

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN 2026-2031

Draft February 12 February 2026



Contents

	Page
Foreword	4
Our Vision	6
Introduction	8
About Aberdeen's Children and Families	9
What Do We Know About Our Under 5s?	10
What Do We Know About Our School Age Children and Young People?	12
What Do We Know About Our Care Experienced Children and Young People?	14
What Do We Know About Child Poverty in Aberdeen?	15
Your Place, Your Plans, Your Future	18
Our Main Areas of Focus	19
How Are We Going to Achieve Our Vision?	20
What System Changes We Will Make?	21
How We'll Know the System Changes Have Made a Difference	22
Helping to Support Our Children Young People and Families	25
Getting it Right for Every Child	26
Improving Educational Outcomes	29
United Nations Rights Of the Child	33
Keeping the Promise	38
Child Poverty	48

Contents

Our Delivery Plan	57
Plan on a Page	58
Governance - How We Will Make Sure We Are Achieving Our Aims	59
Resources	60
Best Start in Life	61
Empowered and Resilient	67
Attainment and Transitions	76
Appendices	85
National Performance Framework	86
Children's Services Plan Priorities Linked to UNCRC Articles	89
Glossary	92





Foreword

It is my privilege, as Chair of the Children's Services Board, to introduce the Children's Services Plan 2026–31—a blueprint for real and lasting change for Aberdeen's children, young people, and families. This plan is rooted in our commitment to ensure that, by 2036, every child and young person in Aberdeen has the opportunity to fulfil their potential, regardless of background or circumstance. Our vision is bold but clear: to close the gaps that persist in our city, particularly for those living in our most deprived communities. Rather than following the usual 3-year cycle, this Plan has been established to direct our shared work over the next 5 years. Amending timescales has enabled the closer alignment of the Children's Services Plan with our Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2026-36 and other related strategies and plans.

We recognise that too many of our children still face barriers that prevent them from fulfilling their potential. The data shows us that: almost one in five children in Aberdeen live in poverty, and the impacts of deprivation are felt most acutely in our priority neighbourhoods. Our Plan sets out a determined response, emphasising early intervention, whole-family support, and to challenge the structural inequalities that hold families back. We will focus our efforts where they are needed most, ensuring that resources, expertise, and compassion reach those living in our priority neighbourhoods.

Ensuring a children's rights are at the heart of all we do our approach is shaped by the voices of children, young people, families, and communities. Through extensive engagement, we have listened carefully to what matters most to them—safety, opportunity, belonging, and a genuine say in shaping their future. This feedback, coupled with robust local data and the expertise of our partners, underpins the three central priorities of this plan:

- **Best Start in Life:** We will ensure that our most vulnerable families are supported from the earliest stages and are empowered to access joined-up, proactive support, especially to families in SIMD1 areas. We aim to break the cycle of disadvantage and give every child the foundation they deserve and improving pathways for those awaiting neurodevelopmental assessment.
- **Empowered and Resilient:** We will work alongside children and young people to co-create safe spaces and provide access to support and activities that foster resilience. Our focus will be on those at greatest risk of exploitation, substance use, and disconnection, ensuring that no child is left behind.
- **Attainment and Transitions:** We are committed to closing the attainment gap by offering tailored support to young people at risk of disengaging from education, enhancing work experience opportunities.

Challenging Child Poverty

Central to our vision is our focus to reduce child poverty. We will use data-driven tools to identify and support families facing hardship, expand financial inclusion initiatives, and address barriers to access to healthcare, affordable childcare, housing, and food security. Our whole-family approach means support will not be piecemeal, but coordinated, timely, and empowering—helping families to build resilience and stability for the future.

Real change will only be achieved through meaningful collaboration across all sectors—local government, health, education, the voluntary sector, and, most importantly, families themselves. We are committed to transparency and accountability, with clear measures to track progress and a governance structure that ensures every partner plays their part.

Let's work together, to challenge ourselves and each other, and to make Aberdeen a city where every child is valued, supported, and able to flourish. The Children's Services Plan 2026–31 is not just a document, it is our shared promise to the children and families of Aberdeen to enable them grow up loved, safe, and respected, realising their full potential. Together, we can deliver on that promise.



Graeme Simpson

Children's Services Board Chair,

Chief Social Work Officer, Aberdeen City Council



Our Vision

By 2036 we want to make sure that all children and young people in Aberdeen achieve their potential. To achieve this, we have set ourselves a 10-year goal that:

95% of young people in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and vulnerable groups achieve a positive destination on leaving school by 2036

Why is this a priority?

It is clear that the life circumstances of children and the impact of poverty affects their educational attainment, and that educational inequality can lead to inequalities of health and wellbeing in early adulthood and beyond. In Aberdeen, increasing numbers of children live in poverty, have disabilities, have additional support needs, or have developmental concerns before starting school.

Children from deprived areas are more likely to experience poor health, miss developmental milestones, and face barriers such as parental smoking and being overweight. By age 16–19, participation in education, employment, or training is significantly lower in the 20% most deprived areas (83.5%) compared with the least deprived areas (95.9%). Young people who have experienced trauma in early life are at greater risk of disengaging from school and require targeted support to prevent lifelong disadvantage. Community feedback highlights the need for safe, affordable, youth-focused spaces, activities, and accessible lifelong learning opportunities. Without intervention, these inequalities will continue to limit positive destinations and long-term outcomes for children and young people.

Our Response

We will adopt a whole-family approach, providing early, proactive support to children and families before and after birth. Families will be offered a trusted case worker to navigate services, build connections, and address risks to wellbeing. We will also support families with children awaiting neurodevelopmental diagnoses to ensure early access to tailored support.

Children and young people will be empowered through co-created, safe, and welcoming spaces, with access to trusted adults, and initiatives to build confidence and emotional skills. We will improve early identification and coordinated multi-agency responses for those affected by exploitation, substance use, or developmental delays, ensuring timely and effective support.



Where We Are Heading

By 2036, through collaborative planning and our system changes across the life course, from early years support to empowering young people and supporting their attainment and transition, we aim to break cycles of deprivation, foster resilience, and ensure every child and young person in Aberdeen has the opportunity to achieve a positive destination on leaving school.



Introduction

This Children's Services Plan explains our goals to supporting all children and young people in Aberdeen by the year 2036 and outlines the steps we will take over the next 5 years to reach those goals. We have organised the plan into four simple sections so you can see what we are focusing on and how we will make a difference. Here is what you will find inside:

- **About Aberdeen's Children and Families:** This section shares some main facts and figures about local children, young people, and families. It also includes what our communities, children and young people have told us about what matters most to them and what they think we should work on over the next ten years.
- **Our Main Focus Areas:** Here, we explain the three main priorities we have chosen, based on the information we have gathered. We will describe what these are and what we plan to do to achieve them.
- **Supporting Our Children, Young People and Families:** This part goes into detail about our work to support national priorities, such as education, involving children and young people in important decisions, supporting those affected by poverty, and helping children and young people who are or who have been in care.
- **How We will Make It Happen:** The last section explains who will be leading the work and how we will make sure these plans turn into real action. It also includes a clear list of the main activities we will carry out to achieve our goals.

We hope this plan makes it clear what we aim to achieve for children and young people in Aberdeen, and how we will work together to make these changes happen.

About Aberdeen's Children and Families

This section of our Plan is a summary of statistics on children and young people in Aberdeen and will give you highlights of key information about their current situation. This information is part of a much wider and detailed set of documents, if you would like to find out more you can find the links to these here:

Aberdeen City Population Needs Assessment

Our Population Needs Assessment (PNA) has up-to-date statistics about everyone in the city, including children and young people: [PNA-2025-draft-health-determinants.pdf](#)

Children's Services Plan Annual Report

Our Children's Services Plan Annual Report offers a more detailed evaluation of the work we have used to inform the priorities set out in this Plan: **TBA June 2026**

The details in the PNA and the Annual Report form what we refer to as a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, helping to identify our key priorities.

Your Place, Your Plans Your Future

You can find the full report on what our children, young people and communities told us were a priority in our Your Place Your Plans Your Future Final Report: [Your Place, Your Plan, Your Future,](#)

Community Planning Aberdeen

There are also plenty of other useful resources and links on our Community Planning Aberdeen Website: [Home - Community Planning Aberdeen](#)

What do we know about our Under 5s?

Maternal Health in Aberdeen

How healthy a mum is during and just after pregnancy can have a significant effect on a baby's start in life. In Aberdeen, there are some positive signs, but also areas that need more attention:

Smoking during pregnancy: Around 9.6% of pregnant women in Aberdeen smoked when they first saw a midwife. This is slightly better than Scotland's average (10.7%), and the number has gone down over time. However, in our priority neighbourhoods in the city, 25% of pregnant women smoke, compared to just 2.8% in the most affluent areas, indicating a large gap impacted by poverty.

Maternal obesity: 25% of pregnant women in Aberdeen are classed as obese (BMI of 30 or above), which is slightly lower than the Scottish average (27.5%). Like smoking, obesity is more common in our priority neighbourhoods (32.7%) than in the most affluent areas (19.8%).

Drug use during pregnancy: Between 2021/22 and 2023/24, 121 mothers were recorded as having drug misuse, about 20.2 cases per 1,000 pregnancies, higher than the Scottish average of 17.9. Thirteen babies were affected by their mothers drug use, though this number has gone down in recent years.

Breastfeeding: 43% of babies were exclusively breastfed at their 6–8-week check-up, much higher than the Scottish average of 32.3%. However, this also varies a lot across the city – from just 16.5% in Northfield to 73.6% in Cults, Bieldside & Milltimber East.

Premature births and low birth weight: 8.7% of babies are born before 37 weeks (slightly higher than the Scottish rate of 8.3%). About 82% of full-term babies are born at a healthy weight, which is slightly better than Scotland as a whole.

Infant deaths: The infant death rate in Aberdeen is 4.2 per 1,000 live births, which is higher than the Scottish average of 3.5. This rate has increased compared to previous years.



How Children Are Doing by Primary 1

By the time children reach Primary 1, the difference in health outcomes for certain children becomes clearer. We are doing well in some areas, but there are still some children and communities that would benefit from more support:

Healthy weight: In Primary 1, 77.3% of children in Aberdeen are a healthy weight, slightly higher than the Scottish average (76.5%). But in priority neighbourhoods, only 72.9% are a healthy weight compared to 82% in the wealthiest areas of Aberdeen.

Immunisation: By age 2, 95.1% of children in Aberdeen have had their main vaccines, meeting the national target for the '6-in-1' jab. But the rate for the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine is only 90.1%, below the 95% target, and some parts of the city have much lower rates.

Developmental checks: At the age of 27-30 months, nearly 90% of children had no concerns at their development check. However, the number of children with at least one concern ranged from just 1% in some neighbourhoods to 18% in others.

Dental health: 71.1% of Primary 1 children have no obvious tooth decay, a little below the Scottish average (73.9%), and again, priority neighbourhoods had a lower percentage of children with no obvious signs of tooth decay.

Exposure to second-hand smoke: 8% of babies are exposed to second-hand smoke at 6-8 weeks, higher than the Scottish average of 6.4%.

Areas for Improvement

- The gap between our most and least affluent areas is large for many health measures, including smoking in pregnancy, obesity, breastfeeding, and child health.
- The rate of infant deaths is higher than the national average and rising.
- Some areas have low rates of healthy weight, good dental health, and vaccination uptake.



What do we know about our School Age Children and Young People

School Attendance and Positive Destinations: Aberdeen maintains strong overall attendance rates, with primary school attendance at 92.9% and secondary schools at 89.7% for the 2023/24 academic year. The combined attendance rate of 91.6% is higher than the Scottish average of 90.3%. Additionally, 93.6% of school leavers achieved a positive initial destination in 2023/24, matching the previous year's result and reflecting robust post-school pathways, though slightly below the national rate of 95.7%. For those with additional support needs, the positive destination rate was 89.4%.

Attainment and Qualifications: Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) compares favourably with the Scottish average in many areas. In 2023/24, 81% of primary one pupils achieved the expected Early Level in reading and writing (equal to or better than Scotland's 81% and 79%, respectively). Numeracy attainment was also strong, with 86% of P1 pupils meeting the expected level, above the Scottish average of 85%. In secondary education, 84% of school leavers achieved literacy and numeracy at SCQF Level 4 or better, and 65% achieved Level 5 or better. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more awards at Level 5 increased to 66%.

Inclusion and Additional Support: We have a strong commitment to inclusion with 36.6% of primary and 48.1% of secondary pupils identified as having Additional Support Needs in 2024. The most common reasons for support were English as an additional language and social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties. Notably, 23.6% of all pupils did not have English as their main home language, reflecting the city's diversity. The rate of pupils with declared disabilities (18.2 per 1,000) is lower than the Scottish average (37.1 per 1,000).

Persistent Inequalities: Despite overall successes, significant disparities persist, particularly linked to deprivation. In all subject areas, a smaller proportion of pupils from the most deprived 20% achieved expected levels compared to those from the least deprived 20%. For example, attendance for pupils registered for Free School Meals was 83.5%, compared to 92.1% for non-registered pupils. Exclusion rates were also higher among the most deprived quintile (33.4 per 1,000 pupils) and those on Free School Meals (51.7 per 1,000).



Persistent Absence and Exclusions: The rate of persistent absence (10% or more sessions missed) in 2024 was 27.5%, with secondary schools experiencing the highest levels (33.6%). Exclusion cases increased to 646 in 2022/23, up from 408 in 2020/21. It should be noted school rolls increased by 1 600 in the same time period. However, these figures underscore the need for continued focus on attendance and behaviour support

Achievement Gap and Destinations: The attainment gap between the most and least deprived remains pronounced. The average total tariff score for pupils in the most deprived quintile was 481, compared to 1,198 for those in the least deprived. Positive follow-up destinations for school leavers were lower in the most deprived areas (82.9%) than in the least deprived (95.3%)

Support for Looked After Children: Educational outcomes for looked after children lag behind the wider population. In 2022/23, 68.8% of looked after children left school with one or more qualifications at SCQF Level 4, compared to 87% for all pupils. Attendance rates for looked after children were 88.4%, above the national average, but exclusion rates were significantly higher (164 per 1,000 looked after pupils versus 96.9 nationally). Positive destination rates for looked after children, while improving, remain lower than the general population (81.3% vs 90.1%)

Mental Health and Wellbeing: Levels of mental health and wellbeing among children and young people require ongoing attention. SHINE Mental Health Surveys indicate that 1 in 5 P6 & P7 and 1 in 3 S1-6 pupils experience low mood, with higher prevalence among those from less affluent backgrounds and those who do not disclose their gender. Suicide rates among young people aged 11–15 have increased from 6.2 per 100,000 (2016–20) to 8.2 per 100,000 (2018–22), highlighting the importance of tailored mental health support within school.

Areas for Improvement

- Some children from our priority neighbourhood families or those who need extra help aren't achieving as well as their peers, with a significant gap between their results and those from more affluent families.
- A proportion of pupils are missing periods of school or being excluded, especially in secondary schools and among those in priority neighbourhoods.
- Mental health concerns like feeling sad or worried are becoming more common in young people, and more support is needed to help them feel better and safe at school.



What do we Know About Our Care Experienced Children and Young People

How Many Children Are Looked After? On 31 July 2024, there were 454 looked after children in Aberdeen City. This is about 1.8% of all children aged 0-17 in the city, which is a bit less than the Scottish average (2.2%). More boys than girls are looked after (60.1% boys), and nearly 1 in 5 (18.7%) are under 5 years old.

Where Do Looked After Children Live? Most looked after children in Aberdeen live with foster carers (46%). Some are looked after children who live within their family network. (called kinship care), but this is less common in Aberdeen (34.1%) than in Scotland overall (54.1%). Sometimes, children have to move homes more than once in a year. In 2023-24, 20% of looked after children had more than one placement—this is higher than the Scottish average.

Why Do Placements Change? Children may change homes for positive reasons, like moving to live with adoptive families or being reunited with brothers and sisters. Sometimes, if a child needs safety quickly, they might have to move again until a suitable place is found. Social workers and carers work hard to make sure changes are as smooth as possible, and extra support is given to help children settle. Nationally, we know, there is a significant shortage of foster care placements, and this can also contribute to placement moves.

Education and School Life Looked after children face extra challenges in school. In 2023/24, 70.3% of looked after school leavers in Aberdeen got at least one qualification at SCQF level 4). This is somewhat lower than the Scottish average but is improving.

Attendance at school for looked after children was 88.4% (better than the Scottish average), but their exclusion rate (when pupils are sent home because of behaviour) was much higher in Aberdeen (164 per 1,000 pupils) than the rest of Scotland (96.9 per 1,000).

What Happens After Leaving School? After leaving school, young people hope to move into jobs, more education or training. In 2023/24, only 60% of looked after school leavers in Aberdeen had a positive outcome (like getting a job, starting college, or training). This is lower than in the rest of Scotland and has dropped compared to previous year



What do we know about Child Poverty in Aberdeen

Poverty in Aberdeen City: Poverty is still a significant concern in Aberdeen, with big differences depending on where people live and their backgrounds. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation shows things have got worse recently: the number of neighbourhoods among the 20% poorest in Scotland went up from 22 in 2016 to 29 in 2020, and the number in the poorest 40% rose from 28% to 33.2%. On the other hand, 36.7% of areas are still among the 20% best-off.

The city has usually had better than average wages and a strong economy, mainly because of the oil and gas industry. However, as the city moves away from oil and gas, and with prices rising and the cost of living going up, low-income families and vulnerable people have been hit harder than others.

The Working Population: Poverty is closely connected to having a job and having the right skills. Aberdeen's economy is expected to grow more slowly than other UK cities, with less than 1% growth each year. Even so, the city is working to improve things by investing in new skills, green energy, and different types of businesses to help the economy recover.

In 2024, people working full-time in Aberdeen earned an average of £721.70 a week, less than the Scottish average of £740.00. The pay gap between men and women has become smaller, but some differences remain. Even with these issues, people in Aberdeen still earn more on average than people in other parts of Scotland and the UK.

Fewer people from ethnic minority backgrounds and young people are in work. In 2023, 16.2% of households in Aberdeen had no one working, which is about 13,700 households. One in seven homes had nobody in employment, and ethnic minority groups were especially affected, with 28.5% not working.



Families Living in the 20% Least Affluent Areas: By the middle of 2022, 20,893 people in Aberdeen were living in the least affluent 20% of areas, including 3,770 children. In 2023/24, 5,615 children were living in families with low incomes (before housing costs), which is less than the 6,163 in 2022/23. Most of these children (66.7%) were in families where someone worked, and nearly a quarter (23.2%) were under five years old. More than half (58.2%) of children in low-income families lived with just one parent. The percentage of children aged 0-15 in low-income families was 12.3%, down from 14.5% in 2022/23, and lower than the Scotland average of 16.3%. However, these numbers changed a lot depending on the area, from none in wealthy neighbourhoods to 31% in City Centre East.

Child Poverty: According to the End Child Poverty coalition, in 2023/24 about 7,825 children (aged 0-15 or 16-19 in full-time education) in Aberdeen were living in poverty after paying for housing, which is 19.1% of children, compared to 23% for Scotland overall.

Child poverty is especially high in families where no one works or where incomes are very low. In 2023/24, 12% of low-income households had children aged 15 or under—about 3,600 children. The city has responded by offering more support to help people find jobs, providing cheaper childcare, and opening more community food pantries.

Food and Fuel Concerns: Worries about having enough food are rising. In May 2024, 20.7% of people who answered a City Voice survey said they only ate a few types of food, 13.6% couldn't eat healthy meals, 13.3% ate less than they thought they should, and 9.4% were concerned about not having enough food. Foodbank use has gone up, with 55,522 parcels given out in 2023/24—over 4,600 a month.

Heating costs are also a big worry, especially for people in social housing, disabled people, single-person households, and minorities. The latest official figures (2017-19) say that 26.1% of households struggled to pay for heating, which is up from 23% in 2016-18, and more than the Scottish average of 24.4%. In May 2024, 24.6% of people said they worried about heating their homes, which is much higher than the 10% in 2021.



Rise in homelessness: In 2024-25, there were 1,778 homelessness presentations to the council, an increase of 1.8% (1,747) on the previous year, whilst still high, a less sharp rise than the 25% reported in 2022-23.

In March 2025, 376 households were in temporary accommodation (down from 442 in March 2024), 80 of these households had either pregnant women or children in them. 492 young people (aged 16 - 24 years old) applied for homeless assistance in 2024/25, a slight increase of 1.9%, since 2021/22 there has been a more significant increase of 55% (from 318)

Areas for Improvement

Financial Support for Families: Families living in Aberdeen's most deprived communities face significant challenges linked to child poverty. Financial support is crucial: families need help to access benefits, grants, and free school meals, with streamlined referrals and clear information and access to community food pantries.

Employability Support for Parents: Support for parents in finding jobs, affordable childcare, offering joined-up, proactive support and listening to families' experiences

Health and Wellbeing Support: for healthy pregnancies, healthy weight, and breastfeeding, as well as easier access to dental care and immunisations. The data shows the importance of early intervention, ensuring families get help before problems escalate, and co-designing services with community input

Health Care Costs: Local health professionals have told us that many parents have difficulties attending healthcare appointments due to lack of transport or not being able to get time off work. While services are trying to reduce the number of appointments, or offering digital appointments if appropriate, sometimes people do need to be seen in person, and not everyone has easy access to the internet.



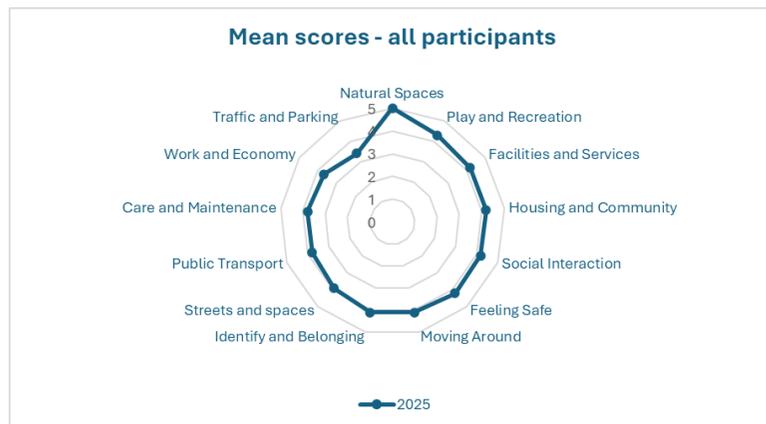
Your Place, Your Plans Your Future: What have our Communities Told Us:

People of Aberdeen and our communities are at the heart of Community Planning Aberdeen. 2087 people across Aberdeen, including 587 children and young people, shared what matters most to them through our Your Place, Your Plans, Your Future engagement.

The engagement ran from 24th March to 18th May 2025 and was a combination of the following:

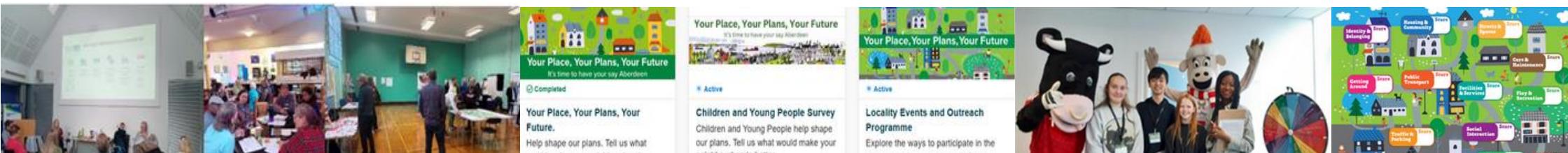
- online survey for adults
- online survey designed for children and young people.
- Six local events, with specific activities designed by the Aberdeen Youth Movement and Aberdeen Ambassadors for children and young people.
- outreach programme where we went to 98 groups/schools/locations across Aberdeen and facilitated participation to meet people's needs.

Engagement Results



Participants rated a range of place-and-community-related themes on a scale of 1–7 and contributed more than 13,000 comments about what they think is working well in Aberdeen and the areas they felt needed to improve. The data and comments have been considered alongside the Population Needs Assessment in making decisions about which priorities and system changes should be within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. Read the full engagement report [here](#).

The five highest ranking themes were:	The five lowest ranking themes were:
Natural space (5)	Influence and sense of control (3.3)
Play and recreation (4.3)	Traffic and parking (3.4)
Facilities and services (4.2)	Work and Economy (3.7)
Social interaction (4.2)	Care and Maintenance (3.8)
Feeling safe (4.2)	Public Transport (3.8)



Our Main Areas of Focus

Taking into consideration all the information above as well as the wider data and evidence from our Population Needs Assessment, Consultation, feedback from our workforce and key stakeholders, we have developed our Strategic Priorities for our Children's Services Plan. The Plan will involve making 6 major system changes organised under three broad themes that we will make to our services to support those children, young people and families most in need of our support to improve their outcomes, these include:

Best Start in Life

- We will make sure our most vulnerable families have a key link worker with them from before their child is born to support them in their first years.
- Making sure families and their child awaiting a diagnosis of neurodivergence get help as soon as possible.

Empowered and Resilient

- Developing a Co-Located City Centre Safe space for our children and young people where they can get access to all the activities and professional supports they need.
- Building a youth-focused system that offers early, holistic, and trauma-informed support to young people at risk of substance use and exploitation.
- Develop a programme to support 12–18-year-old boys to become positive citizens.

Attainment And Transitions

- Supporting young people who have disengaged or are who at risk of disengaging with school, to achieve.
- Improving our Work Experience Offer and wider post school support.

These priorities also form the core of the Children, Families and Lifelong Learning Section of our Local Outcome Improvement Plan for further details on the LOIP you can find information here: **ADD LINK WHEN PUBLISHED**

How are we going to achieve our vision?

BEST START IN LIFE	EMPOWERED AND RESILIENT	ATTAINMENT AND TRANSITIONS
Why is this a priority?		
<p>Every child deserves the best start in life. Supporting parents and babies in the first 1000 days is crucial. This period shapes brain development, physical health, and emotional wellbeing. During this time of heightened vulnerability, the foundations of a child's lifelong health and development are established. If a baby's development falls behind during the first year of life, it is more likely they will fall even further behind in subsequent years. Early support lays the foundation for resilience, reduced risk of future health and social problems, and better outcomes.</p>	<p>The challenges of childhood aren't restricted to the early years, navigating teenage years is challenging for many young people as well as their parents and carers. Feeling safe and included in their community and not stigmatised, enables children and young people to develop self-confidence and trust. This nurturing environment fosters resilience, helping them face challenges, build strong relationships, and grow into empowered individuals.</p>	<p>Every young person has the right to have the best possible opportunity to achieve a positive and sustained destination on leaving school. Young people in the most deprived areas and in vulnerable groups often face more barriers that make it harder to stay engaged in education and achieve positive outcomes. Over time, these challenges can affect attendance, motivation, and confidence, increasing the risk of disengagement.</p>
What will we do?		
<p>Using shared data, we will support professionals to identify vulnerable children and families early, before birth, so that support is proactive rather than reactive. Families will be provided with a trusted case worker who will build lasting relationships and help them access the services and receive the support they need. This will also support parents to make connections within their communities and build a network of support beyond the link worker. We will go further to identify and support families with children awaiting a diagnosis to ensure they are provided with support earlier.</p>	<p>We will work with children and young people to create a safe, welcoming city centre space where they can take part in activities, connect with trusted adults, and get support when needed. We'll make it easier for professionals and communities to share concerns about child exploitation through a new online portal, helping to spot and prevent problems early. Services will work more closely together to support young people affected by substance use or exploitation, ensuring they get the right help at the right time. Finally, a new programme will support boys build confidence and emotional skills</p>	<p>We will provide bespoke support for young people at risk of leaving school without a positive destination such as care experienced young people, those in our more deprived communities and those with Additional Support Needs or disabilities. The new work experience programme offers young people, particularly those disengaged from school, the chance to gain practical workplace skills alongside classroom studies, bridging the gap between education and employment readiness.</p>

What System Changes We Will Make

TBA – This section will provide a detailed summary of the planned activities each System Change once confirmed at the Community Planning Board (March 2026), the system changes are summarised in the following section below

How We'll Know the System Changes Have Made a Difference

In the table below we outline the key measures we will use to track our improvement

CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING					
Input			Output		Outcome
System Change	Target population	Lead Partner	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031	Longer Term 2036
Best Start in Life					Stretch Outcome 1 95% of young people in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and vulnerable groups achieve a positive destination on leaving school by 2036. Baseline: Citywide: 90.1% SIMD 1: 84.5% SIMD 5: 94.7% Gap: 10.2 p.p. (2023/24) Looked After Children: 60% (2023/24) Additional Support Needs/ Disability: 89.4% (2023/24)
1.1 Personal Case Workers for Vulnerable Families and Support for Families Awaiting Neurodevelopmental Diagnosis Provide personal case workers for vulnerable families who need help to access the services they are entitled to, and a better co-ordinated support experience for families waiting for a neurodevelopmental diagnosis	Vulnerable families in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 neighbourhoods Children and Families of children awaiting a neurodevelopmental diagnosis	Aberdeen City Council	% of vulnerable families with children under five have a case worker % of families engaged reporting no concerns %. of children with neurodevelopmental differences and their families with a support plan in place, irrespective of diagnosis, within 12 weeks of identification within identified Schools	Increase by 12% the percentage of children reviewed in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1 neighbourhoods meeting their developmental milestones by 2031 Baseline: 79.9% with no developmental concerns (SIMD1) SIMD5 89.6% SIMD 5 20.1% in SIMD1 with developmental concerns (2023/24)	

CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Input			Output		Outcome
System Change	Target population	Lead Partner	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031	Longer Term 2036
Empowered and Resilient					
<p>1.2 Safe, co-designed spaces for at-risk young people offering onsite support, person centred activities, and healthy relationship programme.</p> <p>Co-design an integrated programme that provides safe, supportive spaces, targeted interventions and individual support opportunities for young people who are at risk of harm from substance use or child criminal exploitation, including support for boys to form healthy and respectful relationships.</p>	<p>Young people in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 neighbourhoods and Vulnerable Groups of C&YP</p> <p>Children and young people at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation and risk of substance use</p> <p>12–18-year-old boys in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Police Scotland</p>	<p>No. of young people (by locality) using the safe spaces</p> <p>% of young people at risk of substance use harm or exploitation who are actively supported through a multi-agency wraparound model, reporting improved SHANNARI measures</p> <p>No. of youth anti-social behaviour calls</p> <p>% of 12–18-year-old boys reporting sense of belonging or connection to peers.</p>	<p>Increase by 5% the number of young people who report always feeling safe in their school, community, and home by 2031</p> <p>Baseline: Safe at school – 41% Safe in community -40% Safe at home - 82% All settings -27%</p>	<p>Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and vulnerable groups achieve a positive destination on leaving school by 2036.</p> <p>Baseline: Citywide: 90.1% SIMD 1: 84.5% SIMD 5: 94.7% Gap: 10.2 p.p. (2023/24) Looked After Children: 60% (2023/24) Additional Support Needs/ Disability: 89.4% (2023/24)</p>

CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Input		Output		Outcome	
System Change	Target population	Lead Partner	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031	Longer Term 2036
Attainment and Transitions					
<p>1.3 Individualised support for young people at risk of not completing school and sustained work experience</p> <p>Support programmes for young people at risk of not completing school and sustained work experience opportunities as part of the curriculum offer</p>	<p>Young people in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 neighbourhoods and Vulnerable Groups of C&YP</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council/ Skills Development Scotland</p>	<p>Percentage increase in school engagement/ attendance</p> <p>No. of young people in sustained work (by locality and group)</p> <p>% of young people in sustained work experiencing engaging with school and achieving a positive destination.</p> <p>% of Young people receiving tailored support transition to a positive destination</p>	<p>Increase by 10% the tariff scores for pupils in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 neighbourhoods and other vulnerable groups by 2031.</p> <p>Baseline: SIMD1 tariff score: 55% of the overall tariff rate. SIMD1 tariff score: 486, SIMD 5 tariff score: 1203 Tariff score overall: 886.</p>	<p>Stretch Outcome 1 95% of young people in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and vulnerable groups achieve a positive destination on leaving school by 2036.</p> <p>Baseline: Citywide: 90.1% SIMD 1: 84.5% SIMD 5: 94.7% Gap: 10.2 p.p. (2023/24) Looked After Children: 60% (2023/24) Additional Support Needs/ Disability: 89.4% (2023/24)</p>

Helping to Support Our Children, Young People and Families

Our Children's Services Plan priorities in the previous section, highlighted the main changes we will make to our systems and services to improve overall outcomes for children and young people in the city. However, our Plan also has the responsibility of explaining how we are going to address national priorities for children and young people. The section that follows provides an explanation of what we will do to support these national priorities, specifically on the topics of:

Getting it Right for Every Child, how we are supporting our services and families to help children reach their full potential

Improving Education in Aberdeen, linked to the National Improvement Framework

Keeping the Promise, ensuring sustained multi agency attention to improving the outcomes for children and young people who care experienced to deliver on the commitments set out in The Promise by 2030.

Making sure we uphold Children's Rights in line with the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child into Scots law.

And Tackling Child Poverty, our strategic approach to tackling child poverty over the next 5 years

Getting it Right for Every Child

How We Create and Maintain Effective Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Practice

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is Scotland's long standing, national commitment to provide all children, young people, and their families with the right support at the right time, so that every child and young person can reach their full potential. GIRFEC is both an approach and framework used by services across Scotland to improve and uphold the wellbeing of children and their families.

In Aberdeen we are deeply committed to ensuring that every child and young person grows up loved, safe, heard, and respected, so they can reach their full potential. Our approach, known as Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), guides everything we do to support children, young people, and their families, especially those who are most vulnerable. Below, we explain how we put this into practice and how we work together to create positive outcomes for all.

Placing Children and Families at the Centre

We always put children, young people, and their families at the heart of our work. This means listening to their voices and respecting their rights, while encouraging them to participate fully in decisions that affect them. By promoting choice and inclusion, and by recognising the strengths within families, we ensure that our support is personal and meaningful.

Working in Partnership

We believe that the best outcomes happen when services work together. Our teams across health, education, social work, and the voluntary sector collaborate closely, sharing information and expertise. We involve families at every stage, making sure they are informed, respected, and included in planning for their child's wellbeing.

Understanding and Supporting Wellbeing

Our understanding of wellbeing covers all aspects of a child's life, including their health, development, family, and community. We use the Wellbeing Wheel (SHANARRI indicators: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included) to see what is going well and where extra support might be needed. We also use tools like the My World Triangle and Resilience Matrix to guide our assessment and planning, ensuring a thorough and holistic understanding of each child's world.

Early and Proportionate Support

We aim to offer help as early as possible before problems have a chance to grow. Our Universal Services (like schools and health visitors) provide most of the support children and families need. Where more complex needs arise, we put together a plan with the child, their family, and other professionals, making sure everyone's views are included and that support is targeted and effective.

Clear Processes and Roles

Every child has a named person—someone familiar, such as a health visitor or teacher—who is their main point of contact and support. If a child needs help from more than one agency, we appoint a lead professional to coordinate support and ensure everyone is working towards the same outcomes. We review and update plans regularly, always keeping the child's best interests in mind.

Information Sharing and Record Keeping

We take great care to share relevant information appropriately and securely, always following data protection laws. Our staff explain to families why information needs to be shared and with whom, seeking consent where possible. In situations where there is a risk of harm, we act quickly and share information without delay to keep children safe. We also keep detailed records and chronologies, documenting significant events and actions, which help us spot patterns and respond quickly to any emerging concerns.



Managing Transitions

We plan carefully for key changes in a child's life, such as starting school or moving between schools, to ensure continuity of support. We make sure that information is passed on smoothly and that families know who their new named person or lead professional will be.

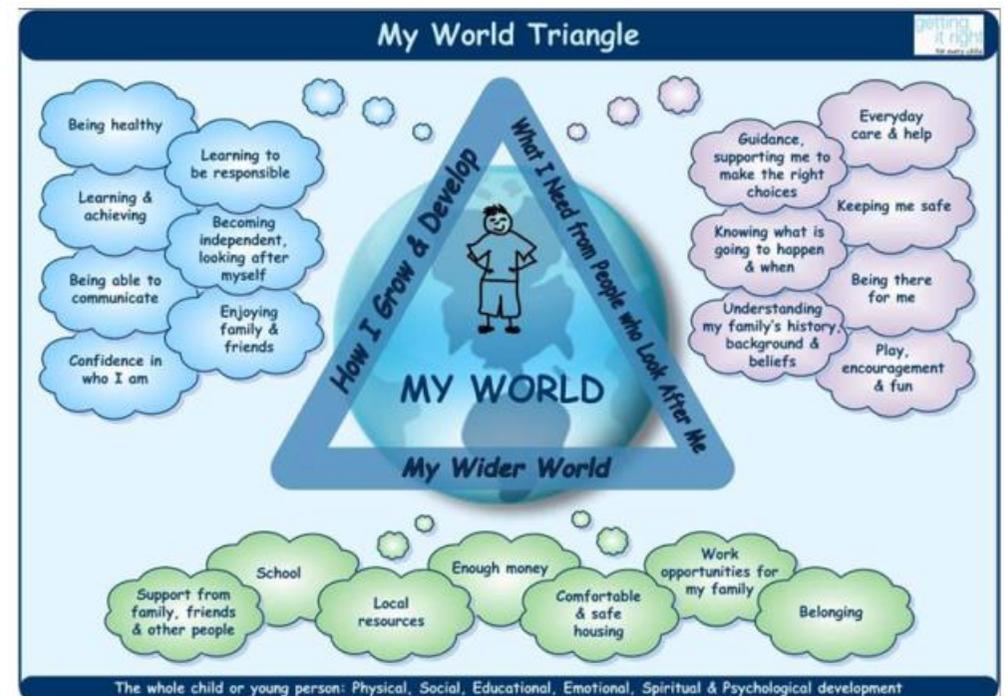
Valuing Diversity and Tackling Inequality

Our services are inclusive and accessible to all. We actively celebrate diversity and work to make sure that every child and young person gets the support they need, when they need it, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Continuous Improvement and Family Involvement

We regularly review our practice, seek feedback, and involve children, young people, and families in shaping the support we provide. Our aim is always to build positive, respectful relationships, and to empower families as expert partners in their children's lives.

The full details of our approach to GIRFEC practice can be found here in our [GIRFEC Operational Guidance](#)



Improving Educational Outcomes



National Improvement Framework

We are strongly committed to making sure every child and young person in the city gets the best possible education. We work closely with schools, parents, community groups, and national partners to tackle challenges, celebrate successes, and strive to make school a positive and rewarding experience for everyone. The Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework (NIF) Action Plan is reviewed and updated annually to reflect the priorities of the education service. Below is a summary of the action we are undertaking and what we are planning in the years to come. If you would like further detail, you can find the latest evaluation here: [Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan Evaluation 2024/25](#)

Primary Schools

Current Achievements and Improvements

Attainment across P1, 4 and 7 are consistent with national patterns. Marginal differences in literacy will be addressed through continued roll out of Cypic writing. By March 2026 staff from all schools will have accessed the professional learning offer ensuring consistent delivery across the city. Young people continue to have opportunities to participate in performance opportunities through established creative events bringing pupils from across all school communities together such as the Big Sing. School attendance rates are continuing to rise and remain above the national average. Schools continue to welcome pupils from different backgrounds, making classrooms more diverse and vibrant

Plans for Improving Learning Environments

As part of the school estate plan improvements continue to be made to the school estate to make sure there are enough good spaces for learning. In the last session we opened the new Riverbank School in May 2025, offering excellent facilities for pupils in Tillydrone. Work has begun on renovations for both St Peter's and Ferryhill to provide welcoming and modern spaces with access to the outdoors providing the best possible learning environments for our young people.

Support for Teachers and Leadership

Supporting teachers and school leaders is a key priority. Training programmes, such as Aspire2Lead and LeadWise, help both new and experienced leaders develop their skills. Every primary school has access to professional learning opportunities, including workshops on maths, literacy, and how to make lessons engaging and effective. Middle leaders take part in quality improvement visits to learn from each other and share what works well. We are also working to help more teachers become leaders, especially in areas where it's harder to recruit staff.

A Focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Wellbeing

Primary schools are focusing on making sure every child can read, write, and use numbers confidently. We have rolled out a writing programme that has boosted achievement in writing at P4 and P7. There's a big push on maths too, with schools taking part in a new research project called MathsBURST, using fun activities to help children understand maths better.

Wellbeing is just as important as learning. Schools check in regularly with pupils about their mental health and happiness, and there's been a drop in children reporting low mood or loneliness. Programmes like "Being Me" help children feel good about themselves and learn about healthy habits. Free breakfast clubs and after-school activities support families and make school a welcoming place.

Inclusion and Additional Support for Learning

In Aberdeen we continue to work hard to make sure all children, including those with additional support needs, get the help they need to succeed. The CIRCLE framework gives teachers practical tools and training to support children with learning or emotional difficulties. There are more places available for early learning and childcare, especially for children from low-income families or those who need extra support. Staff are offered ongoing training in supporting children with trauma or behaviour challenges through our annual learning festival.

Secondary Schools

Current Achievements and Improvements

Secondary schools in Aberdeen have also made strong progress. The number of pupils gaining qualifications has reached record highs, with more entries for National 5, Higher, and Advanced Higher exams than ever before. Attainment (the number of pupils passing these exams) is increasing, and more young people are achieving one or more passes at SCQF Level 5 and 6. Schools are also seeing improvements in attendance.

Plans for Curriculum Development Pathways

Aberdeen's secondary schools continue to offer a wide range of subjects and courses, so every young person can find something that interests them and prepares them for their future. The ABZ Campus project has increased the number of courses available, including foundation apprenticeships, skills-based subjects, and options for pupils with additional needs. Along with our system change to develop more work experience opportunities and partnerships with local employers, this will better equip our young people for their future careers.

Support for Teachers and Leadership

Just like in primary schools, secondary teachers and leaders are supported in professional learning. Networks for learning and teaching, as well as subject-specific groups, will continue to help staff share ideas and best practice. Leadership programmes and mentoring for new head teachers and deputies are being expanded. We are also working to attract more teachers to subjects where it's hard to recruit, like STEM (science, technology, engineering, and maths).

Focus on Attainment, Skills, and Positive Destinations

We aim to help every young person achieve their best and move into a positive destination after school, whether that's college, university, training, or employment. Schools use data to track progress and target support for pupils who need it most. There's a focus on closing the attainment gap between the most and least advantaged pupils, with targeted interventions and extra support for those who need it. With youth work and family learning teams supporting both family and pupils' wellbeing, confidence, and skills, helping them prepare for life beyond school.

Inclusion and Additional Support for Learning

Secondary schools are committed to being inclusive. The CIRCLE framework and other support systems help staff meet the needs of all pupils. All schools work closely with partners with a particular focus on closing the gap for pupils who are care-experienced, young carers, or from families facing poverty.

Looking to the Future

By improving school buildings, supporting teachers, focusing on literacy, numeracy, and wellbeing, expanding the curriculum, and making the most of technology, we will help pupils enjoy learning and prepare for their futures. Collaborating with families, community partners, and national organisations is at the heart of this work.

Key to ensuring this will be our focus on the Attainment and Transitions System Changes Identified in this Plan. Focussing support to those children and families in SIMD1 and in particular those children who are at risk of disengaging from school, will struggle to achieve a positive destination and those awaiting a diagnosis for their Additional Support Needs, we will maximise our support offer at the earliest possible stage.

United Nations Rights of the Child



Children's rights as our common thread across all priorities

Children's rights are the organising principle of this Plan. Across Best Start in Life, Empowered and Resilient, and Attainment & Transitions, we remove practical barriers so rights can be realised in daily life, through early, whole-family support, financial inclusion and employability, accessible health and neurodevelopmental pathways, and safe spaces that protect from harm and exploitation.

We embed participation so that children and young people shape decisions that affect them, and we commit to child-friendly information and clear "you said, we did" feedback. With a sharp focus on equity for children in SIMD1, care-experienced children and young people, those awaiting assessment, and those at risk of homelessness, we align supports to need, uphold non-discrimination and best interests, and strengthen positive destinations.

Our multi-agency, data-informed approach, rooted in GIRFEC, corporate parenting duties, and contextual safeguarding, ensures coordinated delivery and measurable accountability, so that every child in Aberdeen can grow up safe, healthy, included, and ready to thrive.

For a more detailed outline of how the various articles of the UNCRC are embedded throughout our Plan you can find in the 'Children's Services Plan Priorities Linked UNCRC Articles' section on page 93.

How Aberdeen Includes Young People in Decisions

Our Partnership aims to ensure that children and young people have a say in what happens in their city. We have groups such as the Aberdeen Youth Movement (AYM) and Young Ambassadors, where young people can share their ideas with city leaders. These groups help make important choices about things like money for community projects and protecting Aberdeen's history. There is also currently a new Shadow Board in development which will aim to let young people help with important decisions even more.

We run events in different neighbourhoods, bringing information to schools, and use fun campaigns to get young people's opinions. The "Your Place, Your Plans, Your Future" consultation let young people help design how the city looks and works. Young people can be peer leaders, helping others join in and speak up. The Youth Activity Grants programme gives young people money to run their own projects about creativity, inclusion, and leadership. Young people themselves decide which projects get money, so their voices really matter.

We also have programmes to teach everyone about children's rights, including toolkits and training for people who work with young people. We have collaborated on and shared our ideas with other places in Scotland and around the world. Altogether, these projects make sure young people are listened to and their ideas help shape the city.

What Young People Think

Young people in Aberdeen say it's important they get to share their views and that adults really listen. In the "Your Place, Your Plans, Your Future" consultation young people asked for safer paths for walking and cycling, better buses, and more places and activities they can use. They want their neighbourhoods to be safer, with better lighting and play areas for everyone. They also want to know that what they say changes things, so they like to see "you said, we did" reports showing how their ideas are used.

When we asked about budgets, young people talked about how decisions affect things they care about, like youth clubs, buses, and arts events. They like being able to help decide where money goes, and they want these choices explained simply, in ways

they understand. The main thing is, young people want adults to be honest, make changes that help them, and give them a chance to shape what happens in Aberdeen—both locally and across the whole city.

Youth-Led Funding & Innovation: Aberdeen's Commitment to Meaningful Youth Participation

The Youth Activity Grants programme lets young people decide which projects get funding. This means they have real power to create new clubs, events, or activities that are creative, welcoming, and help others learn to be leaders. By making these decisions themselves, young people help build a better community and learn important skills.

Helping Develop Children's Services Plan

Young people have helped shape the plan for children's services by joining special workshops. At one meeting (the Children's Services Board LOIP Development Workshop on 15/07/25), young people from AYM gave feedback about what could be better:

- **Making it Easier to Join In:** The workshops and information were sometimes hard to understand, with lots of big words and abbreviations. Young people want things explained clearly, with simple language and chances for everyone to help design meetings and reports.
- **Fairness and Representation:** Some groups, like those not in school, don't get asked what they think as much. Young people want different ways to share ideas, so people from all backgrounds can have their say.
- **Bigger Changes:** Young people suggested creating goals that they design themselves, making sure their voice is heard in every part of the plan, and writing easy-to-follow guides for how to get help from services.

Representatives from AYM took part in the Aberdeen 2036: Towards a Fairer Future conference. They spoke up about how young people are often misunderstood and shared ideas on how things could be better. They made it clear that it's important for young people's voices to be heard and that changes should make Aberdeen a fairer place for everyone.

Keeping Children's Rights at the Heart of What We Do

To make sure we keep up with children's rights and the UNCRC, we're helping staff learn more by offering regular training and sharing toolkits, aimed at helping services to embed UNCRC in their work and involving children and young people to the greatest extent they can. We check our policies often to make sure they put children first, and we make sure our complaints process is clear and child-friendly, so everyone knows how to speak up if something isn't right. When we buy services or work with partners, we follow rules that protect children's rights. We use smart tools to look at data and see where we can do better, and we share updates so everyone can see the progress we're making. This way, we keep improving and make sure children and young people are always at the heart of what we do.

Planned Activity

Shaping Decision Making

We remain serious about involving young people in planning and running community learning and development (CLD) activities. The city's CLD Plan for 2025–2030 was created together with young people and other groups. Its main goal is to help young people shape the services and decisions that affect them, making sure their voices are heard and acted on in all important areas. Young people are involved through groups like Aberdeen Youth Movement, Young Ambassadors, and other youth forums, which give them regular chances to share ideas, take the lead, and be part of making decisions.

The CLD plan focuses on youth work to help young people feel better about themselves, get involved in volunteering (over 3,000 Saltire Awards have been earned), and find positive paths after leaving school, especially for those who need the most support. Success is measured by things like the number of partners reporting progress, how many young people are involved in different groups, and the impact of youth-led projects. These achievements are checked by our CLD Strategic Partnership, using regular reviews and clear reports, to make sure young people's voices are central to shaping Aberdeen's future.

Children and Young Peoples Shadow Board

As we mentioned above, we are also working to establish the Children's Services Board (CSB) Shadow Board, a key move in making sure children and young people are part of important decisions. The Shadow Board will include young people from different backgrounds, like youth groups, school councils, and groups for young people with care or justice experience, working to ensure the voices of all children and young people are represented. The board will help make decisions, design services, and keep leaders accountable, with options like projects during term time, mentoring, and awards or internships for recognition.

At first, the Shadow Board will focus on Children's Services Board goals, but the plan is to support our wider Community Planning Aberdeen Partnership. The Shadow Board will begin by learning from experts, mapping out how youth voices are included, and making sure its role is clear compared to other youth voice groups. Activities like workshops, mentoring, and joint planning have been underway from June 2025 to April 2026, ending with a big launch and telling everyone about it. The whole process is about making sure young people help shape the board and the CSB plan, with ongoing ways to check and improve things. This means children and young people will have a lasting way to share ideas and help make Aberdeen better, with their views helping to guide decisions and changes across the city.

Keeping the Promise



The Promise was established as a response to the findings of the Independent Care Review. The Promise is “that all Scotland’s children and young people will grow up loved, safe and respected so they can realise their full potential.” To keep this promise, all the conclusions of the Independent Care Review must be implemented, in full, by 2030. Here is a summary of the work we have been undertaking and have planned in order to ensure we keep The Promise in Aberdeen:

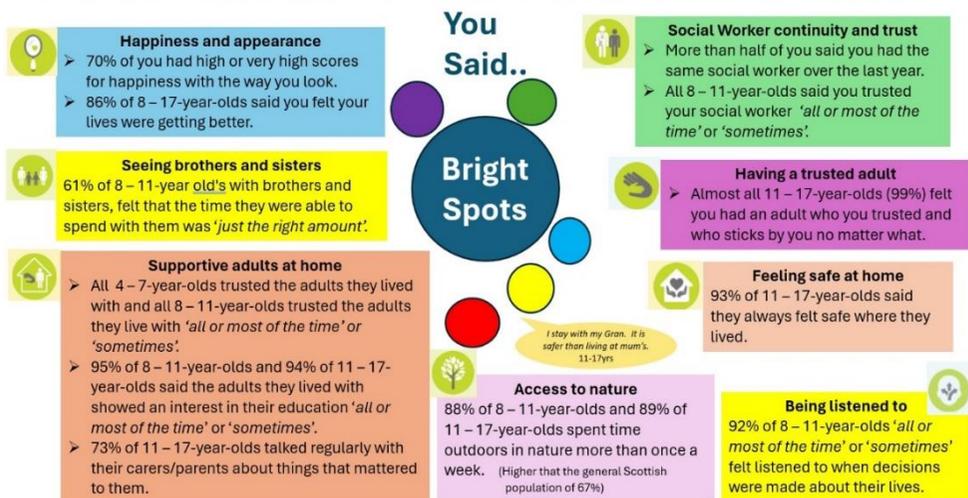
Bright Spots - Listening to Care Experienced Children and Young People

We took time to listen to children and young people in care and those who have left care. In 2024, we worked with Coram Voice and CELCIS to run a survey called Bright Spots. This survey asked children and young people about their wellbeing and how they feel about their lives. We heard from a large number of children and young people, which helped us to better understand what is working and what needs to change.

We also worked hard to ensure that we could hear from children and young people who might find it harder to share their views, such as those in secure care, with disabilities, or living outside Aberdeen, so that everyone had a chance to have their voice heard.

In total we heard from - **72% of our children and young people in care and 69% of our care leavers.**

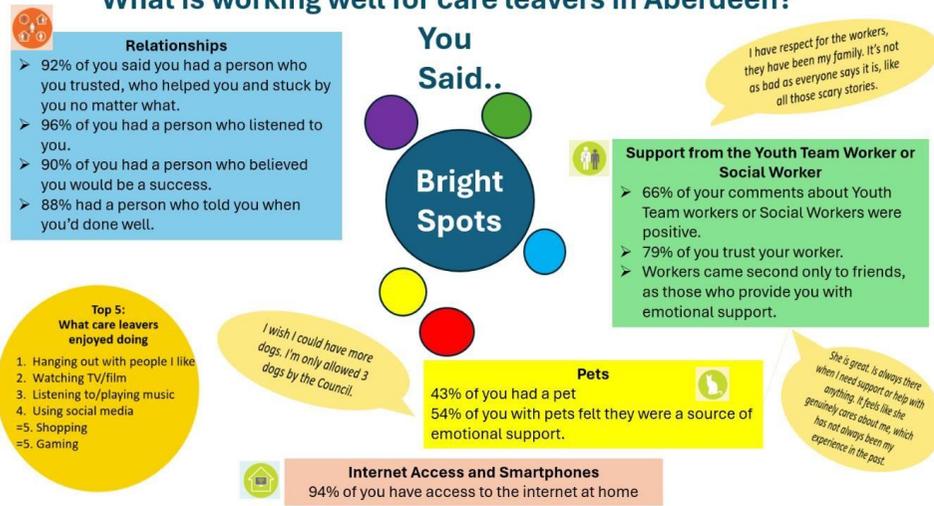
What is working well for children in care aged 4 – 17 in Aberdeen City?



What could be better for children 4 – 17 years in care in Aberdeen City?



What is working well for care leavers in Aberdeen?



What could be better for care leavers in Aberdeen?



Working Together: Collaboration and Participation

In addition to Bright Spots, we have created fun and safe ways for children and young people to share their thoughts. For example, there are focus groups, filmmaking projects, and social activities like “Soup and Sweet” sessions, where young people and adults can chat over a meal. At the request of young people, food is always provided, helping everyone feel welcome and valued.

For children and young people who are new to Scotland (“New Scots”), we make sure activities are inclusive and match their cultural and language needs.

We’ve also started an online magazine called “The Loop” where we share what children and young people have said and show what actions have been taken. Helping everyone to see that their voices are making a difference

Turning Feedback Into Action

We are now using what our care experienced children and young people said to shape our plans as well as continue to listen to their views and options to inform our actions. This feedback helps us decide what needs to be improved, and what is already going well. For example, findings from the Bright Spots survey are being used to inform the development of the Corporate Parenting Plan.

Examples of Positive Changes

Improving life for care experienced children and young people requires all of our partner organisations to work together, such as schools, health workers, the police, housing, and charities. Since 2022 our Promise Pilot has taken a whole family approach, helping children stay in school, and making sure families get help before things become a crisis. Here are some examples of what we have achieved:

- **Bairns' Hoose:** This is a new space designed with help from children, young people, and their families. They helped decide how it looks and how it works, making sure it meets their needs.
- **Rights Service:** Young people are helping to redesign materials and shape the future of this service, making sure it fits what they want and need.
- **Recruitment:** Young people help with hiring staff for Children's Social Work Services. They help design interviews and some even co-lead them, especially for jobs working with children with disabilities.
- **Kinship Service:** Feedback from carers, children, and young people led to more support groups, better information for carers, and new roles to help families spend time together.
- **Intensive Support Service (Craigielea):** This service works closely with families to make sure support is personal, caring, and based on what each child or family needs. Families help plan and review the support they get

Making Sure the Improvement Lasts – Fairer Futures

We know that problems like poverty and housing crisis can make life harder for children and young people in care and their families. That's why they are always reviewing what our priorities should be. For example, we have been awarded extra funding through the Fairer Futures programme, which will provide more resources to support families earlier, help reduce crisis situations, and build stronger communities, so that we can reduce the risk of children and young people being taken into care or reducing the amount of time they remain in it.

Checking Progress and Staying Accountable

The Corporate Parenting Strategic Improvement Group is responsible for ensuring that we meet all of our key responsibilities to children, young people and families experiencing the care system as well as ensuring we continue to do all we can to Keep the Promise. This group reviews feedback, oversees changes, and makes sure improvements are practical and ambitious. The group also makes sure children and young people know what is happening and can see how their input leads to change.

Looking to the Future

Our Partnership remains fully committed to keeping “The Promise” We will keep listening, keep working together, and keep making changes so that every child and young person in Aberdeen feels safe, valued, and able to achieve their best.

By working together with children, young people, families, and partners, and by making sure everyone's voice is heard, we are making real progress—and we are determined to do even more in the future.

Corporate Parenting – How our Services Support Care Experienced Children and Young People?

A Corporate Parent is any organisation legally required to look after, support, and advocate for children and young people in care or who have been in care. Partner organisations work together to ensure care-experienced young people receive the same chances, support, and encouragement as any good parent would provide. Being a good Corporate Parent is essential to our commitment Keeping the Promise.

The number of children who are looked after by the local authority continues to reduce year on year. This shows that we are supporting more children to stay within their family. These children will often have considerable and complex needs which requires partners to work collaboratively together to manage the risk, vulnerability and ensure the child's needs are met. When children do enter care, they may live at home with support, with relatives (kinship care), foster carers, or in residential homes. There's been a small rise in kinship care, which helps keep family connections strong. Foster and kinship carers are supported with activities, training, and practical help.

Aberdeen also supports children and young people arriving from other countries, especially those who come alone, ensuring they have safe places to live, education, and opportunities to connect with their new community. Unaccompanied children and young people seeking asylum and refuge unit (CYPSAR-U) are offered a health assessment delivered through a specialist clinic. This means that their health needs can be addressed as completely as possible without multiple visits to various professionals and onward referrals can be made swiftly if required.

Challenges remain, such as high demand for support and not enough foster carers or residential places, which increases costs. The council is working to recruit more carers and improve residential homes, especially for children with complex needs.

Looking ahead, the focus is on reducing the number of children needing care, supporting families earlier, and ensuring every child in care gets the best possible help. There's a strong commitment to helping young people leaving care succeed as adults and to building a system that puts their needs first for happy, healthy lives.

For a more detailed overview of the work underway to support Care Experienced Young People you can find this in the: [Chief Social Work Officers Annual Report](#)

Our Approach to Corporate Parenting

Aberdeen City's corporate parenting priorities are embedded within the Children's Services Plan 2026–31 and the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2026–36, particularly through work aimed at improving health, wellbeing, and attainment for care-experienced children and young people. This approach ensures that statutory duties and The Promise commitments are delivered through collaborative improvement projects and annual reporting cycles.

As we have shown in this Plan, we gather a wide range of information and data about care-experienced children and young people as well as listening and acting on their views through the Bright Spots Survey, which underpins our Corporate Parenting Priorities, helping us understand their needs and informing us how we respond shaping our everyday practice and Strategic Corporate Parenting Plan (*The 2026-2029 Corporate Parenting Plan will be linked in full here once published, April 2026*).

Our Guiding Principles

The priorities identified through data and lived experience are delivered through a set of guiding principles. These principles form the foundation of our Corporate Parenting Plan, shaping its design and implementation. They ensure that every action reflects our commitment to collaboration, rights, and continuous improvement.

Partnership Working: We work collaboratively across health, education, housing, police, higher education, and the third sector to provide joined-up support and shared accountability.

Rights and Trauma-Informed Practice: Our plan is rooted in the UNCRC, The Promise, and trauma-informed principles, ensuring that rights are upheld and support is sensitive to individual experiences.

Young People's Voice: Participation is central to our approach. We actively listen and act on the views of children and young people so they can influence priorities and shape services.

Continuous Improvement: Corporate parenting priorities are embedded within the Children's Services Plan and LOIP. Progress is reviewed annually, with data and lived experience driving ongoing refinement and improvement.

Our Key Corporate Parenting Plan Priorities

1. Health and Wellbeing

Care-experienced children and young people are more likely to experience mental health challenges, including anxiety and depression, than their peers. Bright Spots data shows that only 4% of care leavers reported high happiness, compared to 75% of the general population.

Many live with long-term health conditions or disabilities, and health inequalities are often compounded by poverty and housing instability. The Mental Health of Children and Young People in Aberdeen (2025) report highlights significant disparities linked to deprivation and care status.

Priority: We will ensure that care-experienced children and young people have access to timely, high-quality physical and mental health support, promote emotional wellbeing, reduce health inequalities, and embed trauma-informed approaches across all services.

2. Education, Attainment and Employability

Care-experienced children and young people consistently achieve lower educational outcomes than their peers. In Scotland, only 47% of looked-after children leave school with one or more SCQF Level 5 qualifications, compared to 86% of all school leavers. University progression remains very low, with only 6% of care leavers entering higher education, and most leaving school at the earliest opportunity (age 16 or younger) (Scottish Government 2019 and 2023).

Bright Spots data shows half (48%) of care leavers are not in education, employment, or training.

Priority: Improve attendance and achievement while expanding pathways into further and higher education, training, and employment through personalised support that removes barriers to learning and employability.

3. Housing and Transitions

Research consistently highlights that care leavers are more likely than other young people to become homeless or experience housing instability. These young people continue to leave care at an earlier age, with less preparation, and less support than young people leaving home without care experience, and often before they are ready. These factors combine disproportionately to increase the risk and occurrence of homelessness for care leavers. (CELCIS 2019)

Bright Spots data demonstrated that.

- 1 in 4 care leavers did not feel where they lived right now was right for them.
- 30% did not always feel safe in their home.
- 36% did not always feel safe in their neighbourhood.
- 41% of care leavers did not always feel settled in their home.

Priority: Strengthen support for young people moving into adulthood, ensuring safe, stable housing and smooth transitions from care, reducing homelessness risk.

4. Participation and Voice

Participation and engagement are essential to fulfilling the commitments of The Promise and the UNCRC, as both frameworks uphold the right of children to be heard, actively involved, and treated with respect in all decisions that impact their lives. Participation improves wellbeing when young people feel their views shape decisions about care, housing, education, and relationships. (CoramVoice 2021)

Priority: Embed meaningful participation in planning and service delivery, ensuring young people influence decisions and hold us accountable.

5. Relationships and Belonging

Positive relationships are essential for emotional resilience, identity development, and mental health. A sense of belonging reduces isolation and stigma, helping young people feel valued and included. Strong, stable relationships act as a buffer against adversity, improving outcomes in education, health, and life chances. Research and local engagement show that care experienced individuals who feel connected and supported have better long-term outcomes.

Priority: Prioritise stable, nurturing relationships and a sense of belonging, supporting family connections and trusted adult relationships.

6. Rights and Advocacy

Embedding UNCRC principles ensures decisions are made in the best interests of children and young people. Advocacy empowers experienced individuals to have their voices heard, challenge decisions, and navigate complex systems. The Promise calls for lifelong advocacy and participation, ensuring care experienced people are partners in shaping services, not passive recipients.

Priority: Uphold rights in line with the UNCRC and The Promise and strengthen access to advocacy for all care-experienced young people in line with the proposed legislative change.

How These Priorities Will Be Delivered

Each priority will be supported by clear actions, measurable outcomes, and annual progress reviews. Delivery will be embedded within the Children's Services Plan and LOIP, ensuring accountability through collaborative improvement projects and reporting cycles.

It is also recognised that implementation of changes is taking place in a context where care-experienced children, young people and families often face significant financial pressures, which can affect their stability and wellbeing. This means our approach must be sensitive to these realities, ensuring that reforms are practical, inclusive, and supported by measures that reduce poverty-related barriers and promote long-term security.

Measuring Success

Annual Reporting: Progress against each priority reviewed and reported annually.

Data and Lived Experience: Quantitative and qualitative feedback inform evaluation.

Bright Spots and Other Surveys: Regular engagement tools track improvements.

Performance Indicators: Clear metrics agreed for each priority.

Governance and Reporting

The Corporate Parenting Strategic Improvement Group provides strategic oversight and is responsible for delivering the Corporate Parenting Plan. This group brings together representatives from all corporate parents and acts as the central forum for implementing plans, monitoring progress, and ensuring accountability.

Key responsibilities include:

- Strategic Oversight: Ensuring priorities are delivered effectively and aligned with statutory duties and The Promise.
- Action Reporting: Members report on progress against agreed actions, enabling shared accountability.
- Collaborative Implementation: Coordinating improvement projects across agencies to deliver joined-up support.

To achieve the priority aims set out by the Group, the following high-level actions have been agreed:

- Embed corporate parenting principles across all services and decision-making processes.
- Deliver mandatory workforce development programmes that promote trauma-informed and rights-based practice.
- Align all improvement work with The Promise Plan 24–30 and UNCRC incorporation.
- Use Bright Spots data and lived experience insights to inform planning and service redesign.
- Strengthen accountability and monitoring through a structured evaluation process within the improvement framework.
- Incorporate feedback from care-experienced children and young people to ensure their voices influence decisions.
- Provide transparent reporting to keep stakeholders informed and promote shared responsibility.

Through this governance structure and agreed actions, we will ensure corporate parenting is a shared responsibility, with progress that is transparent, measurable, and driven by continuous improvement.

Child Poverty



The current situation

The Scottish Government wants fewer than one in ten (10%) children to be growing up in relative poverty by 2030. Relative poverty is defined as households having less than 60% of the UK median income after housing costs. The UK Department for Work and Pensions publish the percentage of children living in low-income families, defined as below 60% of median income, before housing costs. In 2023/24 they report that one in eight children (12%) in Aberdeen City are growing up in low-income families. Loughborough University use the DWP data to estimate the number of children living in low-income families after housing costs, and these are published by End Child Poverty. Once housing costs are taken into account, around one in five children are growing up in relative poverty in Aberdeen City (19%). These figures have not changed much over the past ten years.

Not everyone who grows up in poverty is harmed by it, and strong family relationships and friendships can really help. But not having enough money limits where we can live, it makes it difficult to pay bills, to eat well and healthily, to take part in things, to travel or go on holiday, to manage when things break down, to keep up with everyone around us, or to feel good about ourselves. For all these reasons and more is why poverty is bad for health and wellbeing.

Poverty forces people to focus on short-term survival, making it harder to plan for the future. It limits choices in food, activities, and energy levels. As some of the data in other sections of this Plan indicate, children born into poverty often face health and development challenges and may struggle with taking part in social activities. They might miss out on events, trends, and friendships, leading to feelings of shame or exclusion. Growing up in poverty can reduce future job prospects and earning potential. Adults who experienced poverty as children tend to earn less and need more public support. Poverty can also pass down through generations, making it difficult to break the cycle.

Our Children's Services Plan 2026-31 and Local Child Poverty Action Reports

In line with statutory guidance under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. We produce a Local Child Poverty Action Report each year detailing our current and planned actions for Child Poverty. You can find it here in our **Children's Services Plan Annual Report (Updated on publication June 2026)**. The sections below explain how our Children Services Plan actions align with our vision to support children, young people, and families to reduce child poverty over the next 5 years.

Fairer Futures - Our Partnership Approach to Supporting Vulnerable Families

Community Planning Aberdeen is working with the Scottish Government to help make life better for children and families who are struggling, such as those in or at risk of poverty in order to:

- Make sure families who need help can get support easily, when and where they need it.
- Change how services work, so they work together better and support families as a team.

A big part of this plan is the Caseworker System Change mentioned at the first section of our Plan, which means one person or team will help families get all the support they need. This way, families do not have to keep asking different people for help.

Fair Futures aims to ensure:

- There will be less child poverty.
- Fewer families will need emergency help.
- There will be fewer cases where the government has to step in to protect children.
- Children will be safe and able to stay with their families.
- Families will feel stronger and more able to ask for help if they need it.

Our Guiding principles are:

Voice and Full Participation:

Children and families should help plan, make, check, and improve services. Support should be given by people who listen, care, and work together as a team.

Responsiveness and Person Centred:

Services should focus on people's needs and help everyone, no matter where they go for help. Support should match what each person or family needs and work with adults too, so everyone gets help together.

With People for People:

Help should be given without judging anyone or making them feel bad. Families should get help quickly when they need it, and for as long as they need it, with help changing if their needs change. All the help should fit together so families don't have to keep asking different people and get mixed messages.

Co-Design and Community Involvement:

Communities should work together to help each other and feel better. Support should help families use their strengths and also get help from their neighbours and friends. Families should be able to ask for help themselves and get it in places that are close and easy for them.

Experts in Their Own Situation:

Families should know how to get help easily. They should feel confident to ask for help and be able to choose the kind of help that suits them best.

Unique Community Responses:

Support should be tailored to fit around each individual family and community, not be driven by rigid services or structures. It should cover the spectrum of support from universal services, more tailored support, and intensive support (to prevent or in response to statutory interventions).

What Have Our Young People Experiencing Poverty Told Us About Their Needs?

Young people have told us that tackling poverty in schools is vital. They want equal opportunities, including access to free school meals, uniforms, and school trips. Going hungry affects their ability to focus on school. Feeling socially isolated because of lack of money is stigmatising. Worrying about money affects their mental health:

'Free school lunches for everyone so we don't feel broken and outcast.'

'If we do have to wear uniform make it affordable.'

Young people recognise the additional costs that can come from making these changes but believe it is an important investment.

'Increase taxes to help everyone by making necessities free, or if not free then cheap'

'Donate money to local charities to help everyone'

Free and accessible public transport is important for young people to get to school and college. While bus travel is free in Scotland until you are 22, young people attending college explain that buses can be infrequent and getting the train is often faster, so they sometimes opt for this, but it is expensive.

'All your money goes on travel. Public transport should be free.'

Providing Financial Support to Families

Low Income Family Tracker Project

Aberdeen City Council and partners in the Health Determinants Research Collaboration Aberdeen secured funding from Scottish Government's Child Poverty accelerator fund for the low-income families tracker project.

This project has linked administrative data from different sources to allow a more strategic and targeted approach to tackling child poverty and wider financial insecurity in the city. This has improved the accuracy and granularity of our intelligence on the prevalence and nature of child poverty in Aberdeen.

Using this tool, we have identified:

- 96 households claiming Universal Credit who were affected by the benefit cap and so far, 29 of these households have received DHP awards totalling £63,485.77.
- 63 families who were affected by the under-occupancy charge and had not claimed a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP).
- 76 households experiencing both relative poverty and fuel poverty were targeted for Rent Assistance Fund, resulting in £69,125.28 being awarded to clear their rent arrears and 106 children no longer in a household with the threat of legal action due to rent arrears.
- additional households eligible for Free School Meals (**1,282 children**) and the School Clothing Grant (**2,016 children**).
- **£141,993** in Pension Credit for pensioners

The Health Equity and Learning Project

The **Health Equity & Learning Project (HELP)**, run by NHS Grampian, is funded by Scottish Government's Child Poverty accelerator fund and is intended to benefit families across Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Moray, and the Island Communities. The aim is to help families avoid being pushed into poverty due to the costs of attending healthcare appointments. Several tests of change have proved successful within the HELP project. HELP aims to understand how NHS systems and processes are causing additional financial pressure to families. By working with a lived experience panel, we can understand what needs to change.

What is being heard:

- Transport to appointments can be difficult – costly, time consuming, not disability friendly, not always available or reliable and not appropriate for certain health conditions. Some families experience forced car ownership as they have no alternative way of attending appointments.
- Food and drinks – are expensive for family members who are in hospital with a child. The child is provided for but the parent/carers are not. This may also include siblings if there is no alternative care for them.
- Information and support around income maximisation – can be lacking or inconsistent.

In response to what we have heard:

- A flexible fund has been established (through short-term CPAF funding) to reduce barriers for families accessing hospital appointments. There is an opportunity to work with Cash First Teams to consider how a cash first approach could be taken to support families, to remove up-front costs and the need to wait for reimbursement.
- Expanding support for families who are accessing planned or emergency appointments through the Archie Foundation and hospital-based teams to consider how food and refreshments for families could be managed within the hospital.
- Various options are being explored for colleagues to feel confident in supporting families in regard to financial support needs, providing good information, offering support directly and making warm handovers where appropriate.

There are **financial inclusion pathways** in place to support midwives, health visitors and family nurses routinely ask all pregnant women and families about money worries and refer to income maximisation services where this is needed. An **infant feeding in a crisis pathway** provides low-income families with a 'cash first approach' to support with First Stage Formula and for food when they need it. All families that require this pathway are offered a full financial health check to ensure that they are aware of all financial support available to them to maximise household income. **Co-locating services with food banks** also increases access for those who require support. For example, Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital hosts a foodbank that is open to those in need.

Youth Homelessness – Homewards Aberdeen Coalition

Homewards is a five-year, locally led programme, launched by Prince William and The Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales in June 2023. The aim of Homewards is to demonstrate that together, it is possible to end homelessness – making it rare, brief, and unrepeatable. Homewards aims to do this by preventing homelessness for at risk groups, whilst challenging stigma, inspiring optimism and ensuring this work is sustainable and replicable. The Homewards in Aberdeen coalition aims to support all of those at risk of homelessness, details of this work can be found in the [Homewards Aberdeen Local Action Plan](#). But there are also some specific actions targeted at young people who present as/or are at risk of becoming homeless including young people:

In Aberdeen, the number of young people presenting as homeless continues to rise, up 6.6% on the same period the previous year. However, there has been a sharp decline in the number of 16- and 17-year-olds applying. The number fell 38% year-on-year in the first quarter of 2025/26, from 24 in 2024/25 to 15 in 2025/26.

Homewards aims to make a real impact by focusing support on young people. This includes opportunities for further education, employment, and training. This will also include teaching life skills, such as managing household bills.

Family relationship breakdown – including being asked to leave – is the main reason for homelessness among young people. There is a need to improve data, so that we can better understand why young people are being asked to leave their family home so that we can better give them the right support at the right time, to prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place.

Analysis shows that many young people with low support needs are turning to the Council for homelessness assistance, simply because they have no other realistic path to leave the parental home. Existing support options, such as the Foyer and Nightstop, were primarily designed for young people experiencing homelessness. They are not accessible until a crisis point is reached, often when homelessness is already imminent. This gap leaves many young people without appropriate support at a crucial transition in their lives. To address this, we have identified several targeted interventions for young people, further detail can be found in our delivery plan below.

Supporting Families Into Employment

Child Poverty Employability Plan

A Child Poverty Employability Plan is in development and will complement the Local Employability Partnership Delivery Plan (currently undergoing refresh).

Led by the Council's Employability and Skills Service, the Child Poverty Employability Plan is being co-designed by parents from across the city, with input from Council services, as well as from public, private and third sector partners and aligned to the No One Left Behind strategy, with a focus on supporting parents into sustained fair work and supporting those experiencing in-work poverty to increase their income via a variety of means including training, upskilling, support to take on more hours and/or higher paid work, and via financial advice and support from the Financial Inclusion Team.

No One Left Behind

No One Left Behind is the Scottish Government's employability strategy. It provides local authorities with ringfenced money to provide employability support to 16-17-year-olds resident in local authority areas, with a proportion of that money dedicated for parental employability support.

A broad range of contracts funded by annual Scottish Government No One Left Behind monies have been awarded on a one year + one + one basis, subject to performance and funding. This includes multi-stage courses specifically for parents and for under 25s, as well as for care experienced young people. In addition, there is all-age, all-stage provision which is open to all employability programme participants who wish to participate in it, and sector-specific activity covering industries such as hospitality, construction, early learning and childcare, digital skills, and green skills.

No One Left Behind monies are also used to provide paid work experience placements across a range of industries and sectors, including placements specifically for parents in local authority early learning and childcare settings, and these continue not only to be popular, but also successful in terms of parents securing sustainable employment at the end of the placement. These placement opportunities will continue, subject to funding and the agreement of the Local Employability Partnership.

Regional Economic Strategy Skills Action Plan

A Skills Action Plan has been developed to underpin the Regional Economic Strategy. Inclusion is among the core principles of the Plan, ensuring that those in need of support to access training and jobs in the region's volume sectors, including parents and young people, can do so, in line with the Just Transition approach.

Looking to the future

Our Children's Services Plan 2026-31 as a whole focusses on our commitment to reducing child poverty, looking to 2031 our plan will seek to:

- Improve access to support services, ensuring families can receive help as soon and as easily as possible.
- Improving the way our partnership collaborates ensuring that services work together seamlessly and holistically.
- Address the root causes of poverty by supporting employment, education, and training opportunities for parents and young people.
- Promote healthy eating, physical activity, and mental wellbeing among children and families.
- Reduce social exclusion by increasing participation in community and cultural activities.
- Help to break the cycle of poverty through targeted interventions and early years support.

Our Delivery Plan

Our Delivery Plan is a summary of the key actions, in addition to the system changes described above, that we are going to undertake over the next 5 years to deliver against the priorities and goals set out in our Plan. Below we provide

- The Plan on a page,
- Governance, which outlines how we will manage the improvement work
- A section showing the resources we have allocated to achieve our priorities
- Full list of actions we will undertake to achieve the Plan

Actions against the Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated to show our progress through our Children's Services Plan Annual Reports, you'll be able to find these on our Community Planning Website: [Our Children's Services Board](#)

Our Plan on a Page

Our Vision

95 % of young people in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 and vulnerable groups achieve a positive destination on leaving school

Priorities

Best Start in Life

Empowered and Resilient

Attainment and Transitions

System Changes

Personal Case Workers for Vulnerable Families and Support for Families Awaiting Neurodevelopmental Diagnosis

Safe, co-designed spaces for at-risk young people offering onsite support, person centred activities, and healthy relationship programme.

Individualised support for young people at risk of not completing school and sustained work experience

Supporting Actions

Maternal Health Supports: Breastfeeding; Smoking; Healthy Weight; Dental Health etc.

Early Speech and Language

Diversion from Prosecution

Whole Family Support to those impacted by crime

Victim Support

Addressing Child Criminal Exploitation

ABZ Campus

Behaviour Policies

Improving support to those with ASN/Disabilities

Employability Support

How we will make sure we are achieving our aims - Governance

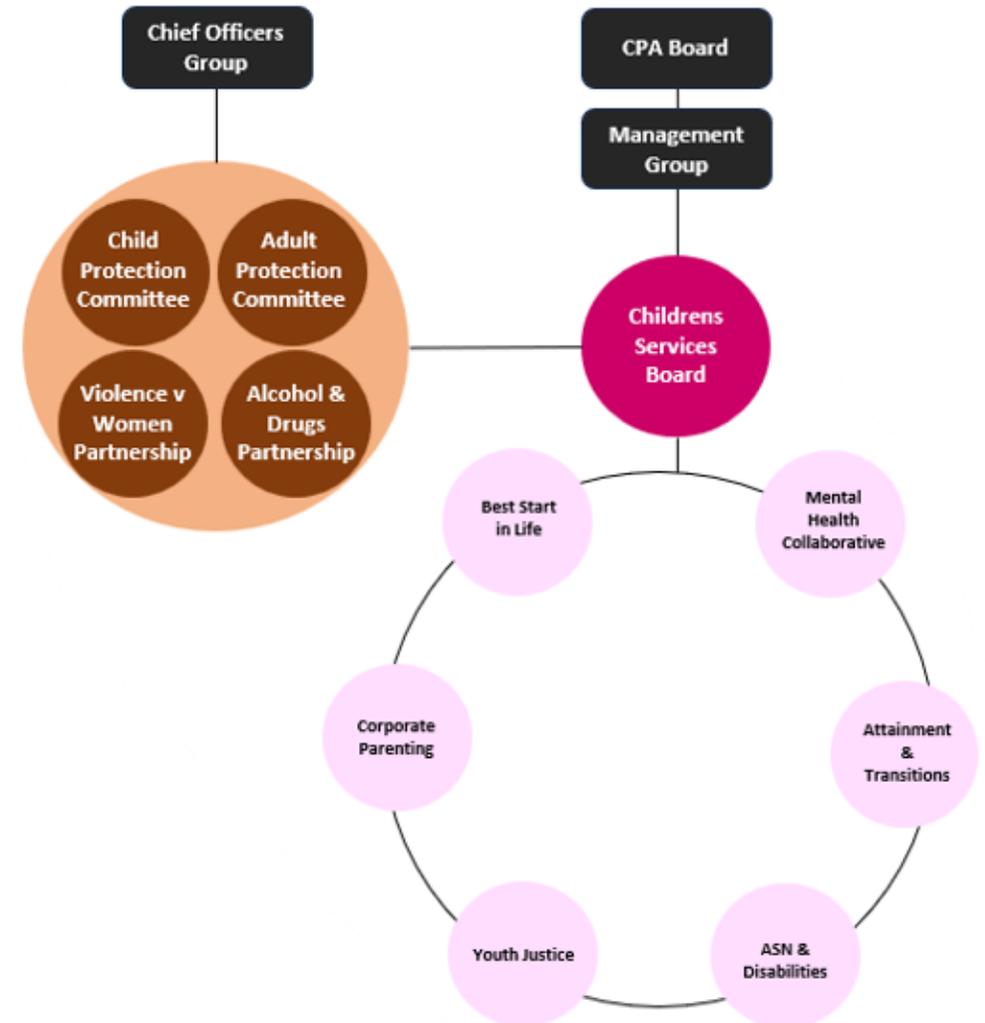
The Children's Services Board is governed by and accountable to the Community Planning Management Group, which in turn is accountable to the Community Planning Aberdeen Board.

The Children's Services Board ensures our partnership meets its responsibilities set out by the government in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and ensure we provide the information it requires through its statutory guidance.

In particular the board does this by:

- Ensuring we deliver this Children's Services Plan and 6 System Changes we have identified in it
- Working together as a Community Planning Partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people within Aberdeen City
- Leading the implementation of national drivers and requirements relating to children and young people (Such as UNCRC, Child Poverty and Corporate Parenting)
- Ensuring we deliver on our commitment to Keep the Promise by 2030.

This page will be updated after the Community Planning Governance Review is completed



Resourcing Our System Changes

The table below provides a summary of the key resources, funds, and organisations we will use to deliver our proposed system changes over the next 5 years:

TBA -Pending review and approval of resource proposals at Community Planning Board (March 2026)

Best Start in Life

Best Start in Life					
Input		Outcome			Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
GIRFEC, Best Start Bright Futures	Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership	SIMD 1 Communities	<p>Improving Health Outcomes</p> <p>Introduce prevention measures and education to reduce health risks during pregnancy, support mums with making healthier decisions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing the Antenatal visit within the health visiting pathway for support and education. Providing support through the Best Start in Life System Change (Case Worker). 	Increased number of parents supported in each activity	<p>In SIMD1 Communities:</p> <p>Reduction in smoking during pregnancy</p> <p>Reduction in Child/Maternal Obesity</p> <p>Increased Breastfeeding Rates</p> <p>Increased number of P1s with no</p>

Best Start in Life					
Input		Outcome		Outcome	
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
			<p>This will include activity on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoking During Pregnancy • Maternal/Childhood Obesity • Breast Feeding • Dental Health 		obvious signs of tooth decay
National Early Language and Communication Project	ACHSCP/NHS Grampian Speech and Language Therapy team in conjunction with Aberdeen City Early Years Team	SMID 1/2 Early Years prevention/early intervention	<p>Supporting Early Language and Communication development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an early years workforce which is knowledgeable and confident in supporting speech, language, and communication • Families receive consistent national messaging in relation to developing speech, language, and communication 	<p>Percentage of EYP completing SLC Knowledge and Skills Matrix</p> <p>% of families receiving national SLC messaging at key touchpoints</p> <p>% of settings using approved national materials</p>	% of children in (Scope Area) from SIMD quintiles 1 and 2 with SLC concerns at 27-30 months by 25% by 2030

Best Start in Life					
Input			Outcome		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase understanding of shared responsibility for early speech language and communication development across the system 		
UNCRC					
UNCRC and Feedback from YP	CSB/ACC E&LL teams/shadow board/Young Ambassadors	Children at 0-5 in SIMD Communities	Develop methods for Primary 1s and under 5s, to have their views heard	Number of 0-5, assessed on participation on ladder of empowerment	Adults and young people are making joint decisions in environments set up to support young people's contribution
Keeping the Promise					
The Promise Scotland Transforming how Scotland cares for children, families, and care-experienced adults	Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership	SIMD 1 Communities	Working With Families of Children at Risk of being taken into care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing universal pathway to ensure early intervention. 	Increase in number of families being supported at an earlier stage, reducing requirement for CPR.	Number of under 2s on the CPR
The Promise Scotland Transforming how	Family Nurse Partnership	Care Experienced Parents	Supporting Care Experienced Young Mums to be confident	Number of young mums supported	Increase in the number of Young

Best Start in Life					
Input			Outcome		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
Scotland cares for children, families, and care-experienced adults			parents, by providing tailored support	through the programme	Care Experienced Mums that feel confident as a result of the intervention
Child Poverty					
UNCRC GIRFEC Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017	ACC	SIMD 1 Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamlined benefit check referral process, making it easier for families. Information pack available for families and professionals to support signposting and increasing awareness of eligibility. 	<p>Increased number of referrals to Financial Inclusion.</p> <p>% or £ increase in benefit uptake by families offered financial health check.</p>	All families' eligible for Financial Inclusion are receiving it.
Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024	Local Authority and Health Board	<p>Priority families as set out in the Child Poverty Delivery Plan.</p> <p>Single parent, child under age 1, parent under age 25, large families, minority ethnic</p>	Established lived experience panels to inform and influence solutions to poverty proofing services. Panels to be configured with families living in SIMD1 communities. Opportunity to link with Torry Health Matters and Primary Care Services in Torry initially.	Evidence of community voice reflected in planning and decision-making processes (IIA's, for example)	Low-income families and those experiencing financial hardship are informing solutions to reduce detrimental financial impacts.

Best Start in Life					
Input		Outcome			Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
The Promise Scotland Transforming how Scotland cares for children, families, and care-experienced adults		families, families with a disabled child or adult.	<p>Better understanding financial barriers to accessing services and exploring approaches to mitigate this, including cash first options. Families valued and empowered as partners in finding solutions.</p> <p>Increase uptake of financial health check through widening existing financial inclusion/ income max pathways.</p>	<p>Qualitative – families report feeling valued and empowered. Number of lived experience panel solutions being explored/ implemented.</p> <p>Number of households receiving full benefits check.</p>	
No One Left Behind strategy	ACC Employability and Skills Team	Priority families as set out in the No One Left Behind strategic plan. Single parent, child under age 1, parent under age 25, large families (3+ children), minority ethnic families, families with a disabled child or adult.	Targeted employability support for parents seeking to enter the workforce or re-enter the workforce after a career break.	<p>Number of parents supported by ABZWorks</p> <p>Number of parents completing accredited training</p> <p>Number of parents entering employment</p>	<p>This activity is entirely externally funded and subject to annualised funding.</p> <p>Families in need of employability support are aware of and can access it.</p>

Best Start in Life					
Input			Outcome		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
				Number of parents sustaining employment for 12 months.	% increase in number of parents engaging in employability support.

Empowered and Resilient

Empowered and Resilient					
Input			Output		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
Introduction - Justice for children and young people: vision and priorities 2024-26 - gov.scot – Priority 1 / Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 / Standards for those working with children in conflict with the law 2021 – standard 9 / Bairns' Hoose standards – Healthcare Improvement Scotland	Scottish Children's Reporter Association (SCRA)/ Victim Information Advice (VIA)/ Bairns Hoose	Children referred to reporter. Any person utilising the support from the Single Point of Contact (SPOC).	Victims are supported, their rights upheld, with specific attention paid to child victims and their families including: Creating a Single Point of Contact. Police Scotland Youth Engagement Officers working with schools to explore use of restorative practice in school settings. Workforce development will be established to increase knowledge, understanding and application of the Standards for those Working with Children in Conflict with the Law.	Number of people who take up offer of support from SPOC. Number of Individuals trained, (reviewing quality of delivery through evaluation)	SPOC is developed and understood in city.

Empowered and Resilient					
Input			Output		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
Introduction - Justice for children and young people: vision and priorities 2024-26 - gov. scot – Priority 2 / Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 / Standards for those working with children in conflict with the law 2021 – standard 2, 3, 4, 5.	WSA Lead Officer Police Scotland CSW Includem/3 rd Sector	CICWL – 12-18. Those children who cannot be held criminally responsible (under12s) but would benefit from early intervention to prevent CWL when older.	Children are diverted away from formal justice system to appropriate alternative support through the continued delivery of the Whole System Approach by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing access to diversionary activity (EEI) in the community as early intervention measure. • Ensure Guidance on Diversion from Prosecution is known and understood, • Increasing knowledge and understanding of the Sentencing Guidelines for under 25's and how we write about this group for purpose of reports. • Where a child is involved in court processes there are appropriate robust 	EEI and diversionary opportunities for all children being accessed, increased awareness, and uptake, of diversionary opportunities.	Increased number of young people engaged in diversionary activity

Empowered and Resilient					
Input			Output		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
			supports in place to ensure the child understands what is happening and their rights upheld at all stages.		
Introduction - Justice for children and young people: vision and priorities 2024-26 - gov. scot – Priority 2	WSA Lead Officer Police Scotland	Initially Children from SIMD1 Communities	<p>Protecting children online from all forms of exploitation. CEC Framework and Screening tool: workforce to be trained in its use and utilising as part of work with all children (all under 18s).</p> <p>Co-creation with children and young people of safe spaces in city (and communities) as a contextual safeguarding response to Criminal Exploitation of Children (CEC) and Risks Outside The Home (ROTH).</p> <p>Whole Family Support to those impacted on by harms of crime. Reduce impact of OCGs/SOCGs in targeted areas by making information for parents, children and communities about CEC and responses and where to find</p>	<p>Data from duty to notify and NRM referrals indicate use of the framework and screening tool.</p> <p>Numbers charged with CEC offences, prosecuted</p> <p>Increase CEC marker being appropriately applied to VPD (data shared with CEG)</p>	All relevant staff trained in use of the framework

Empowered and Resilient					
Input			Output		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
			assistance by developing contextual safeguarding approaches with the multiagency partnership.	Increase in CEC being marked as a referral reason on D365 (including initial and secondary referral reasons) (data shared with CEG) Numbers engaging with specialist support for CEC/ROTH.	
Introduction - Justice for children and young people: vision and priorities 2024-26 - gov. scot – Priority 3	WSA Lead Officer Health Community learning	Young people who are/or are at risk of coming into conflict with the law	Increase early identification and proportionate support for children in conflict with the law, ensuring responses are timely, rights-based, and reduce unnecessary entry into formal systems.	Increase early identification and proportionate support for children in conflict with the law,	Children’s wellbeing and mental health needs assessed as are being met
Working with children in conflict with the law 2021: standards - gov. scot – updated standards expected to be published early 2026.	ACC CSW	Initially Children from SIMD1 Communities	Linking closely with CPC Lead to ensure CEC Framework and Screening Tool are fully embedded into practice into the city. Workforce development	Increase in NRM referrals for children where there are indicators for exploitation.	Reduction in the number of young people reported as involved in criminal activity

Empowered and Resilient					
Input			Output		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
			<p>needs are considered and delivered.</p> <p>CARM processes monitored / reviewed to ensure the needs of children being exploited who are/have also caused harm to others are meeting the needs of the child being exploited and responses are rights respecting and child centred.</p>		
Standards for those working with children in conflict with the law 2021 – standard 6 / Scottish government response to "reimagining secure care" report - gov. scot / Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024	Police	Young people who are/or are at risk of coming into conflict with the law	Children will only be arrested, detained, or imprisoned as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time: Community alternatives to secure accommodation Places of safety as alternative to being held in police station will be fully developed removing children from police stations where possible.	Number of young people arrested	Reduction in the number of young people arrested
UNCRC					
UNCRC and Feedback from YP	Children's Services Board/ACC Youth Work team/AYM	Children and young people who have life	Make sure young people help make choices in the Children's Services Plan, so adults and	-Level of participation from	-adults and young people are making joint

Empowered and Resilient					
Input			Output		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
		experience of things that are in the Children Services Plan 12-18 years	young people can decide things together and everyone's ideas are listened to and matter	ladder of empowerment	decisions in environments set up to support young people's contribution
UNCRC and Feedback from YP	Children's Services Board /ACC Youth Work team/AYM/shadow board	children and young people who have life experience of things that are in the Children Services Plan 12-15 years	Take what works well from the Children's Services Board and trying it in other parts of our city plans (LOIP)	--Level of participation from ladder of empowerment	Number of CSP outcomes represented by young people
UNCRC and Feedback from YP	Children's Services Board / all CPA partners / AYM and other youth participation groups	All Children and Young People	Information for and about children and young people is shared in language and ways that is easy for them to find and understand. When children and young people are asked their views, they are told why, what will happen to the information and what will or has happened as a result.	-% of CPA plans are written in child/people friendly language or have an easy read version. -Evidence of consultation with young people on public materials produced	All Community Planning Aberdeen Plans and Strategies have friendly language or have an easy read version

Empowered and Resilient					
Input			Output		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
Keeping the Promise					
Local Corporate Parenting Plan, The Promise UNCRC Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Housing Options Protocols for Care Leavers (Scottish Government, 2013)	CSW, Housing	Care Experienced Young People aged 16 – 26	Develop and implement a revised Care Leavers Housing Protocol that ensures clear, consistent, and collaborative processes to improve outcomes for care leavers. The protocol will focus on reducing tenancy breakdown by sharing relevant information, meeting individual needs, and promoting the wellbeing of young people.	Up-dated Care Leavers Housing Protocol published and implemented Number of care leavers supported through revised protocol Number of staff aware of and implementing revised protocol Number of staff trained on the revised protocol	Improved housing stability for care leavers. Reduction in tenancy breakdown Young people reporting that they feel safer and more secure in their tenancies Housing protocols fully embed trauma-informed and rights-based approaches
Local Corporate Plan The Promise UNCRC Incorporate Act Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014	CSW Corporate Parents across Partnership	Care experienced children and young people	Develop and maintain a Young Person’s Participation Network that strengthens engagement and provides structured opportunities for care experienced young people to influence corporate parenting	Young people report accessible opportunities to provide feedback Percentage of corporate	Young people actively involved in shaping corporate parenting priorities and strategies

Empowered and Resilient					
Input			Output		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
			<p>decisions, with formal mechanisms to feed directly into the Corporate Parenting Strategic Improvement Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care experienced young people have regular, accessible opportunities to share views. Formal feedback loops created between the Network and the Strategic Improvement Group. Deliver workforce development sessions to build understanding of participation methodologies 	<p>parenting actions influenced by young people</p> <p>Increased awareness of participation principles and rights-based approaches.</p> <p>Workers report improved confidence in applying participation methodologies.</p>	<p>Engagement embedded as routine practice</p> <p>Participation principles embedded in all corporate parenting plans</p> <p>Young people report feeling their views shape decisions</p> <p>engagement practices standardised across services.</p>
Child Poverty					
Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017	Aberdeen Foyer	Young people who are or are at risk of Homelessness	<p>Youth Led Housing Pathway</p> <p>Design dedicated housing pathway, developed with and for young people. It will allow them to access affordable housing</p>	Youth housing pathway designed and implemented	Reduce Number of Young People in Temporary Accommodation

Empowered and Resilient					
Input			Output		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
			<p>options immediately and, in a trauma, -informed way. The aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce youth homelessness • Minimise reliance on temporary accommodation • Provide smoother transitions for those leaving home with lower support needs 	<p>Number of young people using the pathway</p> <p>Impact on youth homelessness (assessed through evaluation process)</p>	

Attainment and Transitions

Attainment and Transitions					
Key Local or National Drivers	Input		Outcome		Outcome
	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
The Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC) About Curriculum for Excellence Curriculum for Excellence Education Scotland	ACC Education	SIMD1 Schools	<p>Increase the number of pathways available to young people through expansion of ABZ Campus</p> <p>Support schools to review their curriculum offer in light of the new curriculum</p>	Number of ABZ Campus Pathways	% increase in the number of pathways available to young people through ABZ Campus
Relationships and behaviour in schools: national action plan 2024 to 2027 - gov. scot	ACC Education	SIMD1 Schools	Support schools to ensure relationship and behaviour policies are in line with national plan	Number of incidents recorded	Reduced number of incidents recorded in schools
Children and young people - national neurodevelopmental	Health	Children with ASN in SIMD1 schools	Ensure formulated support is offered as early as possible.	Child's plans reflecting ND support	Children and families receive the support that

Attainment and Transitions					
Input		Outcome			Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
specification: principles and standards of care - gov. scot			<p>Improve assessment processes and referral quality by removing duplication and designing a joint assessment process to avoid repetition.</p> <p>Improve knowledge and confidence of the workforce to recognise ASN and respond appropriately, to know the support options available, to present for pre-assessment MDT discussion where appropriate and to make good quality referral with all pre-assessment work completed.</p>	<p>Reduction in rejected referrals Reduced repetition of assessment processes. Overall reduction in time from referral to diagnosis.</p> <p>Annual qualitative survey. Referrals audit – appropriateness and quality.</p>	<p>they need at the earliest opportunity to enable them to participate fully at school and in the community.</p> <p>Children and families will experience a smoother assessment process where they will not need to repeat their story or be passed between services.</p> <p>Staff will be aware of support options for children with ASN and their families They will be confident in making appropriate</p>

Attainment and Transitions					
Input			Outcome		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
					referrals with all pre-assessment work completed.
No One Left Behind strategy	ACC Employability and Skills Team	Young people (16+) not in employment, education, or training	<p>Employability support for young people aged 16+ not in employment education or training.</p> <p>Employability support for young people leaving school without a positive destination.</p>	<p>Number of young people being supported by ABZWorks</p> <p>Number of young people supported by ABZWorks completing accredited training</p> <p>Number of young people supported by ABZWorks entering employment</p> <p>Number of young people supported by ABZWorks into further education</p> <p>Number of young people supported by ABZWorks sustaining a</p>	<p>This activity is entirely externally funded and subject to annualised funding.</p> <p>Young people, their families, and partner agencies will be aware of and able to easily access and engage in employability activity.</p>

Attainment and Transitions					
Input			Outcome		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
				positive destination for 12 months	
UNCRC					
UNCRC and Feedback from YP	CLD city wide partners	Young people who take part in youth work	Young people will help make decisions about things that matter to them by taking part in activities and groups made for their age, where their ideas are listened to and make a difference	% of young people being supported by youth work who achieve a nationally recognised award	% of young people being supported by youth work who report that their physical and mental wellbeing has improved.
Keeping the Promise					
Local Corporate Parenting Plan North East of Scotland College (NESCOL) Corporate Parenting Plan The Promise UNCRC Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Scottish Care Leavers Covenant (2015)	CSW, Corporate Parenting Lead, NESCOL	Care Experienced Young People aged 16 -26	Develop and implement a multi-agency NESCOL Forum that co-ordinates support for care leavers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling care leavers to access, sustain, and succeed in education opportunities offered by NESCOL Promoting inclusive educational pathways and improving outcomes through multi-agency collaboration 	Forum established and meeting regularly with active multi-agency participation. Referral systems and information-sharing protocols in place and used effectively. Care leavers report improved	Improved alignment with national standards and local strategic plans for corporate parenting Sustained improvement in college enrolment and retention rates for care leavers.

Attainment and Transitions					
Input		Outcome			Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring student voices are central to planning and decision-making. Facilitating information sharing to support individual students in sustaining and completing courses. Working collaboratively to prevent financial disadvantage, including avoiding unnecessary suspension of bursaries. 	<p>access to advice and guidance for education and training. Increased awareness among staff and partners of support pathways and financial entitlements.</p> <p>Early evidence of reduced disruption to bursary payments through collaborative intervention.</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of care experienced young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET)</p> <p>Enhanced educational attainment and progression into employment or further study</p> <p>Student voice embedded in planning and decision-making processes across NESCOL and partner agencies</p> <p>Multi-agency collaboration becomes standard practice for supporting</p>

Attainment and Transitions					
Input		Outcome			Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
					care leavers, ensuring financial stability and continuity of learning.
Child Poverty					
Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017	Aberdeen Foyer	Young people who are or are at risk of Homelessness	<p>Build on Upstream Pilot:</p> <p>Rationale: Northfield Academy has piloted Upstream, a preventative approach that spots young people who are at greater risk of homelessness. Homelessness prevention still depends, however, upon getting the right support to these young people at the right time.</p> <p>Action: Building on the pilot, Homewards Aberdeen will increase the wraparound support that is available for young people who have self-identified through the initial survey.</p>	<p>Track improvements in wellbeing outcomes for young people identified through the survey</p> <p>Monitor how many participants avoid homelessness following early intervention</p> <p>Assess feedback from young people and schools on the support received</p>	Increased number of young people supported by the programme

Attainment and Transitions					
Input		Outcome			Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
				Use learning to inform and encourage wider rollout of the Upstream model across Aberdeen	
Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017	Shelter Scotland	Young people who are or are at risk of Homelessness	<p>Train Young People in Housing Skills</p> <p>Rationale: Housing instability is greater for young people who lack the skills to get and keep a home. Survey information shows that many young people in Aberdeen don't currently have these skills.</p> <p>Action: Homewards Aberdeen will deliver material and lesson plans to local schools. It will focus on housing options, tenancy rights, and essential life skills for maintaining a home.</p>	Material and lesson plans designed and piloted	At least 90% of young people in Aberdeen know where to seek guidance on housing
Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017	The Royal Foundation, Burgesses of Guild and Seven	Young people who are or are at risk of Homelessness	Unlock job opportunities for young people in Aberdeen:	Number of employers signed up to the Crisis	At least four Aberdeen-based employers supported to

Attainment and Transitions					
Input		Outcome			Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
	Incorporated Trades		<p>Rationale: Getting and keeping a job is crucial to avoiding homelessness.</p> <p>Action: Homewards Aberdeen will work with private-sector partners to create inclusive, sustainable jobs for young people who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. Target sectors will be guided by local labour market analysis, including insights from Hays, and will recognise the changing economy of Aberdeen.</p> <p>We will also encourage employers across Aberdeen to sign up to the Crisis Homelessness Alliance's framework. Our particular focus will be on helping employers to meet the pledge of "supporting employees who may be at risk of homelessness." This includes supporting employers to:</p>	<p>Homeless Alliance</p> <p>Number of employers signed up that receive support to implement the CHA pledge</p>	begin hiring 18- to 25-year-olds who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness

Attainment and Transitions					
Input			Outcome		Outcome
Key Local or National Drivers	Lead Partner	Target Population/ Prevention Teir	Key Action/ Deliverable	Output Measure	Medium Term 2031
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify staff who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness • Provide information and guidance • Signpost, and give access to, timely support 		

Appendices

The following appendices provide some key information about our Plan:

National Performance Framework: This section provides an overview of how our Plan aligns with the National Performance Framework Outcomes

UNCRC Articles: This section expands on our UNCRC chapter, showing how each of the elements of our Plan align with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Glossary: a handy list that helps explain some of the acronyms that are used in the Plan

National Improvement Framework

Scotland National Performance Framework

The National Performance Framework (NPF) is Scotland's wellbeing framework and sets the vision for the kind of Scotland we all want to live in. The NPF provides key outcomes that Children's Services Plans such as ours should aspire to achieve for our children, young people, and families.

Our Plan has been developed with these outcomes in mind, as you should see from the details in each chapter our Plan aligns closely with these outcomes. Currently the NPF is under review, and a revised version is due to be published later in 2026

In the meantime, for the development of this Plan in the table that follows provides a helpful summary of how each the 11 indicators here aligned to the various sections of our Plan. This list is not exhaustive but is intended to help indicate the overall aims of the activities in each section of the Plan

National Performance Framework Outcomes	
	We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy
	We are open connected and make a positive contribution internationally
	We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally
	We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
	We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential
	We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
	We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone
	We are healthy and active
	We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
	We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely
	We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination

Plan Priority	What the Priority Focuses On	National Performance Framework Outcomes	Why These Outcomes Apply
Best Start in Life	Early help, whole-family support, pregnancy & early years health, speech & language development, financial inclusion		Focuses on healthy starts, parental support, tackling inequality, early intervention, and removing poverty-related barriers to development, to make sure all children grow up loved safe and respected
Empowered and Resilient	Safe spaces, youth participation, protection from exploitation, boys' citizenship programme, online safety, diversion from criminalisation		Safe environments, co-designed youth support, contextual safeguarding, and diversionary approaches all protect and empower young people. This helps young people and families feel safe in all of our community spaces
Attainment and Transitions	Closing attainment gap, supporting disengaged learners, work experience, and improving, employability		Ensures equal access to education, support for all learners, and fair chances for positive post-school destinations.
Keeping the Promise / Corporate Parenting	Rights-based support for care-experienced children; stability, relationships, advocacy, transitions, housing		Ensures care-experienced young people are safe, heard, supported, and able to thrive with strong relationships and stable homes.
Child Poverty	Financial inclusion, employability for parents, cash-first approaches, reducing cost barriers, food, and fuel security		Removes poverty-related barriers to rights, ensuring families have enough money for essentials and children can participate fully.

Plan Priority	What the Priority Focuses On	National Performance Framework Outcomes	Why These Outcomes Apply
Embedded Across the Plan	The following Outcomes can be seen to be spread across the Plan as a whole		<p>Understandably there is much cross over between the various outcomes. Our Plan as a whole seeks to ensure that we respect and uphold human rights for all, that we can share our contributions and examples of practice locally, nationally, and internationally. As well as ensuring that our children and young people and families can contribute to Scotland's wider international links.</p> <p>The Plan's links to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child are explained comprehensively in the following section</p>



Children's Services Plan Priorities Linked to UNCRC Articles

The following list provides a how the different parts of our Plan with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles:

Plan Priority	What the Priority Focuses On	UNCRC Articles Supported	Why These Articles Apply
Best Start in Life	Early help, whole-family support, pregnancy & early years health, speech & language development, financial inclusion	Article 2 – Non-discrimination Article 3 – Best interests of the child Article 6 – Life, survival & development Article 12 – Right to be heard (participation for under-5s) Article 18 – Support for parents Article 24 – Health and health services Article 26 – Social security Article 27 – Standard of living	Focuses on healthy starts, parental support, tackling inequality, early intervention, and removing poverty-related barriers to development.
Empowered and Resilient	Safe spaces, youth participation, protection from exploitation, boys' citizenship programme, online safety, diversion from criminalisation	Article 12 – Right to be heard Article 13 – Freedom of expression Article 15 – Freedom of association Article 19 – Protection from violence & abuse Article 31 – Rest, play, leisure activities Article 33 – Protection from drugs Article 34 – Protection from sexual exploitation Article 36 – Protection from exploitation Article 40 – Justice system protections	Safe environments, co-designed youth support, contextual safeguarding, and diversionary approaches all protect and empower young people.

Plan Priority	What the Priority Focuses On	UNCRC Articles Supported	Why These Articles Apply
Attainment and Transitions	Closing attainment gap, supporting disengaged learners, work experience, neurodevelopmental pathways, employability	Article 2 – Non-discrimination Article 3 – Best interests Article 12 – Voice in decisions Article 23 – Rights of children with disabilities Article 28 – Right to education Article 29 – Aims of education Article 42 – Knowledge of rights	Ensures equal access to education, support for ASN/neurodivergent learners, and fair chances for positive post-school destinations.
Keeping the Promise / Corporate Parenting	Rights-based support for care-experienced children; stability, relationships, advocacy, transitions, housing	Article 2 – Non-discrimination Article 3 – Best interests of the child Article 12 – Voice in decisions Article 20 – Children deprived of family environment Article 21 – Adoption (where relevant) Article 25 – Review of care placements Article 27 – Standard of living Article 39 – Recovery & reintegration	Ensures care-experienced young people are safe, heard, supported, and able to thrive with strong relationships and stable homes.
Child Poverty	Financial inclusion, employability for parents, cash-first approaches, reducing cost barriers, food, and fuel security	Article 2 – Non-discrimination Article 3 – Best interests Article 6 – Development Article 24 – Health Article 26 – Social security Article 27 – Standard of living	Removes poverty-related barriers to rights, ensuring families have enough money for essentials and children can participate fully.
Youth Justice / Whole System Approach <i>(within Empowered & Resilient)</i>	Early and effective intervention, diversion, rights-respecting justice, reducing arrest/detention	Article 37 – Protection from torture or deprivation of liberty Article 40 – Rights in justice system Article 39 – Recovery & reintegration	Ensures young people are treated fairly, detention is a last resort, and support focuses on wellbeing.
The following articles are not		Article 4 – Implementation of rights	Why these articles were not included Most of these rights relate to:

Plan Priority	What the Priority Focuses On	UNCRC Articles Supported	Why These Articles Apply
<p>specifically referenced because they do not directly align with the priorities, or they relate to areas not covered in the plan (e.g., international law, asylum procedures, identity documents, etc.)</p>		<p>Article 5 – Parental guidance and evolving capacities Article 7 – Birth registration, name, nationality Article 8 – Identity, name, family ties Article 9 – Separation from parents (except care experience aspects, but not fully) Article 10 – Family reunification across borders Article 11 – Protection from kidnapping Article 14 – Freedom of thought, belief, religion Article 16 – Right to privacy Article 17 – Access to reliable information/media Article 22 – Refugee children <i>(there is some related content in the Plan re “New Scots”)</i> Article 30 – Minority & Indigenous children’s cultural rights Article 32 – Protection from child labour Article 35 – Protection from trafficking Article 38 – War and armed conflict Article 41 – More favourable laws already in place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • international protection (Articles 10, 11, 22, 38) • identity and nationality (Articles 7, 8) • privacy and media (Articles 16, 17) • child labour or trafficking (Articles 32, 35) • general legal implementation (Articles 4, 5, 41) <p>Some are indirectly supported—for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Article 4 (the Plan as a whole demonstrates our activities in line with our local responsibilities for UNCRC Implementation)</i> • <i>Article 5 (parental guidance)</i> relates to family support; the Plan focuses more on early help and whole-family support. • <i>Article 22 (refugee children)</i> is aligned with the “New Scots” inclusion work.

Glossary of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning / Definition
ACC	Aberdeen City Council
ACEL	Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels
AYM	Aberdeen Youth Movement
BAM	Becoming a Man (Programme)
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CARM	Care and Risk Management
CEYP	Care Experienced Young People
CIC	Curriculum Improvement Cycle
CLD	Community Learning and Development
CPA	Community Planning Aberdeen
CPR	Child Protection Register
CCH	Community Child Health
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation
CSB	Children's Services Board
CSW	Children's Social Work
DHP	Discretionary Housing Payment
EEI	Early and Effective Intervention (Justice context)
ESSENCE-D	Early Symptomatic Syndromes Eliciting Neurodevelopmental Clinical Examinations – Diagnostic (specialist assessment)
GIRFEC	Getting It Right For Every Child (Scottish policy framework)
HELP	Health Equity & Learning Project
LOIP	Local Outcome Improvement Plan
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Team
MMR	Measles, Mumps, Rubella (vaccine)
NIF	National Improvement Framework
NHS	National Health Service

Acronym	Meaning / Definition
NHSG	NHS Grampian
PNA	Population Needs Assessment
ROTH	Risks Outside The Home
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SLC	Speech, Language and Communication
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
VPD	Vulnerable Persons Database
WSA	Whole System Approach
YJMU	Youth Justice Management Unit
YPYPYF	Your Place, Your Plans, Your Future (consultation/engagement)



**Community
Planning
Aberdeen**