



CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

4TH DECEMBER 2008

PLEDGE - UPDATE

**MIKE CARR- EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES &
LEARNING**

**GILL ROLLINGS – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Corporate Parenting Board of the progress made in relation to the development of Middlesbrough's Pledge to Children Looked After.

BACKGROUND & CONSULTATION

2. As previously reported (11/9/2008) work is underway in Middlesbrough to develop a Pledge to Children Looked After.
3. The involvement of children and young people looked after in decision-making is regarded as an essential element of the Pledge. Consequently, a Pledge development event took place at Middlesbrough Teaching & Learning Centre (MTLC) on 30th October 2008.

PLEDGE DEVELOPMENT EVENT

4. The event ran from 10.00 am until 7.00 pm, with separate sessions for different ages: 10.00-12.00 for 8-12 year olds, 1.30-3.30 for 13-15 year olds and 5.00-7.00 for young people aged over 16. During the day, Members of the Corporate Parenting Board met with a total of 26 children and young people and a variety of managers from a range of services and agencies to discuss what might be included in the Pledge.

5. The event was facilitated by Time Out of the Box, an independent organisation that undertakes direct work with children and young people, research and development and film production.
6. Broadly the programme aimed to fulfill the aims of The Pledge strategy and on the day participants were able to:
 - Define a promise/ pledge
 - Develop team work and relationships between children, young people and adults
 - Identify children and young peoples' experiences of their corporate parents response to Every Child Matters
 - Encourage children and young people to write and present questions to a panel of adults
 - Encourage adults to listen and respond to children's questions about what they are doing or what they can do about issues that concern children and young people.
7. The ideas generated during the day are currently being written up by Time out of the Box and will be reported to a future meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board.
8. Another event will take place during the February half-term holiday – further details will be available nearer to the event.

PLEDGE QUESTIONNAIRES

9. As not all children and young people were able to attend the event and as many are now placed outside of Middlesbrough, a questionnaire has been sent out to all children and young people seeking their views on what might be included in the Pledge. This information will be collated and will contribute to the development of the Pledge.

OPTION APPRAISAL/RISK ASSESSMENT

10. Not applicable to this report.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS

11. The finance required to support this process is being met from the Care Matters grant funding. There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report. Corporate parenting is a town-wide responsibility so this report will be of interest to all elected Members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12. It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board advise the Executive to note the progress made in developing the Middlesbrough Pledge.

REASONS

13. Elected Members, Senior Managers and partner agencies share responsibility for meeting the needs of children looked after and care leavers. The local authority will be held accountable through inspection and corporate assessment processes for its performance in relation to this issue.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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