

# Children's Services Plan: Annual Report 2021–2022

**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 our annual report for our children's services plan 2021-2023 – **Working Together: Making a Difference (A foundation for recovery)**. This year we highlight the activity undertaken over the initial year of our current two-year plan.



This report highlights the particular improvement approach we have taken to our work as a partnership and the continued progress we are making towards 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.**

The report reflects on the way we have set 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.

We have maintained our focus on the three themes of:

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

These themes continue to be the main pillars for our work as a partnership and continue to be the main sections of our plan.

Our Children's Services Plan is closely aligned with South Lanarkshire's Local Child Poverty

Action Report and 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.

Our plan features twenty priority areas identified through an extensive needs analysis process and we have taken a joint improvement approach to these areas, adopting the 'Model for Improvement' as the key tool in scoping out the activity. Over the life of the plan, this focus on improvement will be at the centre of our work and will ensure a focus on the particular areas of support that we need to improve on to achieve the best possible outcomes for our children, young people and families.

Commitment to The Promise is embedded in the plan and the work of the partnership has built on the findings of the Independent Care Review and its recommendations. In doing so, our corporate parenting partnership arrangements have been refreshed and key areas for improvement have been driven forward through newly established thematic groups and The Champions Board. In addition, there is explicit support at the highest level for the radical changes required to fulfil the aims of The Promise through our Promise Board, which was established in April 2021.



These key changes are helping inform our approach to planning, delivering the best support possible to the care experienced children and young people in South Lanarkshire.

We are committed to the proposed children's rights legislation to incorporate the United Nation Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots' law. We strongly support the Scottish Government's commitment to get this work fully implemented and 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. NHS Lanarkshire is making a key commitment in the development of it's exciting new strategy Our Health Together: Living our best lives in Lanarkshire; to work in partnership to promote wellbeing, address inequalities and ensure sustainability. This includes a strong focus on whole system pathways and care programme delivery for children, young people and families. Our work is informed by meaningfully engaging the children, young people and families who use our services.

One good example of this work is our Champions Board, launched in December 2019 and is providing a valuable opportunity for our care experienced young people to articulate their views and experiences with decision makers at the highest level.

The priorities in our plan have been shaped by children, young people and families through a series of engagement activities including questionnaires, online surveys, a programme of focus groups and in making sure engagement is embedded in the way in which services are delivered across the partnership.

We acknowledge the impact COVID-19 has had on our work as a partnership over recent years, affecting our planning and delivery of services and interrupting the momentum established by the previous Children's Services Plan. However, what has been a positive feature during our response to the pandemic has been the innovative and creative approach taken by partners to continue to support children and families and mitigate the negative impact the virus has caused.

A good example of this is our recently established Early Help Hub, which has implemented an early support mechanism to help keep families out of statutory social work support.

The ambition of the hub is that an earlier help approach 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 will be 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.

As we look towards the future while maintaining a cautious awareness of the health of our children, families and workforce, we are committed to resetting relationships with children and families interrupted by COVID-19 and ensuring that our services and supports are there when our children and families need them for as long as they need them. An integrated approach to supporting families' wellbeing will be at the heart of this work.

There is high level political and stakeholder support for our children's services partnership and the work contained within the children's services plan. We have worked to ensure a clear alignment with relevant local strategies and plans e.g. our South Lanarkshire Council Plan, the priorities set by the South Lanarkshire Integration Joint Board (IJB), the work of the Community Planning Partnership and the priority themes of our Child Protection Plan.

In particular there is clear alignment with the Children and Young people, Education and Learning and Health and Wellbeing themes from the council plan and the Community Plan. There is also close linkage with the South Lanarkshire Integration Joint Board (IJB) priorities of early Intervention, prevention and health improvement, mental health and wellbeing and transition arrangements and there are shared priorities with our child protection processes of supporting children and young people's mental health and strengthening the protection we provide to children and young people from neglect. This helps to provide a strong platform for achieving our shared vision and to ensure that our improvement approach contributes towards the broader public services agenda.



**Cleland Sneddon**

South Lanarkshire Council  
Chief Executive



**Heather Knox**

NHS Lanarkshire  
Chief Executive

## 2. Our commitment to improvement

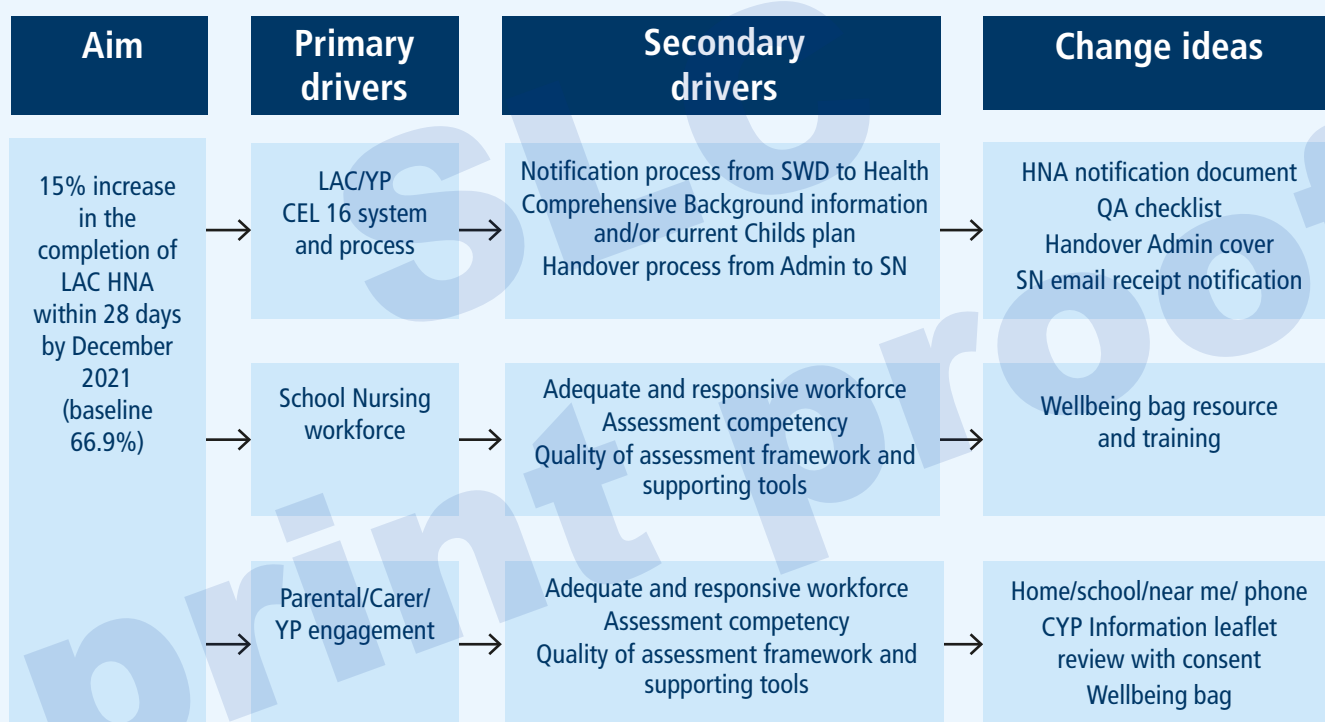
As part of our approach to implementing the priorities of the plan we have used the national '3 Step Improvement Framework' and Model for Improvement to identify change activity. We worked with the Centre for excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELSIS), Scottish Government's Children and Young Peoples Improvement Collaborative and local partners, to develop a route map and theory of change for each of our twenty priorities. To support our quality improvement journey and build the staff capacity to use the model, we invested in the 'Life QI' platform as part of our project management tools and to assist in creating data

dashboards to show where we are improving, or where we still need to focus our efforts.

### From small to all – improvement activity that has changed the way we work!

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 changes, allowing us to work together with children, young people and families for even better outcomes.

Below is one of the best practice examples:



### Responding to the health needs of care experienced children and young people

#### Project aim:

By December 2021, 15% increase in the completion of Looked After Children Health Needs Assessments of school age children within 28 days (baseline 66.9%)

#### Overview:

The Promise 2020 advocates a rights-based assessment stating that, nurturing relationships should be at the centre of caring for children and young people, and that as with any other child, it is these relationships with adults which must alert us to potential health concerns. Early identification, the right help and timely intervention from the right people is a crucial element of health needs conversations with care experienced children and young people and vital to improving their outcomes.



## Methodology

We wanted to improve the quality, timeliness and engagement of young people and carers in the Health Needs Assessment process.

Funded by the Children's Services Partnership and as part of their improvement plan, an 'improvement team' of staff adapted their practice to overcome the challenges of young people shielding, self-isolation, education and children house's access restrictions presented through the COVID pandemic. The improvement team (Social Work, Health, and Education) utilised the three-step model for improvement in practice to address the challenges.

We listened to the voices of children and young people and their desire to change the approach from assessments to 'health conversations'. As part of the response, we worked collaboratively with them to redesign the health needs assessment information leaflet and to improve their experience of the assessment, we used a 'Wellbeing Bag' of resources to help young people articulate their needs. We made sure we took the time to capture children and young people's views of their own health and wellbeing needs to inform future care planning.

As a result of this more interactive approach to Health Needs Assessments, we improved the timeliness of the Health Needs Assessment response.

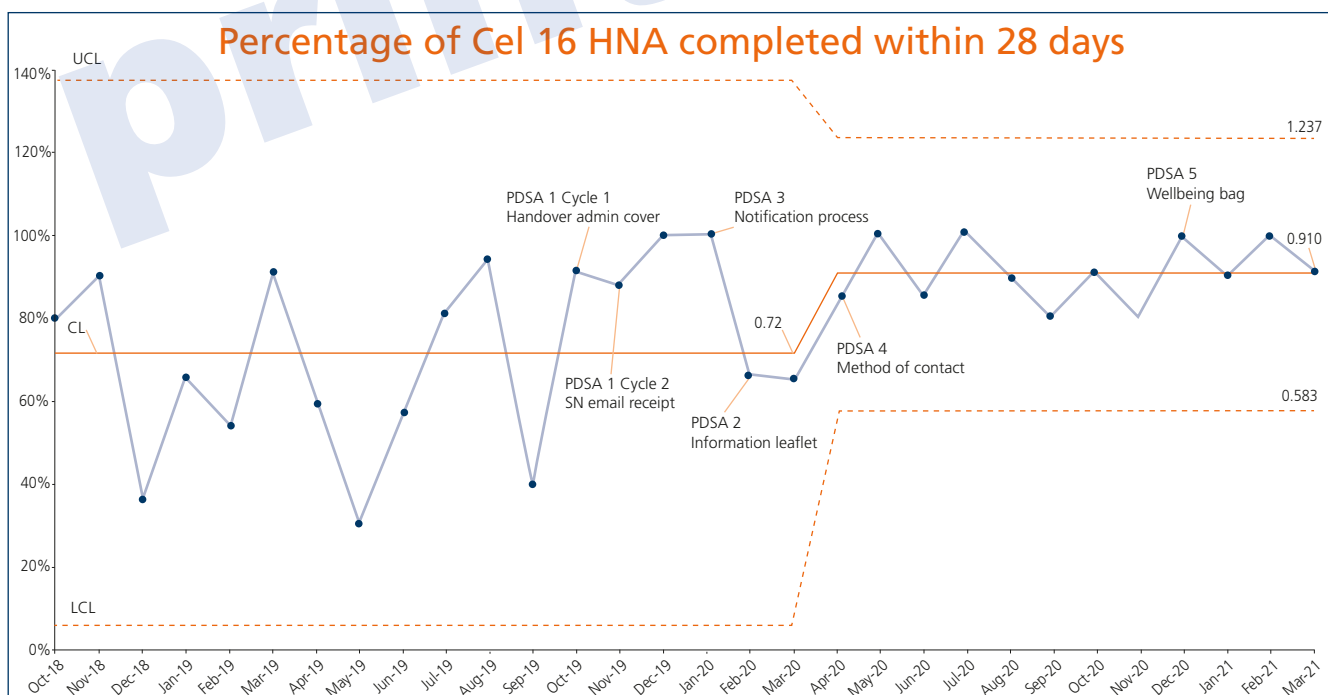
The chart shows the data linked to our aim.

We exceeded our aim with a 19% increase from the point of changing our approach, which resulted in a sustained improvement over the period of between 72% and 91% in the completion of assessments by the 28-day target.

## Key learning points

- Staff adapted their practice to respond to ongoing challenges e.g. virtual contact with children and young people, carers and staff and in restricted visits to 'children's houses' and schools
- We have changed the process of Social Work notifying Health that a child or young person has been taken into care and created a new information leaflet to improve engagement with school nursing staff
- The use of the Wellbeing Bag has helped capture children and young people's views about their own health and wellbeing needs and helps to inform future care planning
- The project learning has highlighted that demands to complete assessments within a limited time timescales can have a negative effect on achieving a high-quality assessment
- The changes to our approach have been implemented and rolled out across school nursing and social work teams

The team went onto win a Scottish Government Quality Improvement award in December 2021 for Embedding Quality Improvement to Get It Right For Every Child – Meeting the Health Needs of Looked After Children, which can be viewed on: <https://vimeo.com/647804323/6dfcb5ca86>



### 3. 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 work towards a strong foundation for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 20 priorities we have identified 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 infants, children, young people and parents (Infant mental health, counselling through schools, community mental health, 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

While the impact of COVID-19 has meant that our approach to these priority areas has had to be developed with the relevant restrictions in mind. We have however been committed to fostering an increasing improvement culture across the partnership workforce.

This is reflected in the story we are able to tell and in what we have achieved so far. We are committed to continuing our robust challenge and reflection process in relation to successes and areas for improvement.



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

We have worked together to improve our shared approach to supporting parents at the perinatal stage. Support is provided to families through Early Years Multi Agency Support (EYMAS) meetings in each area that include Social Work, adult mental health services, perinatal mental health midwives attending meetings, LAMS (Lanarkshire Additional Midwifery Services) and CAREs (Community Addiction Recovery Services). The Hamilton EYMAS has led on improvement work to make the planning of support to parents as good as it can be. This has centred around creating a 'Parents Plan', which has been developed in partnership with parents.

The work has used improvement methods to try different ways of reviewing how things are going for the family as support progresses. Paperwork supporting the reviews will be amended as further consultation takes place and the feedback provided will inform how our understanding of which bits work well or not.

Part of the improvement work is addressing challenges and barriers to key tasks such as minute taking and staff availability for supporting parents.

## Improving parental mental health in pregnancy

In order to better support parents with emotional wellbeing concerns, we have focused our efforts on early help and support. Over the last year we identified 10 cases where parents had mental health concerns. Our multi-agency support process helped with communication between services and in the development of a parent's plan. In discussion with families, it helped determine what was needed and developed ways to offer targeted support to parents to meet their specific needs. Most cases supported were linked to multiple and complex needs like drug and alcohol use, including where child protection support was being considered in some circumstances.

Part of the work explored the attendance of perinatal mental health staff being involved at locality forums, however it was found that sustainability of attendance would be a long-term challenge and for any wider roll out

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.

As part of the support offered to parents, new online resources are now available on Lanarkshire Mind Matters:  
[www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk)

## Improving language development in early years (SIMD1)

Improvement work to enable the early years workforce to enhance parents' ability to support early language development is being undertaken at four nursery sites Loch Primary School, Woodlands Nursery, Ballerup Nursery and St Mary's Primary in Lanark in collaboration with Speech and Language Therapy staff. Different ways of offering support to parents are being tested including virtual online sessions, newsletters and outdoor learning. Parents involved have said that they are now more confident in supporting their child's speech and language as a result of the support.

The work in these nursery settings adds to the existing work already being delivered by health visitors at children's 13-15 month assessment and early support to parents to help with setting language goals for their children. Engagement work has highlighted positive experiences for the parents attending the 'Peep Programme', which supports parents in encouraging their babies and children to become confident communicators and active learners ready for school.

## Developing inclusion as prevention to offending

Our Inclusion as Prevention initiative funded by the National Lottery has developed a range of innovative opportunities in the Cambuslang and Rutherglen areas, designed to prevent children and young people becoming involved in offending behaviour. The project is a partnership between South Lanarkshire Council, Action for Children, the Children and Young Persons Centre for Justice and Dartington Service Design Lab.

We piloted a Junior Pathfinder approach in two primary schools to support pupils who had experienced difficulties with attendance, troubled relationships with education and other barriers to learning. The Junior Pathfinder pilot had a focus on transition support between P7 and S1, with family engagement, confidence building and resilience as key areas. In a six-month period we supported 137 children across two primary schools and initial indications are that the pilot was received very positively by the families involved and by the schools who took part, despite the impact of COVID-19 there is good data to evidence that young people improved attendance at school and were more confident about their transition to secondary than they otherwise would have been. In addition, families reported improved relationships with the schools involved in the project.

Engagement with children, young people and parents and carers through short surveys, activity sheets and postcard surveys identified a positivity about the support they received and what worked well, including relationships with staff.



Going forward to further explore the findings and to ensure broader learning, Headteachers from across South Lanarkshire are being invited to a 'round-table discussion' to help formulate some ideas about next steps and extending this approach to other areas.

The Junior Pathfinder pilot was one of a range of improvement work related to the Inclusion as Prevention initiative all of which are grounded in the experiences of children and young people, driven by co-production and underpinned by a focus on children's rights.

Further information about the work is available on the Inclusion as Prevention website: [www.inclusionasprevention.org.uk](http://www.inclusionasprevention.org.uk)

This includes the Streetcones creative arts project sharing their experiences through development of a script and participation in a live question and answer session to inform co-design of a relationship-based practice programme for social work staff, which will shape future changes to peer support and how services for young people in conflict with the law are being designed and delivered. Young people are also involved in the co-design of a pilot support group (absent skills), improving communication about services for young people by young people (grief and loss), and designing a survey for young people that will inform co-design of a peer workshop (gender-based violence).

## Supporting Young Carers

Over the last year the Young Carer's Steering Group has helped to support new developments in services for young carers. We have recruited additional staff including one post that has been filled by someone with lived experience of being a young carer and will make an invaluable contribution to this service.

There has been an increase in the number of referrals to the new service delivered by Action for Children, up from 22 in the previous year to 39 last year, as a result of increased work with schools to raise the awareness of what a young carer is and how they can get support from the Young Carers Service. This has led to a greater awareness across schools and understanding amongst children and young people about what it means to be a young carer.

There are currently 119 young carers benefitting from support such as working with an artist, weight management interventions, help with stopping smoking, money advice for families, one to one support, access to short breaks and groupwork.

Action for Children were able to access 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 Over the Wall who support siblings of children with serious illnesses and/or disability.

Close links have been developed with Lanarkshire Carers Centre to ensure that transition to caring as a young adult is supported and as stress free as possible.

Families and young people have reported very positively on the support they have received from the Action for Children Young Carers Services and other support available.

## Preventing domestic abuse

Seven young people worked to co-produce a survey for young people aged 12-15 years old across South Lanarkshire to gain understanding of their current knowledge and experiences of Gender-based Violence in their community.

The young people helped carry out the survey with youth groups, employability services, schools and colleges and social media as avenues for the survey to reach as many young people as possible.

A further four young people joined engagement sessions from the initial survey design and have contributed further to the survey design through testing its use and understanding as well as identifying how and where it could be used. At the end of the survey, the young people included a description of their work and an invitation for interested young people to join their design group.

The young people invited Mentors in Violence Project members to join their design group. To raise awareness of their work, young people hosted a Q and A session on Instagram where they discussed their work around the project and are planning to run similar sessions in the future.

The Inclusion as Prevention team along with the young people's design group have begun arranging for supports for the next steps of the project, including:

- Identifying designers who will provide graphic support as well as animation who will be part of design sessions to ensure that final piece is accurate to young peoples' vision
- Securing support from the Gender-based Violence specialist to support the workshop design

Nine secondary schools are currently running the MVP programme. Training has been arranged for May 2022 for an additional 4 secondary schools to introduce the programme in academic year 2022-23. In addition to this the identified SEBN establishment will also attend this training to consider how the programme can be integrated to their specific needs.

An implementation plan is now in place to ensure that the remaining five secondary schools will undertake the training in Autumn 2022 in order that the programme can be implemented in those establishments in the academic year 2023-24. The full evaluation of materials for ASN schools is still being awaited from Education Scotland and this will progress as appropriate in due course.

Co-production activity around Gender-based Violence is 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 from South Lanarkshire 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. Prior to March 2022 Inclusion As Prevention has worked with over 100 young people, across 115 engagement sessions, and these are ongoing.

Young People involved in other groups 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.

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 advertise to them
- They have told us they get most of their information from social media and information would be best shared there
- They also explained that they mostly watch videos rather than read posts. Therefore, 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

The Gender-based Violence Development Officer has begun discussions with the Child Protection Lead Officer from Education Resources regarding the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Awareness Raising Tool (DAART) e-learning module being made a mandatory training resource for selected staff groups.

In addition to this, a minimum one member of staff from every education establishment will be invited to attend the Safe and Together Overview Training, which is a child centred model looking at survivor's strengths and perpetrators patterns of abuse within Domestic Abuse situations. This training will take place around September 2022 and will be repeated in Spring 2023.



## Additional Support for Learning

Staff have been supporting the B-squared programme with pupils who have additional support for learning needs. The programme is designed to record, recognise and celebrate the progress achievements that pupils make. All South Lanarkshire establishments with ASN provision supporting children with complex needs has an identified B-squared champion in place to support planning and improved outcomes.

A B-Squared Champions forum was established and is in place to support staff skills and confidence in using the programme, through sharing resources, good practice etc.

Initial focus has been on providing training and support to ensure that robust tracking and monitoring is embedded within each establishment. The first phase called "connecting steps" has established a baseline for each individual child and allows learning targets to be set. This supports the tracking and monitoring of smaller steps within each level of the curriculum, demonstrating strengths and showing improvement.

The programme helps show how learning progress data is being gathered. Early indications are that initial data is very comprehensive and can be used to support improvement planning going forward.

## Example of improvement using B-Squared

A snapshot picture of three pupils has demonstrated capacity to measure progress, showing improvement within learning levels, highlighting strengths where greater challenge is required and identified areas which require development. This "spiky profile" more accurately reflects individual needs and supports individualised target setting.

Early results are showing improvements in the use of the programme to present information to pupils in age-appropriate, child friendly ways, which provide opportunities to engage in meaningful discussion and to show progress. This is an area that will be developed further in the coming year.

The second phase has focused on the use of a programme to support greater parental involvement in children's learning and recognition of achievements. Staff have been trained to use an online bank of evidence that can be made available to parents so that they can view their child's progress. Schools will decide how best to incorporate this activity into parents' evenings and other reporting arrangements e.g. a Champions forum is using improved reporting formats for parents and sharing good practise.



# 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

(Infant mental health, counselling through schools, community access framework, reducing suicide, COVID-19 impact)

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 and 3481 pupils completing a survey to give their opinions on mental health and emotional wellbeing and their experiences of getting support in South Lanarkshire.

The views of children and young people have been evaluated and results collated into a report which has been presented to key decision-making groups such as the Children's Services Strategy Group.

Key recommendations from the report include:

- Improve signposting and advertising of services
- A clear pathway to access support for young people

- Increasing mental health supports for primary aged pupils

The results from the survey will inform future delivery of mental health services in the community.

To help staff support children and young people's mental health, a range of training and awareness raising has been offered, including information about Lifelines Lanarkshire guidance for all Education staff. Training on Lifelines Lanarkshire guidance has been developed and delivered in 12 secondary schools to 160 key staff. As a result of the training, staff reported improved knowledge and understanding of suicide and self-harm and confidence in assessing risk and using the practical Lifelines Lanarkshire resources. The remainder of secondary schools will receive training early next academic session. Lifelines has already been used by school staff in a number of primary schools when supporting children potentially at risk of suicide and self-harm, and formal training for key primary school staff will be piloted for roll out to primary schools next academic session. Training has been delivered to Social Work practitioners, and further training will be offered with Social Work staff being supported to deliver to their colleagues.



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

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 resource and are now using the resource in their work. It is hopeful that this training will be available to all staff delivering services in the early years stage.

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)

Healthy weight of children is a national priority. The national delivery plan 'A Healthier Future: Scotland's Diet and Healthy Weight Delivery Plan' (2018) sets out a range of key actions to support people to eat well and maintain a healthy weight, while trying to reduce diet-related health inequalities.

We know that increasing numbers of children are at risk of being overweight or obese and this number has increased by 6.8% to nearly 30% in Primary 1 pupils over the last year. To address this NHS Lanarkshire and partners provide a range of weight management support to families. Some key highlights of this activity over the last year:

- 1388 visits to the new children and young people's weight management website that contains helpful information, resources and videos
- [www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/weight-management-service/](http://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/weight-management-service/)
- Launch of a new early years 'Little N Lively' programme for children and families (0-2 age range)

- 138 families completed 'Full of Beans' intervention a six-week programme for two to five year olds
- Launch of new weight management service that has supported 64 children and young people so far. 66% of these referrals were from areas of higher poverty and 68% of these referrals were for children and young people aged between eight and 15

40% of secondary schools engaged in a new third/fourth level Healthy Schools resource which will be extended to the senior phase by August 2022. 160 secondary school staff attended Healthy Schools training.

NHS Lanarkshire and partners successfully applied for funding to establish new early years provision to develop a partnership that offers resources and provision to vulnerable groups of new and young parents through targeted engagement activities. Connecting vulnerable families to sustainable provision in a blended delivery model of online and face to face has been key to the success of the initiative.

Little N Lively is an example of this work, where parents are supported by sessional and leisure staff trained in ante and post-natal intervention. Programmes are made accessible for young and/or new or vulnerable parents with support from health professionals locally. Each programme provides a range of resources designed to the meet the needs of parents. As we move to towards the end of year one, over 80 families have been offered specialist support.

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.

## Breastfeeding

Anxiety around breastfeeding outside the home is a common reason cited for stopping breastfeeding particularly in areas where bottle feeding is the cultural norm. To address this the national Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland scheme was launched with a focus on signing up local business and premises to the scheme to improve confidence when breastfeeding outside the home.

There have been eight Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland scheme venues accredited including libraries, a church hall, a school and nursery, a community centre and a local café. South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture have agreed to sign up to the scheme covering all venues including leisure centres, community halls and libraries.

A survey for council staff has been developed to measure attitudes, beliefs and knowledge of the scheme and roles and responsibilities within the workplace. This will be carried out over the next six months. As a result of being involved in a previous breastfeeding friendly approach, Leisure and Culture staff identified they were already aware of and implementing breastfeeding friendly approaches due to being signed up to the previous scheme.

Ongoing promotion of the scheme for businesses and private premises has been delivered via various social media platforms. We have also promoted the scheme as part of early years locality work and encouraged local partners to sign up to the infant vitamin distribution scheme.

There has been extensive service user consultation with parents via social media and in particular during World Breastfeeding Week in August 2021.

### 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 snippets 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.

Two training dates have been planned for May 2022.

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 is being developed by partners including Regen FX, the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, CARES, Social Work and Young people who are currently receiving support. The pathway will outline the targeted levels of approach to young people who engage in substance use.

As part of the work to create the pathway, 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 young people benefitting from throughcare and aftercare support (120) 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; CARES; 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 focussed on the development of the new Early Help Hub, established in late 2021, with the aim of diverting families away from statutory Social Work services.

The new hub combines 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.

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.

In South Lanarkshire there were 60 young people classed as care experienced leaving school in June 2021. The positive destination rate is 90% for this group, an increase of 4.3% from the previous year and compares well with the national average of 87.9%.

Four young people have secured modern apprenticeships within Early Learning and Childcare, Health and Social Care, Joinery

and Plastering. One further 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.

This year we 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 gracious 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

The realigning services for care experienced children and young people living with parents, friends and relatives has been established, and an action plan is in place to improve outcomes for care experienced children and young people.

This includes the development of a tutoring programme to improve attainment levels for care experienced pupils with an investment of £200K to provide study support to those pupils who need it. Initial evidence suggests that pupils are benefitting from the bespoke support. Following an initial positive evaluation, we hope to offer the support to all care experienced secondary school pupils and then rollout to primary pupils. The tutoring programme is part of the 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 the 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. Request for Maths and English far exceed any other requests.

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 newly recruited promise workers have been linking with young people with a view to making care reviews better and more meaningful for children.

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. We have also been able to provide additional funding to COVEY Befriending to extend the befriending support offered through groupwork and on a one-to-one basis to children and young people in kinship care.

### Improving care planning and reviews

We 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 reviews, which has become the basis for our improvement work. 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 eight kinship carers. A comments questionnaire was issued to each set of carers, asking them to make comment about the level of satisfaction with the support they received, in relation to taking part in the assessment and its outcome and how the process of conducting assessments can be improved in the future. Early responses indicate that carers have found using the assessment framework very helpful.

### Addressing neglect

We developed a neglect toolkit to help staff provide the best possible support to families where neglect is a factor. 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. 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

We are developing a referral pathway for advocacy services for care experienced children and young people to ensure that children are offered advocacy support at every stage of their care reviews. Our two new Promise Development workers have led on consultation with young people and care leavers regarding an advocacy charter.

As a result of the consultation, we have made changes to paperwork so all care experienced people going through a formal process now have an offer of independent advocacy made to them. Work is ongoing to ensure consistency of the advocacy offer, with resources in place to support children and young people.

## 4.Children's Rights and Participation



Preparing for the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law and the additional commitments that will come with it has been a feature of our work this year. This focus is designed to help children access their rights more easily and we have been working with our workforce to understand children's rights better, be more aware of the demands that incorporation will make on public services and aspire to best practice in recognising children's rights.

A dedicated children's rights group has been reaching out to staff across public services to find out about their understanding of children's rights, the UNCRC in general and the challenge of incorporation. Nearly 300 staff completed an online survey and over 100 participated in interactive focus groups to help increase staff awareness and understand what support staff would benefit from in the future.

Over the past year we have continued to make children's rights central to our planning and some examples of this activity can be seen below.

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 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 recognise that children and young people want the right to be themselves and this is a feature of our approach **#TheRightToBeMyself**

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.

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=fS-fdwNfg0o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fS-fdwNfg0o)

The Children and Young People's Commissioner Office guide to participation and engagement with children and young people: [www.cypcs.org.uk/education/golden-rules](https://www.cypcs.org.uk/education/golden-rules)



## What we have done over the last year to continue our commitment to children's rights in South Lanarkshire:

- Continued to use the Children's Rights Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) model in addition to our Children's Services Plan 2021-23, our Local Child Poverty Action Report is informed by a CRWIA
- 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
- 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 model
- The addition of two new Promise Development Workers who have been given the task of talking to and listening to our care experienced children and young people
- Met with a range of groups and individual children and young people to ensure that their views and experiences informed our planning and decision making
- Children's rights have been a feature of multi-agency and single agency seminars including a Corporate Parenting event, GIRFEC consultation event 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
- 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
- Continue to extend and enhance advocacy support to children and young people through our corporate parenting structures

## Engagement with children and families

**Article 12 of the UNCRC** states that children and young people should have their say when adults are making decisions that affect them and their opinions are taken seriously. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 ensures that children's rights are realised and that they properly influence the design and delivery of policies and services.

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:

- Children's Rights/UNCRC incorporation
- Champion's Board
- Consultation on community access to mental health support
- Parenting support engagement
- Whole family wellbeing engagement event
- Mind of My Own app for care experienced young people
- Social media engagement with families around Scottish and World Breastfeeding days
- Lived experience activity with communities around poverty/child poverty
- Embedding improvement work into our 20 children's services plan priorities
- Work with our kinship carer support groups to develop increased engagement with carers
- Children and young people's survey to inform NHS Lanarkshire's Getting Our Active Lifestyle Started programme

## 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.

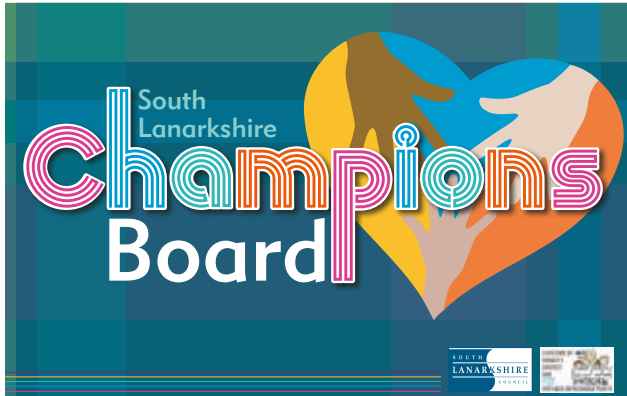
The following areas of work we will develop further over the coming year:

- Continuing to promote rights-based practice so all children's views are heard by all partners when deciding about care plans and their future with children's views at the core of decision making
- Making sure children and young people inform our preparation for UNCRC incorporation
- Making sure children, young people, parents and carers help us design future services based on their experiences of accessing services in the past and their aspirations and needs
- Being creative about the ways we involve children and young people, especially those who do not tend to engage in traditional consultation processes. e.g., making use of social media to provide opportunities for children and young people to share their views and experiences in a safe environment
- Providing more opportunities for children and young people to participate in events with staff e.g., locality seminars, the Promise Board etc
- Developing reference groups for children, young people and parents/carers to help improve mental health and emotional wellbeing services in the community





## 5. The South Lanarkshire's Promise – Corporate Parenting Strategy



In 2021 we launched our new Corporate Parenting Strategy, which builds on our vision for children and young people set out in the Children's Services Plan and from feedback from our recent care and protection inspection. Our new strategy also sees the implementation of a refreshed governance structure for corporate parenting that will help us achieve best practice in implementing The Promise Plan 2021-24.

Our strategy has three themes that are aligned with the foundations of the Promise and reflects our priorities over the period of our plan:

- Redesigning services for children and young people looked after by parents, family and friends
- Engagement and participation
- Throughcare and aftercare

### What have we achieved so far?

The revised corporate parenting governance structure has seen the creation of South Lanarkshire's Promise Board. The Champions board approach has also been formally located within the structure, adding support and challenge to the Promise Board and its improvement groups. The Promise Board has been operational since 2021 and incorporates all the key agencies at the highest level who support care experienced children and young people.

We are in the final stages of opening a community facing Throughcare and Aftercare

hub for young people to access a range of services and support e.g., housing, financial advice, employability, health advice and independent advocacy services.

We have revised and implemented our pathways planning processes to ensure 100 % of young people eligible for aftercare have a plan to guide their transitions.

To support the general health and wellbeing of young people who are 16 years and over, NHS Lanarkshire have recruited two health-based staff for young people in Continuing Care and Aftercare. Young people involved in the Champions Board have helped to create the vision for these nursing-based posts.

We have refreshed our accommodation and housing protocol for young people eligible for aftercare in collaboration with Housing services, which will ensure appropriate housing options are offered to young people and are informed by individual needs.

As a partnership we have worked together to gather available data for care experienced children and young people across Social Work, Education, Housing and employability services. This has enabled us to better understand where the greatest need is and offer appropriate support across the different categories of care.

In October 2021 a programme of tutoring was offered to care as part of the learning recovery and renewal programme across Education. 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. Sixty-four care experienced young people were paired with a tutor and the feedback has been positive from the young people the tutors and the schools involved. The tutoring support was provided across a wide range of subjects from National Four level to Advanced Higher. Request for Maths and English tutoring far exceed any other subject requests.

MCR Pathways is a programme that supports care-experienced young people, or those who have experienced disadvantage to achieve the same education outcomes, career opportunities and life chances as every other young person. It is a school-based mentoring programme specifically designed to provide mentoring and personal support to pupils. There are currently 346 pupils between S1-S6 in South Lanarkshire across six Secondary schools benefitting from mentoring and support.

We have recruited four care experienced dedicated teachers to support the attainment of children and young people who require additional support around their learning.

### Structured Deferred Sentences

With an understanding that as many as 50% of people in prison have previously been looked after, we have continued to use Structured Deferred Sentences for young people under the age of 21 years and support them to be admonished at the end of their sentence. This targeted intervention provides greater flexibility than a Community Payback Order. Young people have responded well to this approach, and we see that there is an 83% completion rate for those that are engaged in this way.

This approach is available for all young people in conflict with the law and involved in the adult justice system. Whilst transfer to children's hearings for young people under the age of 18 is the preferred option, Structured Deferred Sentences are available to all convicted young people up to the age of 21 years.

### Structured Review Hearings

A pan-Lanarkshire pilot called "Structured Review Hearings" is about to begin and underlines our commitment to the implementation of a Whole System Approach to support a reduction in the criminalisation of young people. The pilot is being developed in partnership with the Children's Reporters' Administration and aims to maximise the number of cases passed to children's hearings from the court, keeping young people in the children's hearing system rather than an adult system. It also seeks to maximise the use of secure care for young people in conflict with the law and who would otherwise be remanded to custody.

### Alternatives to remand

Work has continued to maximise opportunities for alternatives to remand e.g., the Targeted Young Persons Services. This service offers one to one help for young people who find themselves in conflict with the law and as a result no young person (under the age of 18 years) has been remanded for the past 12 months from South Lanarkshire in secure care or to HMP Polmont YOI. In addition, there has been an increased trend in the volume of young people subject to bail over the past 12 months.

### Kinship Care

Our population of care experienced children in Kinship Care has grown significantly over the last four years and we continue to increase support for family-based care. We support over 400 kinship carers, and we promote informal networks of Kinship Care Support Groups in each of our four localities. We have carried out engagement events with these groups to help improve support and their experiences.

As part of our Champions Board developments, we have recruited two Promise Development Workers (care experienced young people from South Lanarkshire) to join the team and support children and young people. These two posts will provide increased challenge from a lived experience perspective to the work we do to support the care experienced population

To celebrate Care Day and our care experienced family across Scotland and the wider world. We organised several events in February under the theme of 'Tending the Light' and connections, as we look towards reconnecting with our care experienced peers, corporate parents and the wider community. This included a family fun day at the Jock Stein Sports Centre in Hamilton, an online crafts session and a lunchtime get together for corporate parents in Duncanrig High School in East Kilbride.

Eighty-nine care experienced young people who needed additional support benefited from practical help through our Winter Wishes initiative including:

- A food voucher from Just Eat in December
- Support towards energy bills to prepare the food



- A Christmas gift for themselves or others
- A one-off payment for food and fuel in January, and
- The delivery of Christmas dinners and presents to 28 care experienced people on Christmas Eve who for whatever reason, were not able to access the voucher offers

As part of our work to align our development plans to The Promise Change Programme and actively respond to what care experienced people are telling us matters to them, the Promise Development Team have mapped out the following priority areas for the next 18 months.

- Lifelong support for care experienced people
- Putting voice is at the heart of all decision-making processes, at all levels
- Supporting care experienced people into long term, suitable housing
- Making sure care experienced people have positive mental wellbeing
- Making sure care experienced people gain successful employment and further/higher education opportunities
- Properly resourcing our ability to deliver The Promise

## Next steps for corporate parenting

Over the next year we will prioritise a range of activity that will help us to meet The Promise commitment and provide the support and help to our care experienced children and young people that they deserve. This will include the following:

- We will establish an improved accommodation offer to enhance aftercare support for young people moving on from children's services
- We will piloting a Structured Deferred Sentence model to young people in the Children's Hearing system
- We will develop a new framework for developing strategies to manage place based harm in collaboration partners
- We will strengthen pathways of support for care experienced young people who need support and/or treatment in relation to mental health and problem substance use
- We will promote a relational and trauma informed approach to children's planning across the partnership
- We will increase ways we offer family support for children, young people and their families
- We will work to increase the number of children and young people who benefit from independent advocacy



## 6. Our Partnership

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.**

This vision underpins the work we do together to improve life chances for children, young people and families in South Lanarkshire and achieve the best possible outcomes.

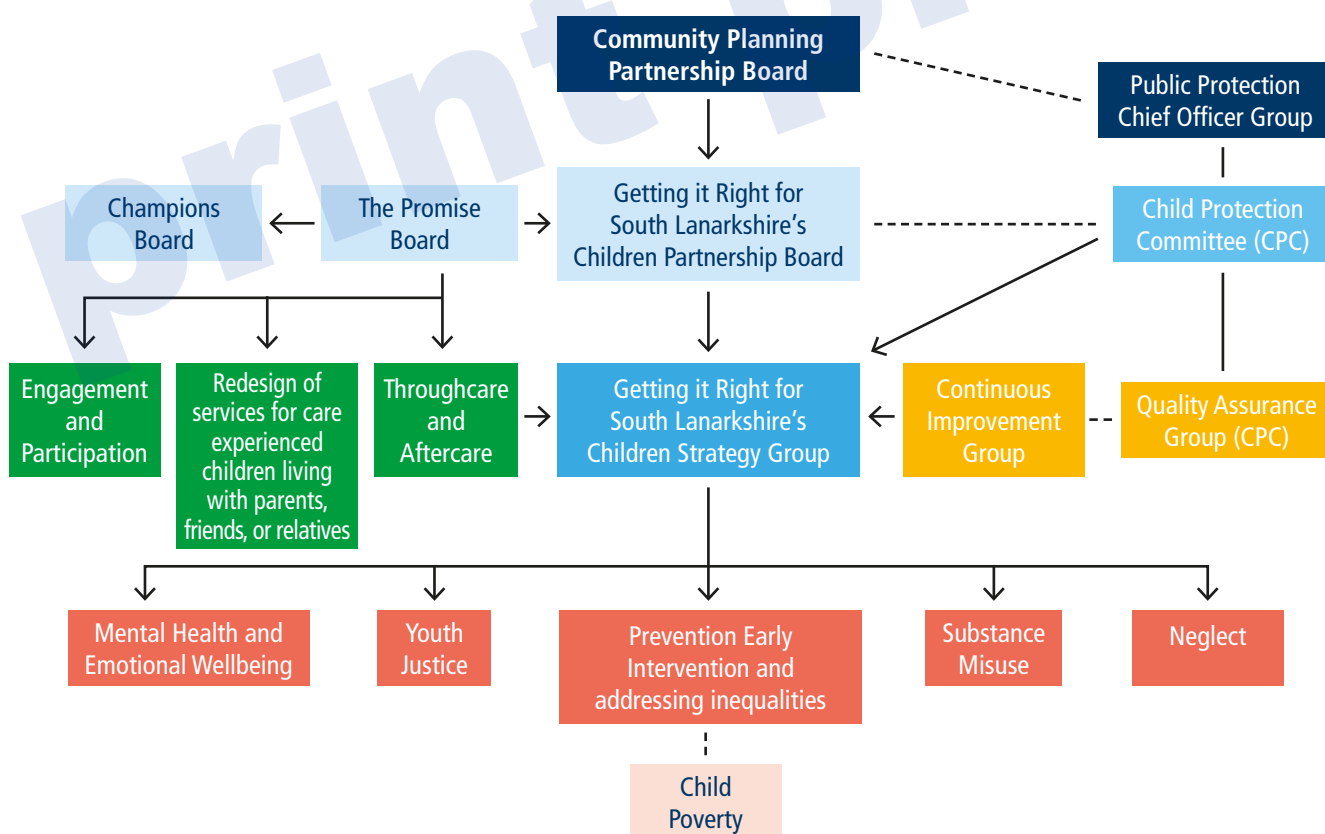
We reflect on our work together as part of a strong governance model and we work to ensure that the relationships in place help us meet the challenge of existing and emerging priorities for improvement.

Our governance structure, highlighted below reflects our current Children's Services Plan priorities and are designed to help meet the

challenges of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, commit fully to The Promise and to prepare for the incorporation of the UNCRC into domestic law.

This model allows us to build on the momentum and success already achieved and make any necessary shift in practice required going forward. We review this arrangement on a biennial basis, and we will ensure that the appropriate arrangements help us transition into further cycles of children's services planning starting with a revised plan in April for the period 2023 – 2026.

### Children's Services Partnership Governance Structure





## Evaluation and quality assurance

The Continuous Improvement Group lead the approaches to self-evaluation and quality assurance and ensures that this work is central to all we do in the Children's Services Partnership. We focus on activities where quality needs to be maintained, where improvement is needed and support services to work towards excellence wherever possible. The Group directs, maintains and manages the delivery of multi-agency self-evaluation activity at strategic and locality level. It maintains our Continuous Improvement Framework and Programme of multi-agency self-evaluation activity on an annual basis.

In addition, the Child Protection Committee support continuous improvement through planned audit activities that measure child protection in a multi-agency context. It also delivers a range of training opportunities that support services across South Lanarkshire. Steady improvements can be evidenced through routine audit and evaluation activity carried out by child protection services across the Partnership.

## The Child Protection Committee

As a multi-agency partnership working together to keep children safe, the South Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee and a number of supporting groups work across children's services to improve the outcomes for children and young people. We monitor activity across all areas of work at local and national level, including the expectations of the national Child Protection Improvement Programme, The child protection Quality Assurance and Management Information Sub Group, through its self-evaluation strategy audits activities in a number of creative ways throughout the year. This includes direct engagement with children, young people, families and communities. Quality assurance activity includes joint audit activity as agreed within the Children's Services Plan.

Findings are shared widely across child protection and children's services and offer quantitative and qualitative data on areas of strength and areas for improvement. The SLPCPC supports shared improvement work on delivering outcomes planning across a number of areas, including parental substance misuse, mental health and neglect. Work is driven by both the Child Protection Committee Business Plan and the Children's Services Partnership's Joint Self-Evaluation and Continuous Improvement Activity Plan. These partnership activities illustrate the shared vision that all children and young people have a right to be cared for and protected from abuse and harm.

## Workforce development

We continue to be committed to the delivery of workforce development activity and provided a number of key learning opportunities for staff to come together to learn, share practice and improve ways of working together despite the restrictions caused by the pandemic.

The following examples underline our approach to supporting the broader children's services workforce to deliver well informed services to children, young people and families.

- A virtual multi agency seminar in November 2021 helped share information around revised GIRFEC resources and informed our response to a national consultation
- Child protection multi-agency training and briefings for staff on new legislation including the Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019
- An Inclusive Education Service seminar provided valuable learning in relation to The Promise and UNCRC developments for senior school staff from all our establishments

# Next steps Children's Services Plan 2022-23

As we move into our second year of the Children's Services Plan 2021-23, we are adapting some areas of work to take cognisance of the opportunities and barriers and are being informed by how the key priority areas of work are developing. These additions or amendments are shown in the table below.

## Prevention and early support

### Outcome 1

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

Areas for action	Priorities
1. Substance use in pregnancy	As part of the support to parents at the perinatal stage through EYMAS meetings consistent assessment paperwork will be used in the development of the Parent's Plan. Over the next year the newly developed data collection tool and parents plan paperwork will be tested extensively before being rolled for use in all areas.
2. Parental mental health in pregnancy	<p>Going forward we will focus on engaging families with a mental health need at an early stage through EYMAS, offering supports in different ways and using different platforms depending on need and the family's preference for involvement.</p> <p>As we review our parenting support offered to all parents, there will be a focus on supporting parents in pregnancy with low to medium level of mental health needs, including offering programmes that provide good evidence of helping parents e.g. Mellow Bumps.</p>
3. Speech and language in early years	Continue to deliver language and communication support to parents in the early years, with the main change of approach being to explore additional outdoor sessions when the weather is better, or have a combined approach of indoor and outdoor delivery throughout the year.
4. Youth Justice	The scope of the Inclusion As Prevention initiative is informed by ongoing learning, incorporation of the UNCRC and are underpinned by our evolving partnership approach. The refocussed aim for the next year is that "children in conflict with the law experience a service that respects and promotes children's rights", including exploring possible stronger links with Early and Effective Intervention systems already in place across the authority.
5. Supporting young carers	The Columba 1400 experience will be offered to young carers as part of ongoing development of the support on offer.
6. Domestic abuse	Young people will help analyse the data from the gender based violence survey and the findings will be used to shape the content of an animated video and workshop which will be designed to challenge perceptions around domestic abuse and gender-based violence.
7. Additional support for learning	The second phase of the B-squared programme will focus on facilitating greater parental involvement in children's learning and recognition of achievements and the ability for parents to view their child's progress e.g., at parents' evenings and through other reporting arrangements such as a 'Champions Forum' using improved reporting formats for parents and sharing good practise.



## Health and wellbeing

### Outcome 2

The health and wellbeing of children and families is improved

Areas for action	Priorities
1. Mental health and emotional wellbeing	<p>ASIST training courses will resume in November with at least 60 staff offered training by March 2023.</p> <p>Delivery of Lifelines training will be offered to all remaining secondary schools by March 2023.</p> <p>There will be further engagement with staff to find out how helpful using the Infant Mental Health Indicator Set has been so far.</p>
2. Healthy weight	<p>The Third/Fourth level Healthy Schools resource will be extended to the senior phase by August 2022.</p>
3. Breastfeeding	<p>The Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland Local Authority Award will be rolled out within South Lanarkshire. This includes council staff receiving training and support to be Breastfeeding Friendly for staff returning to work and members of the public accessing council buildings.</p> <p>The Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland Early Learning Award will be rolled out in Early Learning and Childcare settings in the coming months.</p>
4. Dental decay	<p>As part of implementation of approaches to improve dental health, the Machan Trust will carry out a consultation with children and young people to listen to their thoughts on what the key messages about good dental health should be and the best way to get these key messages across to children and young people.</p>
5. Substance use by young people	<p>Partners will complete and implement the mental health pathway for young people up to the age of 26.</p>
6. Parental substance use	<p>We will develop a leaflet exclusively for use by the Early Help Hub, designed for parents with alcohol/drug issues, for them to pass onwards to their family members.</p> <p>We will make sure parents experience of using support services will be used to increase awareness of services to support families.</p>

Healthy

*Learning journey*

Nurtured

Safe

## 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

Areas for action	Priorities
1. Positive destinations for care experienced young people	We will continue to make positive post school destinations for care experienced young people a priority over the coming year with dedicated staff offering bespoke support.
2. Care leaver transitions	We will further embed the Housing Pathway into our practice to help achieve best outcomes for all young people in our throughcare and aftercare system.
3. Care experienced outcomes	We will prioritise a case file audit involving all key agencies to assess the quality of the support delivered to families and children who are care experienced living with parents, friends, or relatives.
4. Care planning	Work with the Duncannrig High School and Social Work staff will produce a pilot model of care planning and review that focuses on 'what I need from my corporate parents' and will be tested out in other locality areas to assess if children and young people prefer this approach.
5. Kinship care	We will speak to kinship carers to listen to their experiences of accessing support.
6. Neglect	To ensure support and good quality supervision and training is offered to staff using the neglect framework, a short life working group has been established to deliver training on use of the tool kit.
7. Advocacy	The Promise Development Workers will support participation groups and work with them to co-produce an Advocacy charter.

Active

Achieving

Milestones



# Key contacts

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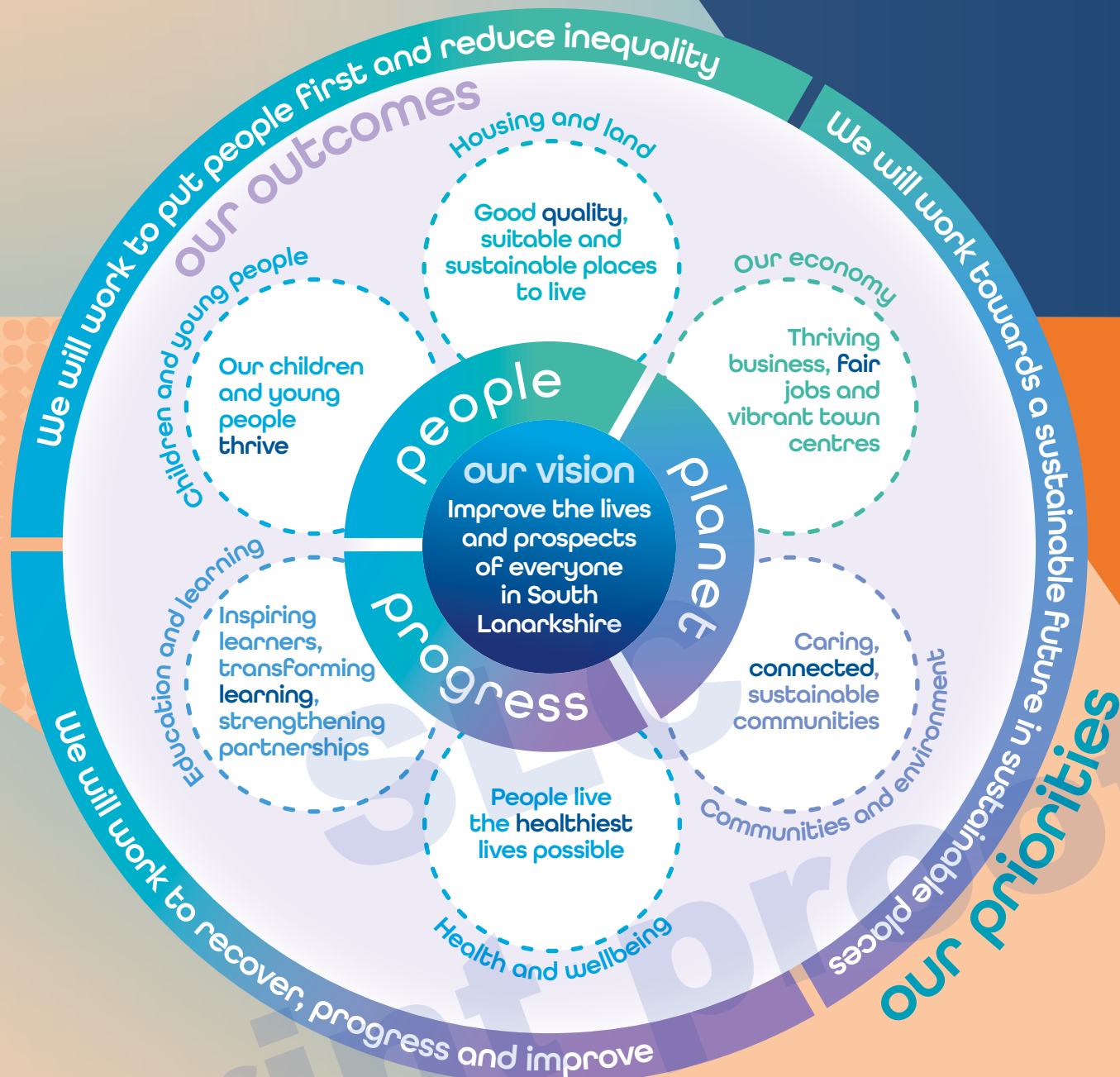
Respected

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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