



## CHILDREN SERVICES THE PROMISE

### LANGUAGE CREATES REALITIES

**Improvement Area 5 : “South Ayrshire recognises that ‘language creates realities’ ; those with care experience must hold and own the narrative of their own lives”.**

Incorporating care-based language into our work in South Ayrshire has been a key improvement made over the past few years.

As far back as 2018, care experienced young people said how different they felt from their non care experienced peers due to the language used around care. The term LAC (looked after child) was noted as particularly marginalising and derogatory. A series of events and awareness raising sessions have focussed supporting the workforce to talk differently and intentionally about care experience and tell a new story.

- ✓ In 2023, fifty-five young people with care experience who responded to a questionnaire and focus group told us their preference was to change the name of LAC reviews to [name of young person’s] meeting – eg. Chloe’s meeting.
- ✓ This new language was communicated widely across both South Ayrshire Council and Health and Social Care Partnership.
- ✓ A change of language in the recording of Social Work files has also been noted in the most recent file audit undertaken in July 2024. This audit indicated an increased awareness of the impact of the written word on anyone accessing their files.
- ✓ A youthwork modern apprentice with the Champions Board has used his care experience to write poetry on aspects of care that are important to him. These poems have been used to help the workforce move towards a deeper understanding of the impact of the care system and have showed us the difference that each and every one of us can make by making small changes to our practice.

**Champions for Change**  
SOUTH AYRSHIRE CHAMPIONS BOARD

*If you haven’t experienced this it must be really hard to understand but trust me the name is so important*

*It is my meeting anyway - I prefer people to use my name*

*I hate LAC - it’s horrible - just another label really*

*I think its important that people know how different we all are care experience isn’t just one thing every single person has their own story*