

West Lothian Council Social Policy Service Children and Families

Mission Statement

West Lothian Council's Children and Families social policy services are based in the community and provide support, advice and guidance to children and young people and their families. We are responsible for promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people in a range of services. These include early years support, early intervention and school-based support services as well as teams which deal with children about whom there are concerns or who have or are affected by disability.

The Children and Families service aims to contribute to making sure that all children and young people in West Lothian are safe, nurtured, active, healthy, achieving, included, respected and responsible. We will do this in partnership with children and young people, their families and carers, their communities and other relevant organisations. We aim to be open, honest and accountable, and to make best use of our resources through a competent and confident workforce.

Service Standards

We aim to:

- Treat all service users fairly, with courtesy and respect
- Respond promptly to all enquiries
- Communicate clearly with all users of our services and to encourage feedback
- Offer appointments at times and places that are suitable to users, where possible
- Consult service users, publish the results annually and use these to improve services
- Respect confidentiality as far as possible without compromising the welfare of children and young people
- Respond to complaints within 1 day and resolve complaints within 5 days
- Ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified or trained for their jobs

Children and Families Early Years Service

Service Commitment

We provide quality care and support services to early years children and their families by offering group care placements, individual packages of outreach support and a wide range of parenting programmes. These are provided by our family centres in Whitburn and Livingston and by the Sure Start team.

To this end we are committed to working in partnership with our colleagues in Health and Education Services to;

- ❖ Provide a safe, stimulating environment in which children can realise and fulfil their individual potential;
- ❖ Further develop early years services which recognise the worth of each individual, acknowledging diversity and promoting equality at all times;
- ❖ Provide continuously improving services which are responsive to service users' changing needs

Family Centre Service Standards

We will...

- ❖ Acknowledge receipt of referrals within one week and advise the referrer when a service is expected to be available;
- ❖ Allocate a named worker who will be the contact person within one week of a service becoming available.
- ❖ Arrange to meet with parents/carers to agree an initial care plan within one week of a worker being nominated;
- ❖ Confirm details of the service being offered, in writing, within one week of the above meeting;
- ❖ Hold a service review within 3 months and at not more than 6-monthly intervals thereafter;
- ❖ Involve parents/carers in all planning meetings and reviews;
- ❖ Consult with parents/carers about plans for ending the service;
- ❖ Ask for suggestions on how we can improve our service
- ❖ Ask whether you consider these standards to be relevant to you and whether you believe we are meeting them with our annual customer survey – we will also ask about your satisfaction with our services. We aim to deliver at least 95% customer satisfaction overall.

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Sure Start Service Standards

In all cases Sure Start aims to:

- ❖ Respond to all requests for service within one week and advise on availability
- ❖ Provide a named contact person to parents/referrers before a service commences
- ❖ Consult with parents and take their views into account when planning services
- ❖ Consult with colleagues from other relevant agencies when planning services
- ❖ Consult with parents on the quality of the service provision, service standards and written information
- ❖ Ask whether you consider these standards to be relevant to you and whether you believe we are meeting them with our annual customer survey – we will also ask about your satisfaction with our services. We aim to deliver at least 95% customer satisfaction overall.

In addition, where individual family support is requested we will:

- ❖ Arrange to meet with parents/carers at a convenient location to agree tasks and set plan
- ❖ Confirm details in writing of the agreed service being offered
- ❖ Review plan within 3 months and at not more than 6 monthly intervals
- ❖ Consult with parents/carers about plans for ending the service
- ❖ Involve parents/carers in all planning meetings and reviews.

Children and Families Residential Services

Service Commitment

We provide high quality care and support services to children and young people by offering residential placements within our units at various locations within and outwith West Lothian. We are committed to ensuring that National Care Standards are met by upholding the principles of dignity, privacy, choice, safety, diversity and equality to maximise the potential of each child and young person. We provide focused, flexible, individualised packages of support, including outreach services. We work with partner agencies in social work, health and education to provide continuously improving services which are responsive to service users' changing needs.

Service Standards

In addition to adhering to the Children & Families service standards, we will:

- Provide each resident with a Welcome Pack within 48 hours of admission
- On planned admissions, allocate a Key Worker prior to admission
- Provide each resident with a copy of the care plan in writing within 10 days of admission
- Encourage all residents to contribute to their care plan through attendance at LAC reviews and completion of written questionnaire;
- Hold residents meetings every six weeks

Children and Families Resource Team

Service Commitment

The Children & Families Resource Team is responsible for the recruitment, assessment, training and support of carers for children and young people. Our services include foster care, adoption and permanence, respite care for children with disabilities, and outreach support. We also provide assessment and support services for kinship care arrangements, and reports for the courts in relation to legally securing family care.

We are committed to supporting carer families in ensuring that National Care Standards are met by upholding principles of dignity, privacy, choice, safety, diversity and equality to maximise the potential of each child and young person. We are committed to working with partner agencies to provide continuously improving services which are responsive to service users' changing needs.

Service Standards

In addition to adhering to the Children & Families service standards, we will:

In all cases:

- Respond to service requests within one week;
- Offer visits within two weeks of receiving a request;
- Allocate a qualified social worker to every carer applicant;
- Review all carers annually;

Additionally, for council carers, we will:

- Send out information packs to potential new carers within one working day;
- Complete carer assessments within six months of allocating a social worker;
- Deliver "Skills To Foster" training to all new carers prior to them being approved;
- Provide all mandatory training for carers within two years of registration;
- Carry out at least one unannounced visit to carers per year;
- Comply with National Care Standards for Fostering and Adoption

Integrated Children & Young People Support Team

Service Standards

In addition to delivering the Children & Families Service Standards, the Integrated Children and Young People Support Team will:

- ❖ Assist in raising school attendance by 10%

- ❖ Work with at least 700 children and young people at any given time

- ❖ Attend all Cluster Resource Groups meetings

- ❖ Review case plans every three months

- ❖ Ensure and maintain clear communication with all partners

- ❖ Deal with referrals within 14 days of receipt

- ❖ Provide 50 groupwork initiatives per year

Throughcare Aftercare Team

In addition to adhering to the Children & Families Service Standards, we will:

- ◆ Respond to all enquiries within 5 working days; duty enquiries will be seen on the same day;
- ◆ Allocate a named TCAC worker, who will be the young person's key contact with the team, within 5 working days following referral for an Aftercare service (where workload permits);
- ◆ Offer every young person within the Pathway process access to an advocacy service;
- ◆ Offer to meet with young people and referrer at a convenient location within 5 working days of allocation;
- ◆ Invite young people to all reviews and meetings concerning them, where appropriate;
- ◆ Review each young person's Pathway plan every six months, or more often if required;
- ◆ Provide copies of written reports and discuss these with young people;
- ◆ Consult with young people about their experience of our service every six months;
- ◆ Consult with young people before ending the service;
- ◆ Ask whether you consider these standards to be relevant to you and whether you believe we are meeting them with our annual customer survey – we will also ask about your satisfaction with our services. We aim to deliver at least 95% customer satisfaction overall.

YOUNG PERSON DEVELOPMENT WORKER SERVICES

In addition to adhering to the Children & Families Service Standards, we will:

- ◆ Respond to all referrals within five working days;

- ◆ Encourage and support young people to participate in a six monthly evaluation and consultation meeting/event throughout the course of our involvement.

- ◆ Consult with young people before ending the service;

- ◆ Provide access to all written reports or communications and discuss these with young people to ensure what is written is being understood;

- ◆ Ask whether young people consider these standards to be relevant and whether they believe we are meeting them with an annual customer survey – we will also ask about customers' satisfaction with our services. We aim to deliver at least 95% customer satisfaction overall.

Children's Rights Officer

In addition to adhering to the Children & Families Service Standards, I will:

- ◆ Respond to all telephone messages within one working day
- ◆ Respond to all email referrals within one working day
- ◆ Respond to all text messages within 3 hours
- ◆ Respond to written letters within 5 working days
- ◆ Offer to meet with a child/young person within 3 days of referral being made;
- ◆ Visit all young people admitted to secure accommodation within five working days
- ◆ Organise monthly forums for children and young people aged between 4 and 21 that are or have been Looked After by West Lothian Council.
- ◆ Consult young people on the planning, delivery and venues for meetings.
- ◆ Involve young people in all aspects of my involvement with them by keeping regular contact throughout the course of any inquiry
- ◆ Consult with young people before ending the service on any given inquiry
- ◆ Provide copies of all written reports or communications and discuss these with young people to ensure what I write is being understood
- ◆ Ask whether young people consider these standards to be relevant and whether they believe I am meeting them with an annual customer survey – I will also ask about customers' satisfaction with my services. I aim to deliver at least 95% customer satisfaction overall.