

The Promise highlights the things that must change in Scotland's Care System. One of the areas we are seeking to change is the language professionals’ use during discussions and in written reports.

Children/Young People and families across Scotland told the Independent Care Review of how much of the language professionals use feels stigmatising, institutional and adds to a sense of being different, how too often it lacks love, warmth and compassion. As professionals we routinely use language to talk to, about and with children and their families that we would never use with our own. As professionals we have rightly been challenged for this and asked to stop and to ensure we use the terms, names and words that the child or young person prefers when describing issues that relate to their lives and experiences.

Since the Promise was published, colleagues in the Children’s Reviewing Team have been capturing the voice of children and young people in Edinburgh when it comes to the language that they would like to stop, as well as the language they would like this replaced with. Where it is not clear, we should ask children and young people what language they would like us to use before engaging with them in meetings or writing reports e.g. with regards to names for their carers or how they prefer their birth parents to be referred to and pass this on to other professionals so that they are aware.

Please help us Keep the Promise and make 2022 the year we change the way we talk about and with children/young people and their families. Carefully consider the words and phrases in the attached list, look at your reports, change the language and please try your best not to use them during the meeting.

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| **We will try not to use….** | **We will try to use …..** |
| LAAC / LAC | Living with, Care Experienced, Looked After |
| Absconder / MP / Misper | Run away, go missing, not coming home on time, walked out |
| Birth or Biological Parents / Natural Parents | First family, First mummy or daddy, Parents, family, mum & dad, tummy mummy |
| Child’s Plan | Your plan, Next Steps |
| Contact | Family time, your plans to see or keeping in touch with family, seeing or meeting up with my/ your Dad/Mum/Grandma/Sister/ Brother etc. |
| Continuing Care | Stay put, remain, plan for after you are 18 |
| Foster Carers | We will ask you what you call them – might be; my family, Foster Mum, Foster Dad, People who care about me, my new family, or just their names |
| Kinship Carers | We will ask you what they should be called – might be; my family, gran, granddad, auntie etc. or use their names |
| LAC Review / LAAC Review | Your meeting, your planning meeting, your review, a looked after child review |
| LAC Visit / Statutory Visit | Home Visit, Visit to see you, social work visit |
| Leaving Care | Moving on, moving house, becoming independent |
| Minutes | Notes, written notes of what was said today, what we agreed today, what was decided today |
| Placement | Your home/ your house / where you live |
| Pathway Plan | Your future planning; moving on plan; your plans for the future |
| Peers | Your friends, people your age |
| Placement Breakdown / Placement Breakdown Meeting | Things didn’t work out with your previous carers, things became a bit difficult and you had to move |
| Respite | Short breaks, short stay, sleepover |
| Rehab / rehabilitation | Going back to live with your family; Going back home, back to mums/dads/ gran’s etc. |
| Reviewing Officer / Chair | Person who meets with everyone occasionally to make sure you have everything you need to be well cared for |
| Siblings | Your brothers or sisters, or use their names, important people in your life |
| Views | What’s important to you, how are you feeling, how do you see things, what you think, what would you like to see happening? |