

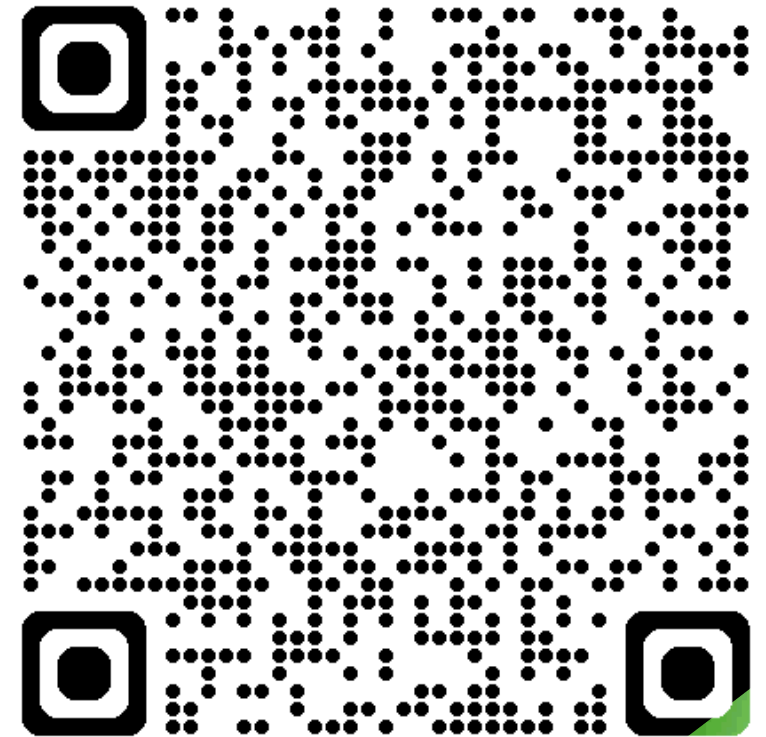
Update for Corporate Parenting Panel

Language that Cares



In 2019, TACT Fostering and Adoption co-produced a report with care experienced young people

- Language that Cares, Changing the way professionals talk about Children in Care.
- A project that challenged the language that professionals use.
- ESCC Children in Care Council were involved in this project.





Why has this language evolved?

Professionals use acronyms as a shortcut to describe their work with children in care. Over time habits have formed in relation to the use of terms such as LAC, contact, placements etc.

The professional quote below explains how language can be used to simplify complex situations and emotions.

“It might be that it gives us a sense of control, reducing a complex situation into something that you can describe neatly and respond to or that it decreases our feeling regarding perceived risk, being able to name a difficulty or threat reduces the danger of an unknowable threat. It can offer a disguise for when we don’t know, or we don’t understand and defends us against an intolerable/unpleasant feeling.”

Language can be a weapon, but it can also be emotional armour.

Young People in Rotherham said:

“The language of care is so mixed up with our everyday language that it is difficult to separate the two. These words that we challenge are used by everyone: foster carers, social workers, teachers, Independent Reviewing Officers, administrators and even children and young people. We should challenge ourselves and challenge people who we hear using them.”





Action in East Sussex

Although East Sussex young people were involved in producing the TACT report, we had not reviewed the language that we use locally for a number of years.

In the summer of 2025, a working group was formed with representatives from across the Children's Service.

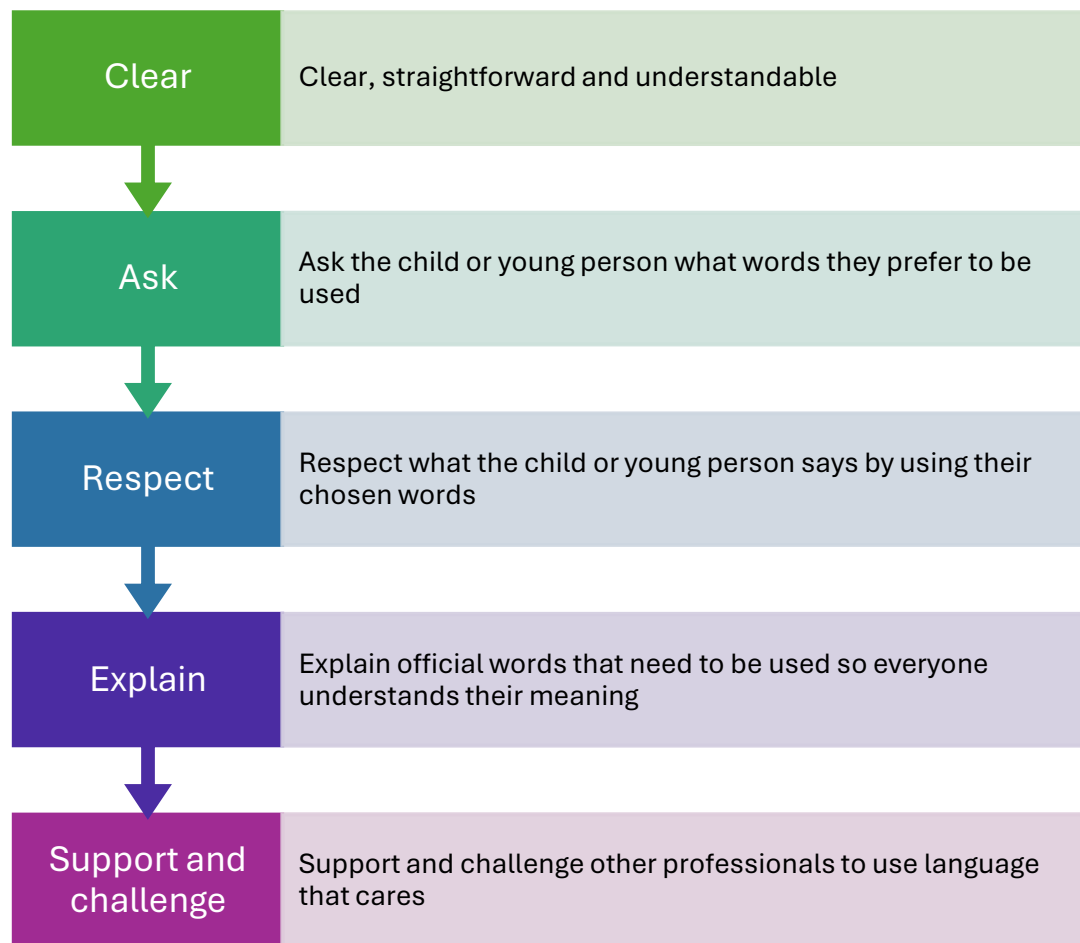
As a starting point the group focussed on a new name for the Looked after Children's Service (LAC) and the teams within it.

Children, young people, staff and foster carers were consulted and asked to vote.


Children we Care for was the most popular option.

New Service and Team names

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Children We Care For Service	Children We Care For Business Support	
	Children We Care For Management Team	
	Adoption South East	
	Children We Care For Fostering Service	Fostering Recruitment and Hub Fostering Support and Training Supporting Independence Team (16+)
	Children We Care For Home Finding and Commissioning Service	Children We Care For Home Finding and Commissioning Children We Care For Connection and Support Team
	Children We Care For and Family Time	Children in Care - East Children in Care - Central Children in Care - West Children in Care - Family Time
	Children We Care For Through Care and Separated Migrant Children	Through Care Separated Migrant Children
	Children We Care For Residential Children Homes	Children We Care For - Brodrick House Children We Care For - Hazel Lodge Children We Care For - Homefield Cottage Children We Care For - Silver Birches
	Children We Care For - Lansdowne Secure	
	Children We Care For Disability Residential Homes	Children We Care For - Seaside Short Breaks Children We Care For - The Bungalow
	Virtual School	



In 2026 the working group will focus on more general use of language, using principles outlined by the young people from Durham County Council.



Next Steps for
Corporate Parenting
Panel to facilitate the
use of new language
amongst elected
members.

Next Steps for Children's Services

Produce a Language
and Recording Policy –
co-produced with
young people.

Continue to embed
the name of service
and teams, especially
with partners.

Start using different
language and others
will follow.

A service development
day.