

Children's Services Plan: Final Report 2020–2023

**getting
it right**
for every child
in South Lanarkshire

Working together: making a difference

A foundation for recovery

Included

Active

Respected

Nurtured

Achieving
Healthy

Safe

Responsible



South Lanarkshire
Partnership
Stronger together

Achieving

Included



Respected

Safe

Healthy

Nurtured



Responsible

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Children, young people and families will be safeguarded and supported to reach their full potential and thrive within their communities.



1. Foreword

Welcome to the final report for our children's services plan covering the period 2020-2023.

Working Together: Making a Difference (A foundation for recovery) has been a two-year plan actioned as a result of the impact of COVID-19 and followed on from an additional year of our 2017-20 plan.



As we highlight the activity undertaken over the final year of the plan, we also reflect on progress since 2020 and map out the direction we are taking going forward into the next planning cycle.

The previous two years have seen the partnership take an explicit improvement approach to the activity contained within the plan. This has been a feature of how we work together to offer the best possible support to families and to help us collectively achieve our shared vision of ensuring that:

South Lanarkshire's children, young people and families will be safeguarded and supported to reach their full potential and thrive within their communities.

This report reflects on the way we have progressed the priorities in our plan 2021-23 and what we still need to do to further improve the life chances of our children, young people and families.

Throughout the last three years we have been guided by our focus on the three themes of:

- Prevention and early support
- Health and wellbeing and
- Children and young people in need of care and protection

Our Children's Services Plan has been closely aligned with South Lanarkshire's Local Child Poverty Action Report. Both plans provide a valuable contribution towards South Lanarkshire's Community Planning Partnership aim of tackling deprivation, poverty and inequality and the continued challenge of reducing child poverty.



This report will focus on the twenty priority areas in our plan and the improvement approach we have taken to progress these areas. Over the life of the plan, this focus on improvement has informed our work and our aspirations to achieve the best possible outcomes for our children, young people and families.

Commitment to The Promise has been embedded in our work over the last two years and the work of the partnership has built on the findings of the Independent Care Review and its recommendations. Our commitment to support our care experienced children, young people and families is informed by a high-level Promise Board and children and young people led Champions Board. Going forward the changes required to fulfil the aims of The Promise will be led by a new Keeping the Promise Thematic Group, one of three thematic groups that will drive the activity to support the children's services plan 2023-26. The other two thematic groups being Whole Family Approach and Health and Wellbeing.

This refocusing of our shared activity will ensure our energy is where it needs to be to deliver the best support possible to children, young people and families in South Lanarkshire.

We are committed to the proposed children's rights legislation to incorporate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into domestic law and as a partnership we will continue to build our children's rights work to ensure the voices of our children and young people are being heard and acted upon by the partnership. This approach will be embedded in our three thematic groups, which will include meaningful participation of children, young people and families in the co-design of future services.

Our recent activity has been undertaken with the challenging backdrop of COVID-19 hampering our planning and delivery of services and interrupting the momentum established by the previous plan. The innovative and creative approach taken by partners to continue to support children and families and mitigate the impact of the pandemic on their work has been a positive feature of our response.

While we look to the future to ensure we are making the most of our resources and capacity to achieve our shared vision, we reflect on the achievements over the last three years and learn from what has worked well and where we can do better.

This report shares many of the highlights of the last three years.



Cleland Sneddon
South Lanarkshire Council
Chief Executive



Jann Gardner
NHS Lanarkshire
Chief Executive

2. Our plan and its progress

This report details how we have worked together to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families in South Lanarkshire and built a strong foundation for recovery from the COVID -19 pandemic.



The 20 priorities for the last two years are detailed in the following table:

Children have the best start in life and are supported to realise their potential	The health and wellbeing of children, young people and families is improved	The life chances of our most vulnerable children and young people are improved
Reducing perinatal substance use	Improving the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children, young people and parents (Infant mental health, counselling through schools, community access framework, reducing suicide, COVID-19 impact)	Supporting sustained positive destinations for care experienced young people
Improving parental mental health in pregnancy	Healthy Weight (Physical activity, diet and nutrition)	Supporting care leavers transitions
Improving language development in early years (SIMD1)	Breastfeeding	Improving outcomes for care experienced children and young people
Developing inclusion as prevention to offending	Reducing dental decay	Improving care planning and reviews
Supporting Young Carers	Substance use by young people	Supporting Kinship Carers
Preventing domestic abuse	Parental substance use	Addressing neglect
Additional Support for Learning		Extending advocacy services for vulnerable groups



The following section details the work undertaken in relation to each of our priority themes:

Prevention and early support

Outcome 1

Children have the best start in life and are supported to realise their potential



Reducing perinatal substance use

Families are supported through Early Years Multi Agency Support meetings in each locality that include Social Work, adult mental health services, mental health midwives, Additional Midwifery Services and staff from our local 'Family Hubs'. This approach makes sure that we understand the needs of families as well as we can and provide the right support for families at this important time. Support is co-ordinated through the creation of a 'Parents' Plan' for each family, which has been built directly with parents. The use of these plans have been evaluated in our Hamilton Locality initially and as a result more families are receiving the right family support at an earlier stage of pregnancy and avoiding child protection and looked after processes being initiated.

Parent's Plans will now be rolled out across all the localities that will support further development of this work and make sure that there is a consistency of practice across all partners, both in terms of early support activity offered through to child protection intervention when necessary.

One of the pleasing aspects of this work has been the role that parents have played in helping design the offer of support. Parents have influenced the paperwork and its use, how we record need, activity and progress, how consistent and sustained relationships with professionals are created, and most importantly the way in which parents are supported to articulate their views at each stage in the process.

Improving parental mental health in pregnancy

Across the partnership there are dedicated services in place to support women who need emotional wellbeing support at the earliest point in their pregnancy journey. The approach has been informed directly by parents being part of the planning and our work is now better focused on identifying the specific needs of parents as quickly as possible.

The strength of this work is based on a strong understanding of trauma informed practice and a close working relationship between all partners, but especially with parents to support best possible parental and infant mental health outcomes.

With an emphasis on a joined-up approach, multi-agency support delivered at the earliest stage helps communication across services, enables a consistent understanding of parent's voice and helps to build a better Parent's Support Plan.

Over the last year, 329 women have benefited from this dedicated emotional wellbeing support leading to improved wellbeing outcomes for themselves and their children. Nearly 31% of parents were supported with their mental health and emotional wellbeing (e.g. post-natal depression or anxiety). This was a slight increase of 3% on the previous year. Many of these parents required support with a range of needs such as alcohol and drug use, domestic violence, which often required more formal statutory support.

Support is also offered to parents through a range of programmes, such as online Solihull resources (dedicated support to help improve parents and children's mental health), one to one support by First Steps Workers and access to a range of programmes such as 'Mellow Bumps' and infant massage.

As a result of this work, we know that parents are more open to support and are more actively involved if we can offer help before families experience a crisis situation.

Additional information about this support is available at Lanarkshire Mind Matters:
www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk

As we look forward, this work will be an integral part of the refreshed Parenting Support Pathway, making sure we address greatest need around anxiety, post-natal depression etc. and in turn develop effective resources for parents we know can make a difference.

Improving language development in early years (SIMD1)

The nurseries at Loch Primary School, Woodlands Nursery, Ballerup Nursery and St Mary's Primary in Lanark have developed improved ways to support language development in the early years along with Speech and Language Therapy teams.

This holistic approach supports parent and carers to embrace a shared approach with professionals, to help improve early learning for children with speech and language communication needs.

Parents have been supported in a number of different ways, including online sessions, newsletters and outdoor learning. All the parents involved have said that they are now more confident in supporting their children's speech and language as a result of the support received.

Woodlands Nursery used the 'Peep Learning Together Programme' to help parents whose children had a speech concern, to improve their children's life chances by making the most of everyday learning opportunities e.g. listening, talking, playing, singing and sharing books and stories together. Parents who participated in this support reported using these strategies with their children, which in turn reduced worries about their child's development.

The work in the nursery settings adds to support already offered by health visitors at routine children's 13-15 month assessments and early support to parents to help with setting language goals for their children.

This approach has highlighted positive experiences for the parents in encouraging their babies and children to become confident communicators and active learners and increase the likelihood of being ready for school.



From work over the previous three years, we know that a greater proportion of four and five year old children are meeting their recommended speech and language milestones. However, there is still a gap between children in high poverty areas in comparison with their peers in lower poverty areas.

Developing inclusion as prevention to offending

Our approach to inclusion as a prevention strategy to reduce youth offending has delivered a range of innovative opportunities in the Cambuslang and Rutherglen area.

The activity is a partnership between South Lanarkshire Council, Action for Children, the Children and Young Persons Centre for Justice and Dartington Service Design Lab.

This work aims to ensure that children in conflict with the law experience a service that respects and promotes children's rights, and in so doing avoids criminalising our children.

Referral to the Children's Hearing system diverts young people away from the criminal justice system and offers co-ordinated support for the child and family. There has been an increase over the past three years in the number of young people being supported by a Compulsory Supervision Order after the age of 16, evidence that young people are being diverted from formal proceedings and supported in less punitive ways. In 2020, the 16+ age group made up just 1% of all Compulsory Supervision Orders, this has increased to 10% by the end of 2022. This excellent progress is further evidenced by a reduction in the number of Criminal Justice Social Work Reports required and Community Payback Orders issued for under 18's.

To improve relationships between young people and staff, a training programme was co-produced with young people and practitioners and tried out in November and December 2022.

We are working to improve how we protect young people who are at risk of harm outside of the family home, e.g., in parks, bus and train stations, in school and online. This supports our shift in focus to take greater steps to make the places where young people are more often and are exposed to abuse safer.

As a result we are able to identify understand and engage more effectively with contexts and groups where young people are at risk of significant harm. During the last six months there has been increased focus on the 12+ population and there has been an improvement in identifying child protection risks to young people enabling the right support to be provided.

Other examples of recent practice have included a 'Junior Pathfinder' approach to support transition from primary to secondary school for pupils with attendance issues, difficult relationships with education and other barriers to learning. 137 children and their families recorded improved attendance, increased confidence about going to high school and better relationships between home and school.

A creative arts project called 'Streetcones' helped young people involved in offending behaviour, share their experiences through development of a script and participation in a live question and answer session with social work staff. The outcome of this work helped to shape changes to services for young people in conflict with the law making support more young person centred in the process.

Going forward we will develop a 'Justice Experienced Champions Board' which will help embed the voices and experiences of children and young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of support services.

Further information about the work is available on the Inclusion as Prevention website: www.inclusionasprevention.org.uk

Supporting Young Carers

Our Young Carers Service (delivered by Action for Children) has been able to support around 350 children and young people since the project was established. Amazingly, 100% of children and young people supported told us that the service has helped them achieve their goals and meet their identified needs through a range of activities including: weight management interventions, help with stopping smoking, money advice for families, one to one support, access to short breaks and groupwork sessions.

Action for Children accessed additional funding which has made a positive difference to our families including providing Christmas gifts, replacement white goods and emergency payments for food. Young carers have also benefitted from engaging in the Summer of Fun programme and support from the 'Over the Wall' project that support the siblings of children with serious illnesses and/or disability.

Staff from the Young Carers Service work with partners to raise awareness of support on offer to children and young people and how they can access additional help if required. Awareness raising sessions have taken place in almost all our high schools across South Lanarkshire.

Between April and December last year 79 referrals were made to the service from partner organisations. In 2021 it was 39 and the year before 22, showing a positive uptake in use of the service and an increase in important support offered to young carers.

Some examples of feedback from young people about the support they experienced include:

A young carer who received support said that 'when with the staff member they feel like they had a big sister, which is what they always wanted'.

I really enjoyed today, was a bit worried I didn't know anyone at first, but it was fun, and I'd come to something like this again if you did it.

Parents and carers also reported the difference support from Action for Children has had on them:

S is loving the group, it's made such a big difference to her, thank you so much.

I want to say how much I really really appreciate your help and support, especially the time you spend with L each week she loves it so much, going out with you has really improved confidence in L.

Mum

Action for Children consult young carers and their families on an ongoing basis and through a tool called 'Menti-meter' and through face to face conversations with young carers and their families, both individually and in groups.

Preventing domestic abuse

Seven young people worked to produce a survey for young people aged 12-15 years old across South Lanarkshire in schools and community groups, to gain understanding of current experiences of Gender Based Violence in the community. The young people helped carry out the survey with youth groups, employability services, schools and colleges and through social media to reach as many young people as possible. The learning from the survey helped them to think about what they could do as a group to challenge Gender Based Violence and other types of relationship-based abuse.

This led to the group making an animation to challenge people's attitudes to gender-based violence. Throughout Summer 2022, the young people worked with the team from Women's Aid to co-create a two - minute awareness raising animation, 16 days of activism visuals and supporting materials for use within an education setting. The animation was shared with over 200 staff from children's services organisations in November 2022.

The animator's blog reflects on her experiences working on this project. [How co-designing with young people can change your practice – Inclusion as Prevention.](#)

The young people are currently completing an SCQF level 4 Wellbeing Award for the work that they have done on this subject, which recognises the levels of skills attained through their group work and approach to tackling complex issues within their community.

The project team, Hamilton Grammar and Women's Aid have worked closely together to pilot these resources in the school with pupils and to understand the impact this has on attitudes and behaviour of the young people participating. The intention is to promote the use of the video and education materials more widely and, in time, make it an integral part of how gender-based violence is challenged.

A number of secondary schools in South Lanarkshire are currently running the Mentors in Violence Prevention programme, which helps to address relationship-based abuse with young people. Staff in additional secondary schools took part in training in Autumn 2022 in order that the programme can be implemented in those schools in the academic year 2023-24.



Activity with young people challenging gender-based violence is just one of a range of activities related to the Inclusion as Prevention initiative, which seeks to co-design and implement new ways of working with children, young people and professionals to help ensure children and young people are less likely to come in conflict with the law. Children and young people have been working with staff from Social Work, Education, Health and other partners who have an impact on the lives of children and young people.

Young People have been providing feedback on services in South Lanarkshire more generally and what they are telling us is, that although there are a lot of great services available to them, they sometimes find it difficult to find them and access them.

Young people are requesting that services advertise more directly to them rather than to other professionals. For example:

- Young people exploring the topic of grief and loss explained that when they have experienced this, they had to speak to different teachers or youth workers to find out what help was available to them. Although this is still helpful for some young people, they expressed that they would like to also have services advertised directly to them
- They have told us they get most of their information from social media and information would be best shared there, where they are more likely to see it
- They also explained that they mostly watch videos rather than read posts

As a result, the young people are working with various service providers to produce animated videos explaining what services are available, what you can expect when you join and how to get in touch with them. These videos are fully co-produced with young people and will be shared for young people, by young people.

Additional Support for Learning

The 'B Squared Programme' for pupils is now in use in every complex Additional Support Needs education establishment across South Lanarkshire. It has led to a higher quality learning and support for pupils and subsequent improved achievement. It has allowed schools to improve attainment through the setting and assessing of baseline data and individual targets, improved

Additional Support Plans for pupils and more meaningful reporting progress to parents.

The programme allows for children, young people and their families to engage with individual target setting and learning outcomes in a number of ways. Participating schools are beginning to open up this online attainment sharing platform to pupils and parents/carers to allow them to see the progress that has been made by their children and to share in the setting of any new targets, all of which are child friendly. It also allows all stakeholders to see how the Additional Support Plan targets relate directly to assessment of children's learning. As a result, parents and carers are more directly involved in their children's learning based on the targets being set.

Going forward will see an analysis of all establishments' attainment, which will help inform improvement in all areas of the curriculum in schools. It will improve our approach towards the sharing of practice to improve results for pupils and support annual reporting to parents/carers that is linked directly to the B Squared information in a parent and child friendly way.

Early help and support

A good example how we support families in a preventative way is through our Early Help Hub approach, which has implemented an early support mechanism to help keep families out of statutory Social Work support.

The aim of the hub was that earlier help will reduce the likelihood of families needing more formal care and protection support by providing preventative, strengths-based help for families who have been referred to Social Work, or reached out for support themselves. Instead of waiting until families meet statutory thresholds for intervention, the Early Help Hub works with families to identify what support will prevent the problem escalating. Mostly families are supported to use help already within their family, or community but, if required can also be provided with targeted or intensive support from Social Work Family Support services. The experience of the work around Early Help Hub has been very positive, to the extent that this approach has developed into a locality model, with each area having a local Family Hub that is open, welcoming and accessible for families to get that much needed community based help when they need it.

Health and wellbeing

Outcome 2

The health and wellbeing of children and families is improved



Improving the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children, young people and parents

We talked to children and young people about their mental and emotional health needs and to help inform future services. This included ten focus groups, 3481 pupils completing a survey and a high profile 'Let's Connect Event' in February 2023 for around 120 young people. The key issues being raised by children and young people were:

- Improve signposting and advertising of services
- A clear pathway to access support
- Providing more mental health support for primary aged pupils

In 2022 we launched a new digital support for children and young people in South Lanarkshire called Kooth. Of the young people who completed the Kooth survey, 91% found the content helpful and 100% found the online counselling helpful.

Training for staff helped increase the skills and understanding around suicide intervention and in particular Lifelines Lanarkshire guidance and procedures. Lifelines has been used by school staff in a number of primary schools when supporting children who were potentially at risk of suicide.

I'd just like to thank (Lifelines Lanarkshire training team) for giving their time to our team and providing an opportunity for us to stop and reflect on the most challenging part of our job. I found this training very reassuring and also really appreciated the self-care aspect. Thank you!

Participant Feedback

Eighty-six staff participated in a two-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) including staff from all mainstream secondary schools. Feedback from the training has informed adaptation of the training for use in secondary additional support needs schools.

A key resource of an 'Infant Mental Health Observation Indicator Set' has been created for use by staff in early years to help them identify



emotional wellbeing concerns at the earliest stage possible. Staff across a range of early years settings e.g., Health Visitors, Family Nurse Partnership, Social Work, Head Teachers and Early Learning and Childcare have benefitted from training to use the Indicator Set to help inform their work with infants and families.

Using the resource as part of everyday work is now becoming more common and is supported by briefings for staff, who found that the tool was helpful in particular when working to address issues such as maternal mental health, care experienced infants, infants with an emotional behavioural concern, or when there was a child protection issue.

Between February 2021 and April 2022 there were 29 consultations with the specialist Infant Mental Health Service, in the same period to April 2023 the service has received 32 referrals, the most common age group to benefit was between 13 and 35 months. The multi-agency team, which includes a Social Worker and an Early Years Worker provided support to families including a programme called 'Circle of Security', which helps to strengthen the attachment between parent and child.

In addition, we have been talking to parents across South Lanarkshire to enable them to help inform the redesign of the Parental Support Pathway and supporting groupwork programme.

Healthy Weight

(Physical activity, diet and nutrition)

NHS Lanarkshire and partners provided community based weight management support to improve the overall health and wellbeing of children, young people and families. Some key highlights over the last year have been:

The Lanarkshire Weight Management Service recently launched a 'Getting Our Active Lifestyle Started (GOALS)' programme with 68 children and young people participating. The majority of the participants were in the 8-15 age group and came from the higher poverty areas.

There were 1304 visits to the children and young people's weight management website that contains helpful information, resources and videos. www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/weight-management-service/

144 children and families (0-2 age range) participated in the Little 'n' Lively programme, where parents are supported by staff trained in ante and post-natal activity. A group of six parents interviewed after completing the programme said that they would all recommend the programme to others, that it was an ideal programme for first time mums and helped to reduce isolation as well as providing an ideal learning opportunity about their babies' development and nutrition.

Thirty-four families completed the 'Full of Beans' six-week programme for two to five year olds.

Eighty five percent of secondary schools engaged in the Healthy Schools Framework exceeding a target of 50% and 72 staff attended the Healthy Schools Framework launch event and received training on the framework.

All programmes are made accessible for young, new and vulnerable parents with support from health professionals locally. Each programme provides a range of resources designed to meet the needs of parents. Many parents reported their child's increased consumption of fruit and vegetables and decreased consumption of high sugar snack foods and drinks.

Breastfeeding

As part of Scottish Breastfeeding Week, we held a multi-agency conference where a large proportion of participants were mothers, babies and families with a key theme of engagement and listening to feedback. A total of 26 illustrations were created on the day to demonstrate the main messages and themes coming through.



A staff survey has been carried out across South Lanarkshire Council to understand knowledge, confidence, attitudes, and beliefs around supporting breastfeeding within the workplace. Key themes from the survey were: the need for an updated Breastfeeding Return to Work Policy for staff and training for all staff.

As a result new training resources and a Return to Work policy have been developed.

In order to support breastfeeding in the community, continued promotion and support of premises signing up to Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland has continued. All South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture buildings have signed up, as well as a number of community venues where NHS Maternal and Infant Nutrition and Health Improvement staff have engaged with partners and private businesses.

Moving into the next year, we will work towards a whole systems approach where every department in the local authority will be breastfeeding friendly and can submit an application to the Scottish Government for the Breastfeeding Friendly Local Authority Award. The initial first steps of this will be to work with Education on achieving the Early Learning and Schools Awards.

Reducing dental decay

A training resource around good dental health has been developed, including wellbeing packs for use with children, young people and families. The training to support the use of the wellbeing packs aims to give staff a better knowledge and understanding of oral health key messages, dental services and the Childsmile Programme. The delivery of key oral health messages has a beneficial impact on the children and young people with messages being taken back to their homes.

The packs provide staff with a series of facts and information they use when having health conversations led by the children and young people as part of the wellbeing bag activity. This includes a toothbrush and toothpaste pack that the children can take away. The aim is to increase staff confidence to have those conversations around oral health, knowing the information they are providing is accurate and up-to-date.

Over the last year we have seen a 21.4 % increase to 94% in school age children being registered with a dentist. Work will continue to encourage

families to commit to regular visits to the dentist and maintain good oral health behaviours.

Substance use by young people

A substance use pathway for young people that can be used up to the age of 26 has being developed by partners including Regen FX, the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Social Work and young people who are currently receiving support. The pathway outlines the various support and help available to young people who engage in substance use.

As part of the pathway work, partners are building an understanding of which services young people seek out for support and what the impact of that support is. A recent audit of 120 young people benefitting from throughcare and aftercare support identified 16 young people as needing targeted substance use support and treatment. At present young people get support from a range of services including Beacons locality bases, Community Mental Health teams, Intensive Housing Support Workers and the Challenging Behaviour Clinic.

Parental substance use

Partners have worked to improve parents' awareness and access to alcohol and drug support services and the services that exist to support family members and loved ones who support adults who use alcohol or drugs.

Much of this work has been part of the new Early Help Hub established in late 2021, with the aim of diverting families away from statutory Social Work services.

The newly established local Family Hubs combine a range of existing support services for families with early identification of need. There are currently strong links with community-based alcohol and drugs services to ensure families experiencing the negative impact of drug and alcohol use get the right help. However, an area for improvement is the extent to which parents who are supported by the hub due to their alcohol/drug-use have 'My Support Day' (charity for family members/loved ones) promoted to them. The key benefit of this support is a reduction in stigma, poverty, and health inequalities for parents and children.

Supporting vulnerable groups and keeping children safe

Outcome 3

The life chances of our most vulnerable children with additional support needs and our most vulnerable young people are improved



Supporting sustained positive destinations for care experienced young people

We continue to make sure that all care experienced young people get the best employability support if they need it when leaving school. Their progress is closely monitored as part of dedicated support to make sure as many as possible experience a positive post school transition. The Care Experienced Employability Focus Group continues to meet regularly and well established processes are in place between the Youth Employability Service, Education and Social Work to track destinations and jointly support young people. All care experienced young people, including those in kinship care, looked after by friends or relatives are identified and discussed at school meetings which are held twice a year in all schools. This identifies those young people who require more intensive support including referral to Aspire and Aspire Works.

The recent publication of school leavers destinations in 2022 shows that South Lanarkshire has a positive destination rate of 92% for care experienced leavers compared with 96.2% for all leavers. The gap has been reduced to 3.7% from the previous year. This evidences the successful identification and offer of support to young people who are care experienced in moving into positive destinations. The gap is the smallest to date and compares well to the national average.

A South Lanarkshire Council modern apprenticeship 'promise' has been developed which supports care experienced young people through pre-apprenticeship placements and a flexible recruitment approach. Young people have secured modern apprenticeships within Early Learning and Childcare, Health and Social Care, Joinery and Plastering. One young person has secured a building operative post with a further two young people set to secure a modern apprenticeship soon.



Supporting care leavers transitions

One of the main supports offered for young people leaving care is accessing suitable accommodation. To support this, we have implemented a person-centred 'Housing Pathways' approach for all care experienced young people applying through the Throughcare system. The pathway is based on the needs and aspirations of young people and progresses at a pace young people are comfortable with. It helps match the needs of care experienced young people with available tenancies, including those in the private rented sector in addition to social landlords. In the past year 43 young people were offered tenancies, with 33 of the young people having a housing pathway in place. At the end of the year 96% of the tenancies were being sustained. One example of the impact of this approach is contained in the following case study:

Case Study

As part of a review for a young care leaver who was placed in an external secure placement the young person was supported by a Housing Officer. During an initial meeting the young person became overwhelmed and ran out of the meeting. The young person was later found at her Mum's and was refusing to return to her placement and was struggling to cope. The young person advised she wanted to stay and support her Mum as she suffered from mental health issues. Her mum had been diagnosed with psychotic behaviour and refused to take medication and there were concerns around Mum's safety.

Mum's accommodation only had one bedroom but supporting services agreed to this arrangement as a temporary measure.

The young person completed a housing application form and a housing pathway based on her needs. Whilst awaiting an offer of housing the young person made numerous calls and advised that her relationship with her Mum had become extremely volatile and concerning. Her social worker was concerned she was becoming her Mum's carer impacting on her ability to accept a tenancy of her own or return to college. Staff from Housing and Social Work worked together to identify an appropriate property and identified an available house close to her Mum. The offer was discussed with the young person, and she felt this was a good option as she could be nearby her Mum but still have her own space.

As a result, the young person has now moved in and settled well. Both she and her Mum are engaging with supports and sustaining their individual tenancies. The young person reflected positively on the experience saying:

"This was the first time I have felt included and listened to. I am grateful for the opportunities you have given me. Thank you for not quitting on me like everyone else, you all seem to care about me. Thanks for trying to help, thanks for not giving up when I didn't phone you back, thanks so much for listening and for caring."



Improving outcomes for care experienced children and young people

Support for care experienced children and young people living with parents, friends and relatives has been a key feature of our work and an action plan to improve outcomes for care experienced children and young people helped set out our commitment.

This included:

A tutoring programme to improve attainment levels for care experienced pupils that provided study support to those pupils who needed it. Evidence shows that pupils are benefitting from this dedicated support. The tutoring programme was part of a wider learning recovery and renewal programme within Education and the project was established to give all care experienced young people in the senior phase the offer of a tutor to support a subject of their choice to help them to achieve the best outcome possible.

A pool of tutors was created from core teaching staff, and a matching and support system was established to build relationships and agree the best place and time for the tuition to take place. Key to the success of this work was the school-based leads and their support in organising the tutor matches.

The school leads were crucial for making the introductions, securing a good place for the tuition to take place and ensuring we took account of the individual learning needs of each young person. Sixty-four care experienced young people were matched with a tutor and the feedback has been positive from the young people, the tutors and the school leads. The support was across a wide range of subjects from National 4 to Advanced Higher.

Some great work has taken place to get a consistent language for use across the partnership on definitions of care settings. This will avoid confusion in planning of support and targeted interventions. This work has also included a scoping exercise to get the most up to date data on each category, so partners are aware of the scale of need and can provide support accordingly.

The dedicated Promise Development Workers have been supporting young people with a view to making sure their experiences and their voices are being recognised as part of our planning of services and they have been directly involved in improving the assessment, planning and reviewing of care plans to make the experience more meaningful for children.

The work of the Early Support Hub has been realigning existing support to provide better targeted help so kinship carers can access this more easily. We have also supported our Kinship Carers' Forums with added information and publicity resources to raise the awareness of the peer support on offer.

As part of the Warm Welcome initiative in South Lanarkshire, £40,000 was awarded to Who Cares? Scotland to support a Winter Wishes campaign alongside the Continuing Care team in Social Work Resources. 207 care experienced children and young people benefitted from support ranging from £50 – £250 in vouchers to help cope with the cost of living during the Christmas period and wider Winter challenges. Young people said:

Hey! Just wanted to let you know how much of a difference getting those vouchers at Christmas made, the stresses of getting everything in, it made me able to relax and enjoy the Christmas period knowing I had a voucher to go get food in and something for myself as well, it helped me a lot mentally as well as I wasn't stressed and worried about how I would manage! I hosted my first Christmas dinner for family and it made me so proud to have this extra money to make it special.

Thank you for thinking about me, it means so much.

This helped with the little extras I would never have been able to afford.



Improving care planning and reviews

Who Cares? Scotland have been working with a secondary school and Social Work staff to explore the process of the Looked After Review, the support offered and impact on the child or young person. Young people have produced a video highlighting their experiences of care reviews, which informed our improvement work on making care reviews more child and young person friendly. Young people have reported that they would prefer an aspirational approach to care planning and reviews that focus on a 'this is what I need from my corporate parents' type approach, rather than a reflective historical review that focuses children/young people. A way to measure satisfaction with the review process is currently being explored with children and young people.

Who Cares? Scotland continue to provide peer review advocacy and record children's satisfaction under the 'Each and Every Child' model, ensuring that language, tone and approach all positively frame care experienced people and the world around them.

Supporting Kinship Carers

Staff in East Kilbride have been using a new assessment framework with kinship carers. A comments questionnaire was issued to each set of carers asking them to comment on their level of satisfaction with the support they received to participate in assessment, and with its outcome. They were also asked how the process of conducting assessments could be improved for the future. Early responses indicate that carers have found using the assessment framework very helpful.

Kinship carers networks meet on a regular basis in each of our four localities and are supported by a range of staff at appropriate times. The networks benefit from volunteer peer support, which is a strength of this work and regular sessions are planned with visiting professionals from Health, Education, Social Work, Youth, Family and Community Learning, Skills Development Scotland and Money Matters providing valuable information on benefits, education support, employability etc.

Two fun days were held in the Summer and October school breaks attracting over 100 families and providing the opportunity to connect with other kinship care families, try new activities and access additional help and support.



Addressing neglect

A neglect toolkit was developed to help staff provide the best possible support to families where neglect is an issue. The toolkit covers a wide range of topics ranging from physical care to relationships and education. Staff involved in the first phase of using the toolkit were offered training and support in its implementation.

As part of evaluating its use, two families, four health staff and four social workers took part in giving their views about its use. Feedback from the families and staff was 100% positive and parents commented on how they felt “part of the process” instead of being “talked at.” Parents reflected they better understood the issue of neglect, their own experiences, and the impact neglect had on their children. We found convincing evidence that children were benefitting from greater routines, improved supervision and increased safety, alongside regular attendance at school.

As a result of this successful use of the new toolkit, South Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee approved a rollout of the toolkit for use by all staff.

Extending advocacy services for vulnerable groups

A Referral Pathway has been designed by Who Cares? Scotland and Partners In Advocacy with a view to signposting young people and professionals to the appropriate advocacy services in South Lanarkshire. This has increased access to independent advocacy for young people and ensured that young people have advocacy support in all formal processes. An example of this is when a referral was made to Partners in Advocacy to support a young person through the Children Hearing System. The advocate provided support to the young person during these meetings. When the meetings were concluded, a referral was made to Who Care? Scotland to support the young person at their Care Review.

Work on an advocacy charter is ongoing. The Promise Development Workers have been building positive relationships with young people and partners across the local authority to ensure young people are at the heart of the creation of the charter. The workers are developing positive working relationships with young people and staff in the children’s houses across the local authority with a view to increasing participation opportunities and including the young people in the creation of the charter.

Achieving

Milestones

3. Children's Rights Report 2020-23



Preparing for the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into domestic law has been a feature of our work over the last three years. Our approach is designed to help children access their rights more easily and we have been engaging with our wider workforce to understand children's rights better, be more aware of the demands that incorporation will make on public services and to understand what best practice looks like.

Respecting and promoting the rights of all children and young people has been central to our work in developing our new children's services plan 2023-26 and we are confident that this strong rights-based approach will make a significant difference to children and young people's lives and improve the quality and impact of services. We are listening more to young people than ever before through a wide range of participation and engagement practice.

As a partnership we are developing a strategic approach to how the voices and lived experience of children, young people and parents and carers can be incorporated into our planning processes more effectively.

We recognise that children and young people want the right to be themselves and this is a feature of our approach [#TheRightToBeMyself](#)

Our commitment to children's rights and engagement participation is a strength and features in our children's services plan animation designed and created by our children and young people: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sx_rrNiKOo8&t=4s



What we have done to support children's rights in South Lanarkshire:

A selection of the many examples of children's rights practice from across South Lanarkshire is shared in the table below:

Clusters UNCRC Articles	What we have done	What we will do now
(i) General measures of Implementation Article 42 (knowledge of rights)	<p>Continued to use the Children's Rights Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) model in addition to our Children's Services Plan 2023-26 and our Local Child Poverty Action Report.</p> <p>Further developed the awareness of children's rights by carrying out a series of informative and participative children's rights focus groups for staff across public services.</p> <p>Implemented our Promise Board with representation at the highest level and with care experienced children and young people at its heart through our Champion's Board.</p> <p>Recruited two new Promise Development Workers who have been given the task of talking to and listening to our care experienced children and young people.</p> <p>Children's rights have been a feature of multi-agency and single agency seminars including a Keeping the Promise event, workforce 'Connecting Localities' seminars and an Inclusive Education Service event which has helped build on our rights-based practice and continue to set the agenda for further improvement in working towards best practice.</p> <p>We have worked with children and young people to produce an exciting animation that helps focus on what support is available to children, young people and families in general and children's rights in particular.</p>	<p>Provide Children's Rights Wellbeing Impact Assessment training for relevant staff.</p> <p>Make children's rights part of all that we do.</p> <p>Further support our Champion's Board to articulate the issues most relevant to care experienced children and young people.</p> <p>Make sure that co-design of future services is an integral part of how we work together.</p>

Clusters UNCRC Articles	What we have done	What we will do now
(i) General measures of Implementation Article 42 (knowledge of rights)	<p>Kirktonholme Primary 7 class hosted an event in the gym hall, 'Road to Rights' to launch and teach each year group about UNCRC and demonstrated excellent leadership skills by having information stands about the main articles.</p> <p>Through the use of digital technology, children created videos explaining the rights of a child and introduced the whole school to the UNCRC. Classroom, dining room and playground charters have been created, linked to the UNCRC articles and children created signage of each article, which is displayed in the school gym hall and dining hall. As result of the event children are now aware of their main rights.</p> <p>Other examples of work in Kirktonholme Primary includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pupil Council have consulted with the school community on participatory budget spending from their Pupil Equity Fund • Health and Wellbeing ambassadors have supported implementation of the Attachment Strategy and have created sensory boxes for each class • Reading Ambassadors have organised celebrations of reading, including World Book Day • Learners have been consulted on after school and have facilitated lunchtime clubs • Eco Warriors have facilitated Kirktonholme's climate conference <p>The work to support pupil voice and leadership has resulted in an increase in children's confidence, self-esteem and engagement.</p>	<p>Continue with this good practice e.g. monthly assembly, 'Right a Month', use of videos to maintain enthusiasm, share UNCRC information with parents.</p> <p>Connect with learners from other schools.</p>



Clusters UNCRC Articles	What we have done	What we will do now
(ii) General principles of the UNCRC Article 12 (respect for the views of the child)	<p>We have adopted a strategic approach to gathering and analysing the engagement work we carry out to make sure the views and experiences of our children, young people and families directly informs our planning and decision making. A scoping exercise carried out over the last year highlights the following activity, which will inform our planning going forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children's Rights/UNCRC incorporation awareness raising for staff• Champion's Board voices inform the priority actions for The Promise work• Care Day Event for 130 care experienced young people• Consultation on community access to mental health support and a 'Let's Connect' Event for 120 children and young people• Launch of South Lanarkshire's Youth Strategy by young people• Mind of My Own app for care experienced young people• Lived experience activity with communities around poverty/child poverty• Work with our kinship carer support groups to help inform and improve services and support• Children and young people's survey to inform NHS Lanarkshire's Getting Our Active Lifestyle Started programme• We have extended advocacy support to children and young people who are on the child protection register• Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service has appointed an Engagement Officer to improve our engagement with young people and gather their views on service provision, accommodation etc.	<p>Make participation and co-design an integral part of the activity of children's services partners and the partnership as a whole.</p>

Clusters UNCRC Articles	What we have done	What we will do now
(ii) General principles of the UNCRC Article 12 (respect for the views of the child)	<p>Neighbourhood Participatory Budgeting in Fernhill, Burnhill and Cambuslang has helped young people become more involved in neighbourhood planning processes by having a variety of methods to get involved and specifically promoting this opportunity within groups/organisations that work with children. In most areas about 20% of all votes on Participatory Budgeting were from children and young people. This allows young people to have a direct role in decision making at a neighbourhood level and letting services know what is most important to them, not only giving young people the right to vote but to actively encourage them to do so.</p> <p>Neighbourhood consultations in Fernhill and Burnhill areas helped design a more child friendly version of surveys for use in schools to ensure young people are involved in setting community priorities in neighbourhood planning. Designing focus groups and workshops in fun environments to engage young people more in the neighbourhood planning process meant that nearly 30% of people that have taken part in our engagement exercises have been children and young people. Not only giving young people the right to have their say but to actively encourage them to do so.</p> <p>Ongoing development of the specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service team who work with care experienced children and young people help to inform and improve mental health interventions and supports for this group of children and young people and help partner agencies understand their difficulties more effectively.</p>	<p>Continue to encourage children and young people's participation in Neighbourhood Planning activity.</p> <p>Keep involving young people in the design and delivery of our participatory budgeting and in the design and delivery of our engagement work.</p> <p>Continue to ensure children and young people contribute towards the planning and evaluation of CAMHS services.</p>



Clusters UNCRC Articles	What we have done	What we will do now
(iii) Civil rights and freedoms Article 2 (non-discrimination)	<p>St Andrew's and St Bride's High School has developed a whole school ethos around inclusion and non-discrimination, including the school's anti-bullying policy and promoting positive behaviour policy. The school has linked different aspects of school community to specific UNCRC rights e.g. S2 held a Culture Day where pupils led activities around different cultures of children and young people within school, which increased awareness of different cultural practice and appreciation of the variety of cultures within the school community. In addition, the school Equality Group for staff and pupils meets regularly through the year to discuss issues of equality which has increased pupils understanding of equality issues.</p> <p>Mossneuk Primary's Rights Respecting Schools Award Pupil Leadership Group worked on relaunching the Right of the Month at pupil assemblies. The children showed the new Right of the Month boards which are displayed in every class and throughout the school. The Right of the Month changes every month and the annual overview takes account of rights that may link to special events and festivals. This allows class teachers to discuss the Right of the Month with their class led by the Leadership Group member. The children investigate the specific Right of the Month and learn more about this.</p>	<p>The school will implement new ideas outlined in school ethos policy and continue to support the activities of the Equality Group.</p> <p>Continue having a Right of the Month and investigate the possibility of developing a Global Goal of the Month.</p>
(iv) Violence against children Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect)	<p>In all our schools we work to maintain children's and young people's right to privacy when it is safe to do so e.g. information sharing.</p> <p>This allows children and young people to be confident when sharing very personal information that it will only be shared with others when their safety is at risk, or they give permission to do so.</p>	<p>We will ensure this is an integral part of our GIRFEC practice across all partners to support the care and protection of children and young people.</p>

Clusters UNCRC Articles	What we have done	What we will do now
(v) Family environment and alternative care Article 9 (separation from parents)	<p>School nursing staff were involved in organising and delivering the Christmas gifts for families which enables a greater sense of wellbeing at this important time. Staff also work closely with Venture Scotland to which they refer children to access funded outdoor activities to build on their strengths and emotional health through play.</p> <p>The support for South Lanarkshire's Champion's Board has been a highlight of our engagement work over the last three years. An inclusive model of participation for children and young people has meant that the voice of our care experienced population is heard by decision makers at the very highest level impacting on strategic decisions and the way we deliver some support. One example of this work has been the Promise Development Team from WhoCares? Scotland who worked closely with the Champions and partners from Social Work and Education to deliver a 2023 Care Day conference and ensure care experienced pupils from every secondary school could inform our activity to Keep the Promise.</p> <p>The event focused on themes identified by corporate parents at an event in October 2022 to support wider discussion with children and young people on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where you live (Housing) • The adults around you (Dedicated support) • Money (Finance) <p>Over 130 care experienced children and young people from all secondary schools shared their views and experiences and stories from their peers, friends, and family. This helped us all to agree on what matters most to care experienced people.</p>	<p>School Nursing will make the organisation of Christmas gifts for families an annual offer of support.</p> <p>Further develop our Champion's Board model and make the Care Day celebration an annual event and an integral part of our co-production activity.</p>



Clusters UNCRC Articles	What we have done	What we will do now
(vi) Basic health and welfare Article 24 (health and health services)	<p>School nurses have changed the way we offer Health Needs Assessments to care experienced children and young people and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children using our 'Wellbeing Bag'. This supports a more conversational approach, where children and young people can be more engaged in the assessment and lead the conversation.</p> <p>Kirktonholme Primary School hosted a Children's Mental Health Week promoting the theme of 'Connections'. The whole school participated, with various activities linked to the UNCRC articles. Children increased their learning and understanding about how to form a positive growth mindset, respect each other and regulate emotions. Children also had the opportunity to participate in an after school club.</p> <p>Health professionals have been supporting young people to continue to attend school through working alongside the young person, their caregivers and education staff to develop an individual approach for young people within Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to continue to attend school or have support provided at home as required. This support allows young people who have been struggling to attend school, the opportunity to work towards attending on a phased basis through developing coping strategies for managing in school or looking towards further education options.</p> <p>Woodlands Nursery Class has a Wellbeing group that runs twice per week for a group of eight children to attend over two terms to allow adequate time to learn about the importance of nurture. Each week children hear about how support for attachment and resilience can help children to understand their right to be heard, cared for, and respected.</p>	<p>Extend the use of the Wellbeing Bag approach where relevant.</p> <p>Continue to make connections with the Wellbeing indicators and UNCRC articles.</p> <p>Continue to create pathways for children to participate in clubs within their community.</p> <p>Continue to support young people who wish to continue to attend school even when their mental health impacts upon their ability to attend.</p> <p>Continue to develop this approach and other examples of good practice in our schools.</p>

Clusters UNCRC Articles	What we have done	What we will do now
(vii) Education, leisure and culture Article 31 (leisure, play and culture)	<p>The development of the High Backs in Burnhill through neighbourhood planning and Participatory Budgeting has given young people a safe place to learn and play with peers through informal community activities. This development is driven by a Children's Action Group.</p> <p>St Kenneth's Primary School Nursery class developed their own Outside Mud Kitchen in the school grounds. The children observed the area looking at ways to improve it and in groups they discussed what changes they would like to make. They made plans of the area with their marking skills and lists of resources, using pictures from catalogues and the internet. The children linked this with their families through our learning journals to ask if parents could donate any real-life resources. The mud kitchen area was a terrific success and looked amazing and is now a very popular part of the school's outdoor area.</p> <p>Facilitating the children to take ownership of the area encouraged a range of skills such as: creativity, teamwork, leadership skills and communication (expressing thoughts and feelings and likes and dislikes).</p> <p>Children from Machanhill Primary School Nursery Class joined in with their keyworkers in August, or on beginning nursery in signing up to our nursery charter by signing the charter with painted handprints. The Nursery Charter is on display in the nursery playroom for everyone to see. Children and staff are able to discuss, agree and understand the nursery rules. E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding that we need to listen to adults and children to be able to follow instructions/ rules/routines and to learn • agreeing that we would have kind hands and feet in nursery and that we would not use unkind hurtful words to our friends or keyworkers <p>St Cuthbert's Primary School and Nursery Class have an inclusive approach to recognising all cultures in the school, e.g. by celebrating Chinese New Year and enjoying story telling sessions from one of the school's Mandarin speaking parents. Children have enjoyed listening to Romanian and Polish interactive stories using the interactive touch screens.</p>	<p>Continue to ensure that the voice of children and young people is an integral aspect of the neighbourhood planning process across South Lanarkshire.</p> <p>Other children have been inspired by this and are now developing other areas of the nursery.</p> <p>Continuing to immerse all children in the language and meaning of UNCRC throughout all daily learning experiences that are on offer to all children in Machanhill Primary School.</p> <p>The school will continue to celebrate up and coming calendar events to include all children.</p>



Clusters UNCRC Articles	What we have done	What we will do now
	<p>These activities made the children feel safe with the link from home to Nursery and made them aware of other customs and realise that 'we are all unique'.</p> <p>Law Primary School Nursery Class developed a rest area in a cosy corner to establish a quiet nurture area where children can relax and enjoy books and sensory experiences. Children identified and co-constructed rules and expectations for the area and staff encouraged and supported children to use the area appropriately. This acknowledges that children have the right to rest and sleep in the nurture area. Staff identified that children rarely want to sleep at nursery however the children use the nurture area to relax and take a rest.</p> <p>Children have the right to free choice and 'in the moment' planning and open ended resources support holistic and curiosity approaches to learning. To support this work staff and children have developed a display board which links the children's activities in nursery to the UNCRC.</p>	<p>The school will look to improve this resource by adding more loose parts and open-ended resources for learning.</p>
<p>(viii) Special protection measures</p> <p>Article 40 (juvenile justice)</p>	<p>The Inclusion as Prevention initiative has championed a rights-based approach, promoting participation of children and young people, particularly those most at risk of systemic discrimination. Our vision for children and young people involved in behaviour which leads them into conflict with the law is informed by a rights respecting approach. Inclusion as Prevention tests of change have looked at strengthening co-production approaches, reducing the criminalisation of young people, and giving audience to the voice of young people. More information can be found here: https://inclusionasprevention.org.uk.</p> <p>Inclusion as Prevention has provided opportunities for more regular and increased dialogue and communication about new and innovative ways that service providers can be more inclusive in all areas of practice involving children, young people and their families. This has been particularly well received and from the learning and feedback there has been a direct impact on service change and service delivery.</p>	<p>Use the learning from Inclusion as Prevention to inform other areas of practice such as the approach to Whole Family Wellbeing and The Promise.</p>

What next for children's rights and participation in South Lanarkshire?

The work of our partnership is founded on a rights-based approach which supports best practice and desires improved outcomes for all children and young people, particularly those who are most disenfranchised.

We will develop the following areas of work:

- Promotion of rights-based practice so all children's views are at the core of decision making and are heard by all partners during care planning for their future
- Making sure children and young people inform our preparation for UNCRC incorporation and our rights-based culture in general
- As an integral part of our thematic groups, ensure children, young people and families will help design future services based on their experiences in the past, their current needs and their aspirations for the future
- Being more innovative in the way we involve children and young people, especially those who do not tend to engage in traditional consultation processes
- Providing more opportunities for children and young people to participate in events with staff e.g., locality staff seminars, the Promise Board etc
- Working across all public sector partners to further embed children's rights into culture, policy and practice
- Ensuring that the seven principles of rights-based practice are at the heart of our work





4. Our commitment to improvement



As a partnership we used the national 3 Step Improvement Framework and Model for Improvement to identify improvement change activity within this plan. We worked with the Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELSIS), Scottish Government's Children and Young Peoples Improvement Collaborative and local partners, to develop a route map for each of the agreed priority areas in the Children's Services Plan 2021-23. We will extend this approach into the new planning cycle and in developing improvement work around our refreshed priority areas.

All of our improvement work has started small, trying out ideas to see if they work before we make wholesale changes to services or systems. We are delighted that a number of improvement projects have resulted in more strategic changes, allowing us to work together with children, young people and families for even better outcomes.

As we move forward, we are committed to maintaining our focus on improvement as part of our shared work and this will feature in how we work together across the groups within our governance structure.

How will we achieve this?

- Increased focus on joint working and the pooling of expertise and resources to deliver additional value through the activity of the three thematic groups
- Commitment to an increasingly evidence based, outcome focused approach which gives particular consideration to the needs of the families
- Systemic involvement of children, young people and families with lived experience
- Long term, strategic thinking that aligns key areas of policy and priorities to support a more holistic, preventative approach
- Robust accountability and governance across all of our working groups and through the production of accessible annual reports

5. Moving forward

The Getting It Right for South Lanarkshire's Children's Services Partnership has a strong vision for our work together:

South Lanarkshire's children, young people and families will be safeguarded and supported to reach their full potential and thrive within their communities.

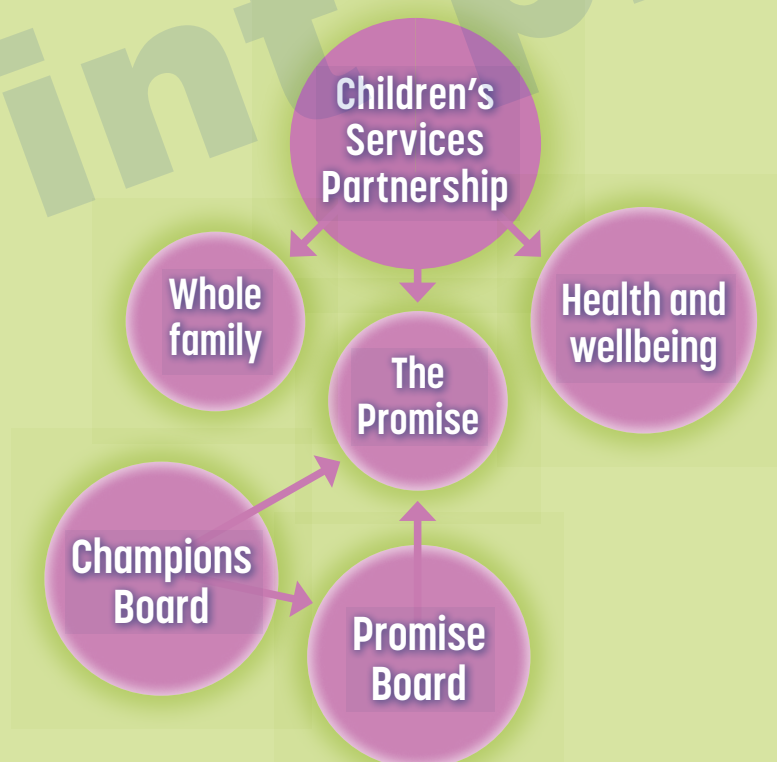
In late 2022 our children's services partners carried out a reflective evaluation of our shared activity, structures, relationships, available capacity and how we can achieve this vision and contribute towards local and national priorities. This review included involvement with the wider workforce and gathering in the views of children, young people and families.

The resultant governance structure is one designed to make the most of available resources and one that is well placed to drive forward our agreed priorities going forward and make a substantial

contribution towards the national priorities of the Promise, Whole Family Wellbeing, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing, Children's Rights and Getting It Right for Every Child.

The three thematic groups of Whole Family Approach, Health and Wellbeing and Keeping the Promise will carry out most of the activity of our partnership. This includes actions to support the priorities below, key tasks around participation and children's rights and ensuring self-evaluation, improvement and quality assurance is central to our planning and evaluation.

Getting It Right for South Lanarkshire's Children Governance Structure 2023-26





The three thematic groups of Whole Family Approach, Health and Wellbeing and Keeping the Promise will carry out most of the activity of our partnership. This includes actions to support the priorities below, key tasks around participation and children's rights and ensuring self-evaluation, improvement and quality assurance in central to our planning and evaluation.

Whole Family Approach Thematic Group

Every family that needs support gets the right family support at the right time for as long as it is needed

- Reduced number of children and young people living away from their families
- Reduced number of families requiring crisis intervention
- Reduced inequality gap in child development
- Reduced inequality gap in wellbeing outcomes for families' children and young people
- Increased number of families taking up wider supports

Health and Wellbeing Thematic Group

Every child and young person will be able to access support which helps improve their mental health and emotional wellbeing

- Improved maternal and infant mental health
- Improved support offered to children and young people who may be at risk of suicide and self-harm
- Improved whole school approaches to mental health and wellbeing
- Improved visibility and accessibility of community mental health supports and services
- Staff professional learning and development to ensure their own and others' wellbeing established

Keeping The Promise Thematic Group

Children and young people grow up loved, safe, respected and listened to

- Voice is at the heart of all decision-making processes at all levels
- Increased number of care experienced people accessing further and/or higher education opportunities and successful employment
- Reduced poverty amongst care experienced people
- Improved lifelong support for care experienced people
- Improved support into long term housing for care experienced people
- Improved mental health and emotional wellbeing of care experienced people



6. Wider partnerships

Our children's services partners are: most importantly our children, young people and families, South Lanarkshire Council, South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), Police Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture and Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASLan) on behalf of our vibrant and valuable third sector organisations.

The structure shown in section five highlights our core children's services plan activity, but also has key links to the Community Planning Partnership, Child Protection Committee, Community Learning and Development Partnership and the Drug and Alcohol Partnership, where we share common priorities in achieving best outcomes for children, young people and families.

We are committed to using our combined resources effectively to deliver services promoting wellbeing, preventing adversity and offering the right help at the right time to those who need it.

The wider planning structure is shown below:





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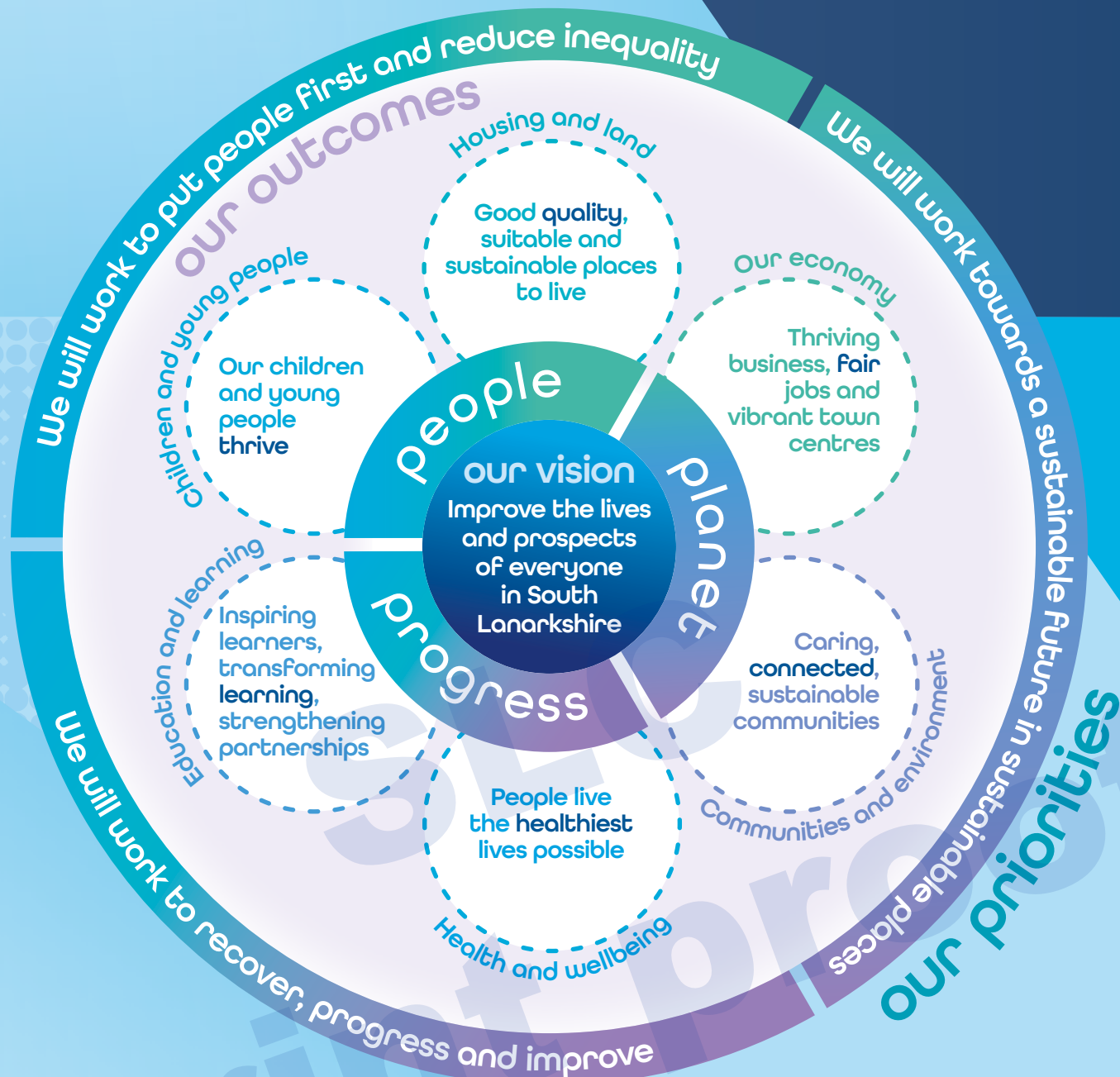
Respected

Responsible

Attachment

Life chances

Included



our values

Focused on people and their needs
Working with and respecting others
Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent
Ambitious, self-aware and improving
Fair, open and sustainable
Excellent employer

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

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