 28 days.
- Action for Children will convey to CiCC participants the outcome of issues raised at CiCC meetings.
- Action for Children will submit a report on the operation of the CiCC to each quarterly meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- Participants of the CiCC will be encouraged to attend meetings of the Corporate Parenting Panel whenever possible. Action for Children will support young people, and will represent their views if they are unable to attend.
- The Director of Children's Services and Dorset Council Lead Member for Children's Services will be invited to attend meetings of the CiCC when appropriate and at least once a year. Other key officers including the Head of Children and Families, the Virtual School Head, the Health Coordinator

and the Policy Manager for children looked after, the Safeguarding Manager and the Leaving Care Team Manager will also be invited as appropriate. A written response to issues raised will be provided to Action for Children within 28 days.

- At least one elected member will be invited to attend each meeting of the CiCC.

### **Code of Conduct**

- CiCC participants agree to represent the views and wishes of all children and young people in care and care leavers to the best of their ability.
- CiCC participants, facilitators and visitors agree to treat each other with respect.
- Bullying, sexism, racism and violence will not be tolerated during CiCC meetings. Any incidents of such behaviour will result in removal from the meeting at the discretion of Action for Children staff.

### **d) The Corporate Parenting Panel**

To improve the oversight and co-ordination of the County Council's corporate parenting function on a regular basis by:-

- (a) maximising the life chances of children and young people in care and care leavers by improving access to all County Council services;
- (b) improving the opportunities for care leavers to gain employment or training placements with the County Council;
- (c) ensuring that the needs of children and young people in care and care leavers are addressed in new initiatives and service developments;
- (d) ensuring that the interests in sports and arts of children and young people looked after and care leavers are supported and encouraged, and that access to these facilities is made easier;
- (e) assisting young people in care and care leavers to access public and commercial services without disadvantage because they are or have been in care;
- (f) ensuring that the help provided to develop children and young people in care and care leavers is done in a way that honours them as individuals and respects culture, ethnicity, religion and other aspects of their identity, taking steps to dispel the general misunderstandings;
- (g) challenging misconceptions about children and young people in care and care leavers, by good publicity and public relations; and
- (h) celebrating the achievements of children and young people in care and care leavers.

*This Plan provides a broad overview of some key activity which will be enhanced in order to contribute to the improved experience, well being and opportunities of children in care/those who leave care. It does not convey all the core services available to children and young people. There is also a Healthy Care Action Plan which details other specific tasks that will take place. Some cross reference is made here. The Children in Care/Care Leavers Strategy Group will work with partners to ensure that progress is made in the service areas and organisations they represent.*

<b>Priority Issues for children in care/care leavers</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>	<b>Activity taking place</b>	<b>Main lead (in partnership with others)</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>Cross Reference to Healthy Care Action Plan</b>
1. Improve educational attainment	Children and young people will be equipped with the skills and confidence to achieve a positive future in employment, education or training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- education psychology (EP) involvement monthly with Children in Care Tuition Team</li> <li>- EP input to Designated Teacher (DT) meetings</li> <li>- school EPs request attainment and well-being information re Children in care termly at planning meetings.</li> <li>- Have well understood procedures for completion of Single Learning Plans (SLP), including training of DTs and social workers. Put in place an Early Years SLP, and emphasise the tracking of education for post-16 students.</li> <li>- Develop specific SLP for use with students with an SEN Statement, linked to SEN Review.</li> <li>- Improve coordination of data available, linking attainment with care data.</li> </ul>	Virtual School Head, DCC  Link DCC psychologist, Children in care	Monthly  Termly  End November 2010-10-13  December 2010  January 2011	2.4

Priority Issues for children in care/care leavers	Expected outcome	Activity taking place	Main lead (in partnership with others)	Delivery date	Cross Reference to Healthy Care Action Plan
2 Improve attendance at school	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- emphasise the significance of good attendance through the SLP process</li> <li>- regular collection of attendance information via the SLP</li> <li>- ensure needs of children in care are approached positively as part of Attendance Strategy with schools.</li> </ul>	<p>Virtual School Head, DCC</p> <p>Secondary Behaviour and Attendance Consultant</p>	Ongoing	2.4
3. Improve engagement in positive activities out of school	Positive engagement by young people identified, which will build confidence and assist motivation to do well in their lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- encourage take up of 'Step up' funding in schools through Step-Up coordinator and Designated Teacher</li> <li>- increase in number of resources accessible through use of MAX Card</li> <li>- target engagement of children, young people and their carers in reading for information and leisure</li> <li>- maximise use of Letter Box scheme with foster carers of children in Years 3 and 5.</li> </ul>	<p>Children in Care Tuition Team</p> <p>Action for Children</p> <p>Senior Manager, Reading and Learning, Library Service</p> <p>Children in Care Tuition Team</p>		1.3

<b>Priority Issues for children in care/care leavers</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>	<b>Activity taking place</b>	<b>Main lead (in partnership with others)</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>Cross Reference to Healthy Care Action Plan</b>
4. Improve placement stability	Children and young people will feel that they belong and have settled living arrangements and are provided with good stability to progress with their lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase in number of foster care placements available, specifically Project placements</li> <li>- Review of preferred providers (independent fostering agencies)</li> <li>- Increase in provision of short breaks in family based shared care for children who are disabled with complex needs</li> <li>- Provide additional support to foster carers to prevent placement breakdown</li> </ul>	Service Manager (Resources), DCC	Ongoing during 2010/11	1.2, 3.2
5. Increase availability of placements.	Children and young people will have choice of placement near to their home, if appropriate	Actions in Healthy Care Action Plan	Service Manager (Resources), DCC	Ongoing during 2010/11	1.2, 3.2
6. Promote healthy living and ensure good access to health resources (physical, emotional and mental health)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensure all health assessments undertaken</li> <li>- ensure completion of Strengths/ Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs)</li> <li>- improve electronic systems for transfer of information</li> <li>- coordinate learning from outcomes of health assessments and SDQs</li> <li>- Improved timely access to services for mental health needs</li> </ul>	<p>Children in Care (LAC) Nurses</p> <p>Lead Manager, Dorset Healthcare University Foundation Trust</p>	<p>By December 2010</p> <p>By end January 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	2.5, 2.6, 3.5

<b>Priority Issues for children in care/care leavers</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>	<b>Activity taking place</b>	<b>Main lead (in partnership with others)</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>Cross Reference to Healthy Care Action Plan</b>
7. Reduce offending behaviour by children in care	Reduction in number of young people who receive final warnings, reprimands or convictions or who repeat offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offer additional restorative justice training to foster carers/ residential homes</li> <li>- implement actions in YISP Plan re children in care, including by closer work with Tuition Team and by offering intensive support to those with significant emotional or mental health needs</li> </ul>	YOT Manager	Ongoing	-----
8. Increase the number of work placements/ work opportunities for children in care/ care leavers	Work placements and work opportunities will be provided in Dorset County Council and with partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify opportunities across Directorates and agencies for placements, work opportunities and volunteering</li> </ul>	Assistant Service Manager, Resources, DCC	Ongoing	-----
9. Ensure suitable accommodation for care leavers	Young people will have a suitable place to live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- continue work with Supported Housing Schemes to sustain current provision, increase quantity and ensure quality of provision</li> <li>- improve data sharing about need with District/Borough Councils</li> <li>- deliver "Total Respect" training to supported lodgings providers</li> </ul>	Assistant Service Manager, DCC	Ongoing  End December 2010	-----

<b>Priority Issues for children in care/care leavers</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>	<b>Activity taking place</b>	<b>Main lead (in partnership with others)</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>	<b>Cross Reference to Healthy Care Action Plan</b>
10. Achieve opportunities for care leavers to be in education, employment or training	Develop further the systems between Social Care / Leaving Care, Connexions and FE institutions to ensure young people in care are fully supported in their transition post 16.	<p>Social Care, Connexions and FE Colleges to develop protocols for working together and sharing information to ensure LAC and Care leavers gain support at their place of Further Education.</p> <p>Learning Skills Coordinator to work with Connexions PA and Leaving Care Workers to ensure all Care Leavers have appropriate Information, Advice and Guidance to equip them to move into education, employment and training</p>	<p>Connexions Area Manager</p> <p>Assistant Service Manager, DCC</p>	Ongoing	-----
11. Provide opportunities for children and young people to convey their views	Young people feel listened to, that their views are heard and play a role in influencing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deliver 'Total Respect' training</li> <li>- increase involvement of young people in interviews for services which affect them, and link to an accreditation process</li> <li>- support Children in Care Council and its relationship with Strategic group and Corporate Parenting Panel</li> </ul>	Action for Children/ Policy Manager, Children in Care DCC		Section 1.1, 1.3