

# Briefing Note



## **Champion Model**

The Champion model is for all our elected members to help support and champion specific areas of need and priority that affect our vulnerable children and young people, particularly our Children in Care and Care Leavers.

### **Background:**

The Champion model is for all our elected members to support and champion specific areas of need and priority that affect our vulnerable children and young people, including Children in Care and Care Leavers. This was a direct recommendation from the Government's Lead Advisor for Care Leavers, Mark Riddell. It was launched in Milton Keynes during Summer 2020.

### **Detail of the Model:**

We have 10 areas of the model: Participation, Children in Care, Care Leavers, Fostering, Housing, Health, SEND, Education, Quality and Children's Perspective is Everyone's business.

We have 7 member champions already engaging with some of these areas:

Councillors K Bradburn, Darlington, Townsend, Ferrans, Reilly, Marlow and Brown.

The areas that do not currently have a member champion: Participation, Quality and Children's Perspective is Everyone's Business.

Alongside the model is a steering group comprised of a number of CPP members, Sivay Heer, Head of Corporate and Richard Lee, Team Leader for Participation. The steering model has oversight of all areas, has created an action plan to help ensure progress and accountability.

### **Plans to Progress:**

Short 'training' and overview videos for Members and Officers to ensure full understanding and engagement.

Quarterly 'round table' conversations with all Members and Officers involved in the Champion Model for sharing updates, good practice and key learning points.

## **The role and expectations of a Champion:**

To be linking into the key areas of service and specific lead officers for that area of the service as described below.

The role of the Champion is with the view to:

- Make a difference to the lives of MK young people and children particularly children in care and care leaver.
- Meet with the link manager to discuss the area of work and review the progress of the priorities you will be supporting.
- Meet with Children in Care/Care Leavers who are affected by the area of work on a regular basis to hear their views.
- Support the priorities for the area of work you will champion.
- Use your own networks and communities to enhance and support the priorities identified.
- Liaise with the other elected members to utilise their networks and communities to support and develop the specific area of priority.
- The steering group will be monitoring and supporting your action plan and progress to date.

## **Champion Model Key teams and contacts**

### **PARTICIPATION**

**Point of contact; Richard Lee - [Richard.lee@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.lee@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 07881353675**

Hi, I'm Richard and am the Team Leader for the Participation and Intervention Team. As the Champion for Participation you will be able to meet young people that attend the Children in Care Youth Club and the New2Uk Youth Club. One of the core aims of the Participation and Intervention Team is to ensure the Voice of the Child is heard. You will also be able to attend and be a part of the Children in Care Council which aims to represent the views of Children in Care and Care Leavers.

Team priorities needing Member support and action:

- To encourage all services /departments to exercise their role as corporate parents for Children in Care and Care Leavers
- To ensure that the voice of children and care leavers is heard and listened to

## **SEND**

**Point of contact; Mandy Fell - [mandy.fell@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:mandy.fell@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 07747658101**

Hello, my name is Mandy Fell, and I manage the children with Disability team. I am supported by a well-established team of 17 workers, composed of a Deputy team Manager, social workers and social work assistants who have all had experience of working with families in complex situations. The team covers the whole of Milton Keynes as well as supporting children who are placed both in Milton Keynes and out of county at residential units. We work primarily with children who attend Redway, Walnuts and Slated Row school, although this is not an exclusive list as we do take into account parents' wishes for which school they would like their child to attend. We carry out all elements of social work including assessment, formulating child in need/support plans, Looked After Child, child protection, fostering support and adoption. The team have close links with colleagues in the Special Educational Needs team, health, children social care, and voluntary agencies. The likely group of young people we support have a learning/physical disability/ complex health issues, an EHCP and will be dependent on services for life.

**Point of contact; Anne Roberts - [anne.roberts@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:anne.roberts@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 01908 521048**

Hello, my name is Anne Roberts and I'm responsible for the council's two children's homes for children with special needs. You are welcome to visit us in the children's homes or attend the social events we organise each year. We work towards helping our children and young people become as independent as they can, to gain new experiences and to develop their social skills. We work as a close-knit team across the homes and want to make sure that we can reach as provide an environment that is stimulating and enjoyable for our young people.

Team priorities needing Member support and Action

- To ensure our children's voice is heard in the planning for their lives and they are given the best opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- Support in the anxieties that can be faced in supporting our children towards independence and transition to Adulthood.

## **CARE LEAVERS (16-25)**

**Point of contact; Maria Rogers - [maria.rogers@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:maria.rogers@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 01908 253434**

Hello, I am the Deputy Team Manager for the 16 – 25 Team. We are a team of Social Workers and Personal Advisors who work with young people in Care and those

Leaving Care, from 16 to 25 years. Our objective is to prepare young people for life after care, to enable them to develop the resilience and skills to manage independently in the adult world and have access to the same opportunities as their non-care experienced peers. We do this by developing collaborative, aspirational Pathway Plans, with young person's voice being pivotal to the plan. This is a multi-agency plan that identifies the support and services required to meet the young person's health, education, housing, employment and leisure needs moving into adulthood. Our role is to ensure Milton Keynes Care Leavers are supported by the system the same way young people living at home do by their parents.

Team priorities needing Member support and action:

- Improving education, employment and training outcomes for care leavers.
- Improving accommodation options and experience for care leavers as they prepare for independence.

## **CIC**

**Point of contact; Sharon Godfrey - [sharon.godfrey@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.godfrey@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 01908 254004**

Hi – My name is Sharon Godfrey and I manage the Children in Care Team. We work with children post care proceedings and those children who are voluntary accommodated and are unable to return home to live with family. I am supported by Deputy Team Manager, senior practitioners, social workers, social work assistances and a primary mental health worker. We work with and support children to progress permanent plans, either through adoption, special guardianship orders, returning home to live with parents or long-term foster care. We work with children up to the age of 16 years. We value the importance of helping children have a sense of belonging through secure permanent homes and reaching their full potential. We are proud to say we know our children well as we listen to them to ensure we know how they are getting on and ensuring we support those children who maybe experiencing problems.

Team priorities needing Member support and action:

- Increasing placement stability for our Children in Care.
- Ensuring that children live in settled families and are safe and well.

## **PERMANENCY/ADOPTION/FOSTERING**

**Point of contact; Nicola Sankey - [nicola.sankey @Milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.sankey@Milton-keynes.gov.uk) 01908 253983 – Fostering**

Hello - My name is Nicola Sankey and I manage the Fostering Supervision and Support Team. We work with Milton Keynes Council Foster Carers providing them with supervision and training and improving the outcomes for Children in Care. I am supported by a team of senior social workers, social workers, social work assistants. Our primary focus is to provide supervision to foster carers and review their suitability to Foster. We look after approximately 150 fostering households who care for around 200 children. The team also support a similar number of families who are cared for under Special Guardianship Orders. In this Champion role we also want to support the recruitment of new carers. In this work we have a team that consists of six social workers; one social work assistant and one business support officer. The key role is to undertake assessments of mainstream foster carers, kinship foster carers and special guardianship carers, as part of our recruitment process. We have an annual recruitment events calendar and try to attend as many appropriate local events as possible to raise the awareness of the need to recruit foster carers. We also have visible relevant posts on several social media platforms 2 – 3 times per week. The work with SGO and Kinship Carers enables children to have permanency within the family and team runs 3 days training six times per year, for all our carers. The child's voice is a priority for all the work we undertake with our carers, children and the families we work with.

Team priorities needing Member support and action:

- To support with the recruitment of new carers and support our existing carers.
- Our children in care's voice is heard and their needs promoted to ensure good placement matching.

## **HEALTH**

**Point of contact; Mandy Park - [mandy.park2@nhs.net](mailto:mandy.park2@nhs.net) 07920500675**

Hello, my name is Mandy Park, my role as Designated Nurse is to ensure that Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Groups statutory responsibilities are met and that there is a proactive approach to the developing agenda which relates to the physical and emotional health needs of LAC, and by association care leavers. The Designated role is a senior health professional lead across the whole health community on all aspects of Looked after Children in Milton Keynes, part of this is in collaboration with other senior leaders.

Team priorities needing Member support and action:

- Improving the engagement of, and service offered to, Children with disabilities.
- Support our looked after children in a holistic view in regard to their health, particularly their emotional health and wellbeing.

## **QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE**

**Point of contact; Julia Roberts - [julia.roberts@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:julia.roberts@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 01908 254371**

My name is Julia Roberts, I am Team Manager for Safeguarding. I manage the Independent Chairs who chair Child Protection Conferences and Childcare Reviews. I also manage the Local Authority Designated Officer. It is important to test and scrutinise care plans for children and young people and ensure that actions are achieved, and drift and delay is challenged robustly to ensure standards remain high. We ensure that children and young people are fully involved in care planning for their future and that they participate in this process in a child focused way. As a champion for safeguarding you would have the opportunity to meet with chairs and consider our progress and performance as a service in relation to our Looked after children and care leavers.

**Point of contact; Delia Brownsill - [delia.brownsill@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:delia.brownsill@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 01908 253778**

Hi, my name is Delia and I am the manager of the Quality and Compliance Team for adults and children's services, I have two dedicated children's quality and compliance officers who work with children and young people's providers (residential, 16+ and fostering agencies) to ensure contracted services are monitored efficiently and maintained effectively as part of their contractual obligations. Inspections are completed annually unless concerns are raised which are followed up as and when they occur, during the inspections of these services officers speak to the children and young people using the service to gather their views on how their care and support is being delivered to identify how well the service is meeting their needs. Where necessary we will identify gaps in provision and make recommendations for improvements in performance relating to service delivery, efficiency, children and young people's satisfaction and report internally and externally.

Team priorities needing Member support and action:

- Ensuring good participation in care plans by children and the adults that are important to them.

- Support in helping understand what 'good Corporate Parenting' looks like and help us achieve to be Outstanding.

## **EDUCATION**

**Point of contact; Jenny Cooledge - [jenny.cooledge@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:jenny.cooledge@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 01908 254496**

Milton Keynes Virtual School monitor and promote the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children in MK. We close closely with other teams across MK Council. We support Social Workers and Schools to undertake Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings. As the Champion for Virtual school you will be able to: Shadow Virtual School staff attending PEP meetings, participate in aspirational activities the Virtual School deliver, observe training to schools and education providers, attend Designated Teacher Forums and attend Virtual School Conference. Please feel free to get in touch and provide your contact details. Some of these activities are ad hoc/ one off - we can ensure you are provided with dates and information.

Team priorities needing Member support and action:

- Developing a resource bank of key contacts and what they have to offer.
- Developing specific pledges from key contacts on the support they are willing to 'sign up to' over the next year for Children in Care and Care Leavers.

## **HOUSING**

**Point of contact; Jane Carbin - [jane.carbin@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:jane.carbin@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 01908 252117**

Hello, I am Jane and I am a Senior Homelessness Prevention Officer in the Homelessness Prevention Team. My main duties are to work with customers (single people, couples, families) who are either facing homelessness or are homeless. Within my role I try and prevent people from becoming homeless. To do this I work with colleagues within MKC, external partners and agencies to obtain the best outcome for the customer. I also attend Housing panel with CSC every fortnight to discuss young people's housing needs. Although the job is challenging at times it is extremely rewarding too as you are helping customers in crisis and we recognise we should never be in a situation where a care leaver is homeless.

**Point of contact; Nicola Watson - [Nicola.watson@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.watson@milton-keynes.gov.uk) 01908 252161**

Hello, I'm Nicola and I am an Allocations Officer in The Housing Access Team. My main duties are to assess a customer's housing needs and support them in seeking

suitable accommodation. I consider many aspects of family life to gather the required information, this can include medical information or disability and support needs. I work with colleagues within MKC or external partners and agencies to help me make informed decisions when allocating a new home. Another area of my role is to allocate the accommodation it is extremely rewarding knowing you have assisted someone to move into a new home.

Team priorities needing Member support and action:

- To support increasing the accommodation options for care leavers and help them transition into independence in a timely way and well prepared and supported.
- Help to support good local accommodation provision for local care leavers.