

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

Messages from Care and the Care Sector

Strategic Vision & Priorities 2019-22



Voices of children - loud, proud and entitled
Secure love and care - children feel loved and securely cared for
Relationships - a focus on people, networks, wellbeing and resilience
Public Affairs - clear vision, leadership and direction

National IRO Managers Partnership
Securing better life chances and choices for all children and young people with care experience – constantly striving for more.



Acknowledgements

The National IRO Managers Partnership would like to thank all the people who shared their views, ideas and experiences.

We also want to thank the different organisations and institutions who contributed.

The following pages indicate the range of positive messages received.

Thanks again to everyone who agreed for us to publish their comments and positive messages.

Ian Gould, Every Child Leaving Care Matters Ambassador

“As an older person with care experience and a retired probation manager, it is a joy/privilege to be asked to share a few thoughts about this Strategy. Loud proud and entitled, feeling loved, securely cared for and listened to and significantly being understood. What is there not to be liked?

With a growing momentum for real change across our Care family, this document epitomises the hopes and aspirations behind a language that cares, the centrality of our children and young person, the growing movement which call for compassion/kindness to be at the root of children and social care policy and, actions designed to bring the voices of our children and young people to the very core of their care Journey whilst ensuring the accountability of all those involved.

With a focus on children and young people's rights and being a critical friend, the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer is viewed as integral to their journey of 'Becoming' the very best they can be through, careful planning, agreed goals and aspirations and holding others to account as carers, enablers, encouragers and facilitators. The affirmation of 'We Will' are to be commended and provide the additional safeguards / protective factors which underpin the hopes and aspirations of NIROMP's key priorities. “

Ian Dickson, a personal view:

"I will offer you a purely personal view as an experienced social worker and regulator over many years who happens to be care experienced. I think it is a very useful and ambitious document that is very much moving in the right direction of placing the child at the centre of planning & promoting consultation. It promotes informing and educating children about their rights and including them in planning etc."

Lisa Cherry, Author, Speaker and Trainer -Trauma | Recovery | Resilience

"The vision within this document strives to place children at the centre of their own lives seeking to ensure that they are worked alongside rather than 'done to'. This is commendable.

There is also a recognition that to deliver on the priorities, working together with other bodies such as ADCS to continue to lobby and educate the Government on what Local Authorities require to deliver real change for children and young people who are looked after is essential.

The independence of the IRO offers a real opportunity to truly be an advocate AND an activist with a small 'a'."

Laura Newman, Supervising Social Worker.

"I like the idea of a national learning programme for IRO's to help develop consistency and practice within and between local authorities across England."

Foster Carer

"As carers we are great supporters of the IRO system and would like to see it develop & flourish to support those in the care system by providing the appropriate checks and balances, ensuring care providers are doing their best."

Otilia Broadhurst, independent reviewing officer

"This document is well written and detailed and literally covers everything. It's good to raise our profile as IROs, it's good to set the bar high and expect the best for the children we work for, This is a good framework to use when we self-reflect and self-inspect our own provisions and team performance. Having a clear vision and clear expectations should leave no excuses for ineffective practice. Thank you and well done."

Sarah Holtom-Fawcett, independent reviewing officer

"I really enjoyed the Secure Love priority – thank you! One of the most important things for me as an IRO is finding ways to build a meaningful relationship with children and young people. Often we are the most enduring relationship for children, given recruitment and retention issues in frontline teams and I think we could play a significant role in ensuring children have a coherent narrative by writing to them with our minutes / sharing memories when we meet etc."

Ed Nixon, a personal expression.

"I am speaking neither for the ECLCM campaign or indeed for the Independent Children's Homes Association both of which are areas of my activity.

I am extremely pleased that this document has been written and will be widely read. It is important that IRO's as represented by NIROMP, have an independent voice and have taken the opportunity to state their priorities for the future and to that extent I welcome its publication."

Cathy Seiderer, Children's social worker and Fostering Manager

"I am incredibly impressed and pleased with the Strategic Vision and priorities as set out in this paper. The voices of children and young people are completely at the heart of this and in turn, they will be part of important and vital change for all children who are in care. It is very evident that NIROMP have a determination and expectation that is value and relationship led. As a children's social worker for many years and now as a fostering manager, the voice of the child being heard has remained my own priority with every decision that is made. With this vision, there will not only be positive change that is possible, but a consistency across the Independent Reviewing Officers which will enable all children and young people to feel that they matter, that they are cared about and that they are heard. The fact that this is a vision where change will be demanded for the benefit of and supported by children and young people demonstrates the commitment of NIROMP and I am excited to see what the future will hold."

Moira Stone, Independent Visitor Co-ordinator

"I welcome NIROMP's emphasis on the importance of children and young people's relationships and the importance of them feeling securely cared for. This is an important aspect of what Independent Visitors can bring to the lives of children and young people in care.

NIROMP's focus on children's rights, children's need for secure loving care and consistent relationships is very welcome. I think that by also promoting the role of the Independent Visitor, NIROMP can help more children and young people have lasting relationships."

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