

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN

2025-2028



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Introduction

Being a Corporate Parent means providing secure, nurturing and positive experiences for children and young people in our care wherever they live. Where a child or young person cannot safely remain at home, it is up to us to provide them with the care, support and stability that they deserve, whilst maintaining the relationships that are important to them.

We are delighted to present our newly refreshed Corporate Parenting Plan for 2025 – 2028.

This plan builds upon the progress that Dumfries and Galloway have made towards #KeepingThePromise and enhance on our previous plan, whilst continuing to address challenges raised specifically by our children, young people, and their families. Our children and young people's voices have been integral in the formation of this plan to ensure that it fully represents and addresses what is important to them.

How We Developed Our Plan

This plan has been through a multi-agency iterative development process in which our priorities have been shaped by the following:

- Our previous Corporate Plan – our successes in this plan and areas where we needed to continue to deliver improvement objectives.
- The Promise - the findings of the Independent Care Review, together with the output of Plan 21-24 and Plan 24-30.
- Findings from key collaborations with our children, young people and their families.
- Data on our looked after children and young people.

Our Corporate Parent Plan sits within our Children's Services Plan 2023 – 2026 under Workstream 4 – Care Experience; "We are committed to improving outcomes for our looked after and care-experienced children and young people". Similar to previous years, we will produce an annual report on this plan that provides clear information in relation to our performance and progress in relation to what we have achieved, and what work we need to do to continue to progress for our children.

Dumfries and Galloway's Corporate Parent Plan Pledges

Our Corporate Parents are all committed to ensuring that we give all of our children and young people – who are the experts in their own lives – influence to shape the services which are being provided for them to make sure that they get the right help at the right time and are supported to reach their full potential.

Our newly developed Corporate Parent Plan is designed to be undertaken through the below 5 priority workstreams, each with an accompanying pledge that we have made to our children and young people.

A Safe and Stable Home

We will improve and increase the accommodation and care options for our care experienced children and young people to ensure they have the right place to live with the right support when they need it. This will increase their opportunities to have stability and consistency which will allow them to access the other help and support they might need and so allow them to live their best lives.

Access to Education

We will work together across the partnership to improve and increase the opportunities for our care experienced children and young people to access education in a way which best suits their needs, giving them the best chance for success and preparing them for the future that they want and deserve.

Being Healthy

We will work across the partnership to ensure our care experienced children and young people are able to have their health needs met by attending their health appointments and that health services sufficiently reflect and accommodate the unique circumstances that our care experienced children and young people experience.

Being Involved and Included

We will ensure that the voice and rights of our care experienced children and young people are meaningfully and systemically embedded across all areas of activity and development that affect them including their rights to a safe and stable home, accessible education and good health.

Moving On/Transitions

We will work across our partnership in co-production with our care experienced young people so that we can be confident that those moving on from care.

What have we achieved so far?

Our previous Plan delivered on the following improvements in processes and service delivery, as well as capturing the progress we have made towards #KeepingThePromise.

Implemented a relationship-based practice approach to working with our children and their families, explaining the work we undertake to support families, empowering them to come up with their own solutions to the issues and barriers they face with the aim of creating and developing more sustainable plans for children and young people to remain where possible with their families and siblings.

Introduction of a dedicated Fostering and Adoption website containing information about services, what it means to become a Foster Carer, the process and training opportunities for our carers.

Working with Registered Social Landlord partners to develop a pathway for young people to access mainstream accommodation which forms part of this refreshed plan.

Redesign and implementation of a new model of service delivery across our Children and Families Service to ensure that we can use our resources flexibly and ensure the right resources are targeted at the right children and their families at the right time.

GIRFEC Website Launch. The Dumfries and Galloway GIRFEC Leadership group launched a newly refreshed website providing a one stop shop for local tools, guidance and information about services and supports that are available for professionals, but more importantly, our children, young people and their families. If our children, parents and carers would like more information about local services and supports that are available to them, this can be accessed through the new website.

The language used within this plan was and accompanied actions were developed in consultation with our children and young people.

Dumfries and Galloway have implemented the nationally recognised 'Keeping the Promise Award' in our schools, with all schools across our region having completed this award by September 2024. The purpose of the award is to support practitioners, across all levels within schools to develop their awareness and understanding of The Promise, the commitment made by Scottish Government and to improve the educational experiences and outcomes for Scotland's care experienced children and young people. The implementation of this award has provided Dumfries and Galloway an opportunity to showcase our commitment, and to share our voice nationally as we

Dumfries and Galloway were one of 8 Local Authorities selected to be part of a short life working group in partnership with colleagues at COSLA, The Promise Scotland and Scottish Government to develop The Promise Progress Framework. This framework utilises multiple data sources as well as telling the story of experience, to guide high-level understanding of the national story of progress towards #KeepingThePromise. This framework successfully launched at the end of 2024.

Dumfries and Galloway were selected to be part of a pilot for aligning The Promise with Family Learning Delivery across Scotland. The work created a Continued Professional Learning pack for all practitioners including front line and strategic leaders. This was another exciting opportunity for Dumfries and Galloway to lead on a national initiative and showcase the work that we are doing. The finished resource has been used as a best practice example and shared nationally to support other Local Authorities. This work launched in August 2024

Key Collaborations with our Children, Young People and their Families

An underpinning principle of The Promise is to ensure that our children and young people's voices are integral to our service design and work planning. Our Corporate Parent Plan has been refreshed and developed alongside our children and young people including engagement through the following programmes, all being integral to the formation of this plan.

Bright Spots

Bright Spots is a programme that supported us as a local authority to listen to our children in care and care leavers, about the things that are important to them. The focus being on what our children and young people say about their lives and what is important to them, together with ensuring that their views and experiences influence our service development.

We considered Brights Spots as a very exciting development for Dumfries and Galloway being one of only three local authorities in Scotland participating in the pilot project, prior to rolling out across Scotland.

Bright Spots focuses on the subjective wellbeing of young people and looked after children by using a survey focusing on young people telling us how they feel about their experiences. First originating in England and Wales, thy survey was developed from literature reviews, roundtable discussions with professionals and from focus groups and individual interviews with 140 children and young people in care living in nine different local authorities.

The results of the programme have not only allowed us to shape our Corporate Parent Plan, but it will also help improve the health, wellbeing, and future outcomes of our young people in care.



bright spots

WeCare Event

Together with our Youth Work Service and Listen2Us Youth Advocacy, as part of the Youth Beatz Fringe Programme we hold an event specifically for our care experienced children and young people from across Dumfries and Galloway. The event is held at no cost to our young people, and they are provided with transport, and food and drinks throughout the day.

The Listen2Us group is part of the wider Champions Board Project that is delivered by Dumfries and Galloway Council's Youth Work team. The goal of the project is to provide opportunities for young people with experience of care in Dumfries and Galloway, and for young people to have their voices heard and influence decision making when it comes to services they access.

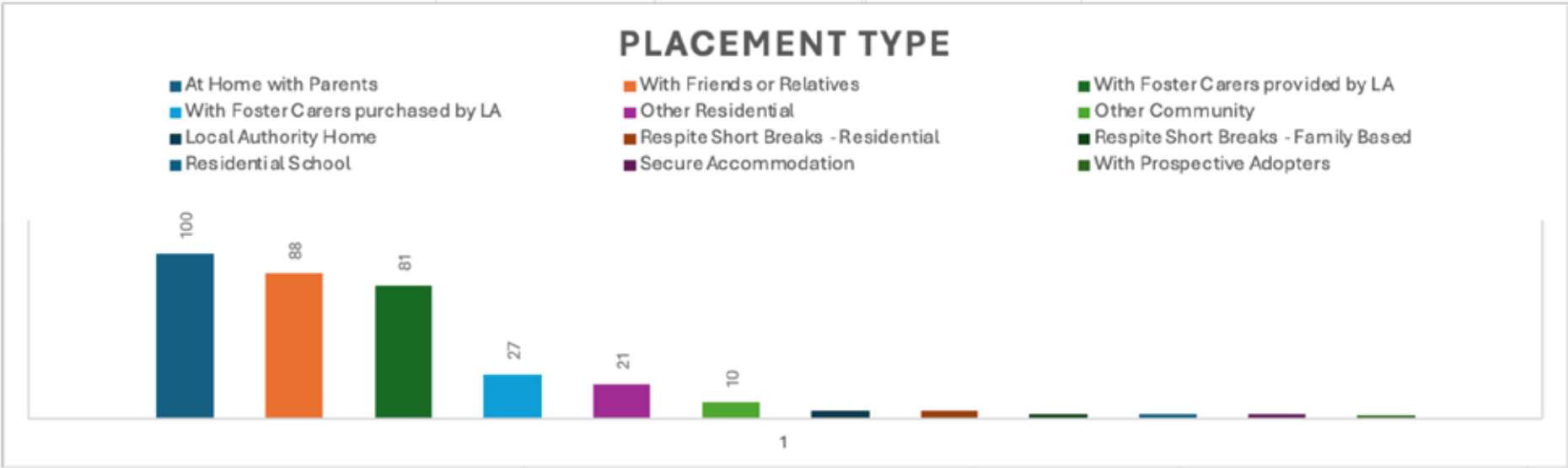
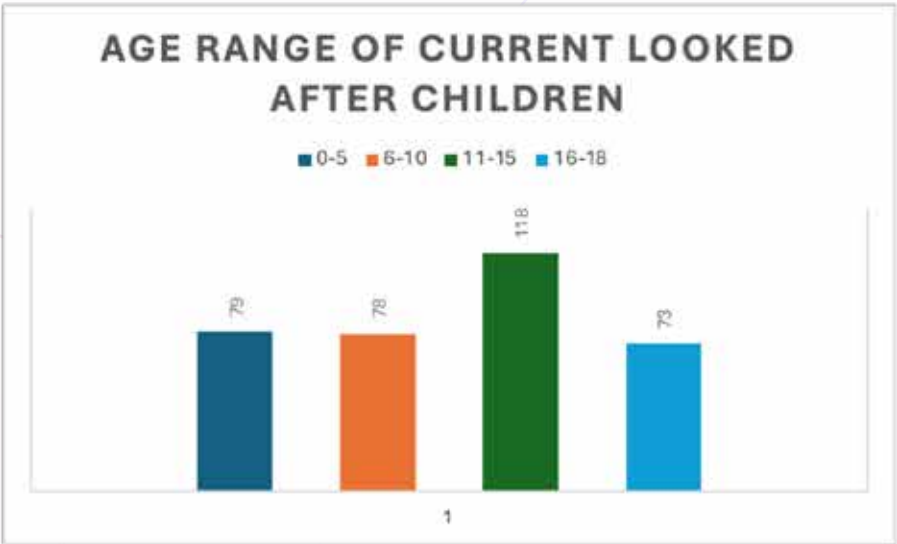
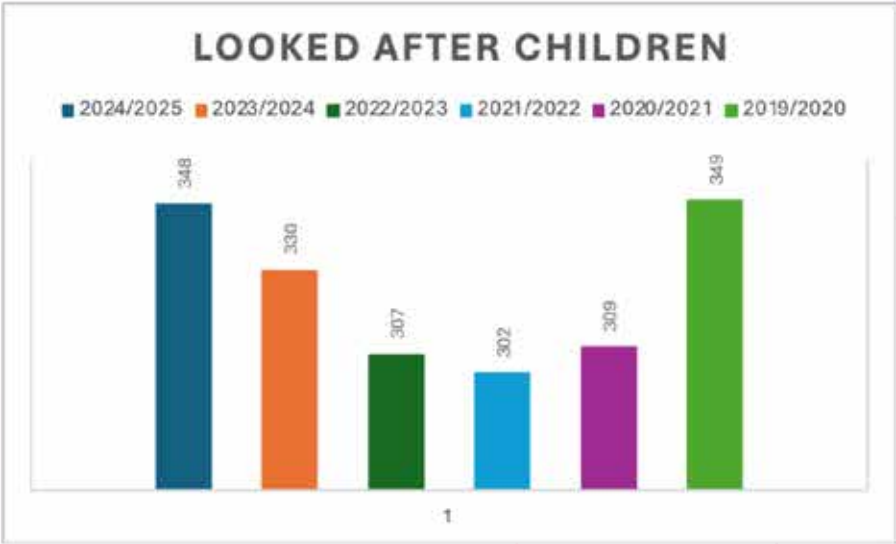
The purpose of our We Care Event is to provide an opportunity specifically for our care experienced children and young people to share their views on services, and a variety of area that matter most to them through the facilitation of interactive workshops. Our and children and young people's voices at this event held in the summer of 2023, have been incorporated into the development of this plan.

10,000 Voices

Dumfries and Galloway first ran the 10, 000 voices consultation in 2018, and again 2023. The project consults with young people aged between 10 and 25 years old who were living, working and/or studying within Dumfries and Galloway and this year, 51.7% participated. The results of this consultation have informed the development and progression of this action plan.

Data on our Children and Young People

Dumfries and Galloway have 349 children that are Looked After, an increase of 13% on the previous year.



Type of Legal Order

Compulsory Supervision Order (CSO)	A CSO in Scotland is an order made by a Children's Hearing or Sheriff. It requires a child to comply with specified conditions and requires the local authority to perform duties in relation to the child's needs.
Interim-Compulsory Supervision Order (ICSO)	An ICSO can be made if it is necessary for the protection, guidance, treatment or control of a child. The ICSO is flexible and offers options such as removing the child from home or allowing them to remain at home. It can be issued during the hearing of an application to establish grounds for compulsory supervision. The ICSO replaces Place of Safety Warrants and is used in cases of urgent necessity.
Section 25 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995	Enable parents, supported by social workers, to voluntarily place their child to secure their safety, into the care of the Local Authority away from the parental home.
Permanence Order	Permanence order can only be applied for by the Local Authority and are designed to safeguard a child who will not be returning home. A Permanence Order will remove the child from the Children's Hearing System and can last until the child reaches the age of 18.
Non-LAC Legal Status (Other Legal Status)	Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

The Five Foundations of The Promise will be at the heart of everything we do



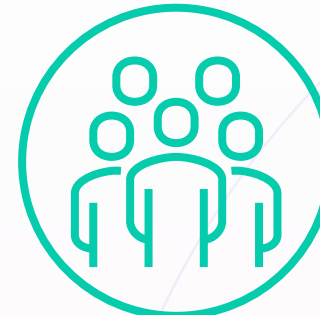
VOICE



FAMILY



CARE



PEOPLE



SCAFFOLDING

To uphold the rights and secure the wellbeing of all looked-after children, young people and care-leavers through the development, delivery and monitoring of a Corporate Parenting plan which aims to:

- Be aspirational and ambitious in driving better outcomes for looked after children, young people and care leavers
- Identify and remove barriers to the wellbeing of looked after children, young people and care leavers
- Provide looked after children, young people and care leavers with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing
- Track, assess and monitor the individual and collective needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers including parents and carers
- Through the delivery of agreed priority actions, improve the services and supports that are available and deliver on Our Pledges
- Ensure that there is pro-active engagement with looked after children, young people and care leavers in both individual care planning and strategic planning
- Monitor, evaluate and challenge the delivery of improved outcomes for looked after children, young people and care leavers to ensure continuous improvement.
- To take action continually to improve services and ensure it is responsive and meeting changing needs
- Ensure that all Elected Members are able to fulfil their role as corporate parents and consider training requirements / how all members can contribute to improving outcomes working collectively with our Young Persons Champion Board.

The Promise

In October 2016, the First Minister made a commitment that Scotland would 'come together and love its most vulnerable children to give them a childhood they deserve'. An independent root and branch review of the 'care system' was commissioned – the Independent Care Review.

The conclusions of the Independent Care Review articulated in The Promise, set out the transformational change required by 2030. The Promise makes clear what those working with children and families in Scotland must do to make sure our children feel loved, safe and have the childhood they deserve.

The Promise Scotland published Plan 21-24 in March 2021 outlining the priorities and set out what must happen between 2021 and 2024 to ensure Scotland stays on track to deliver on The Promise. It outlined Scotland's route map, providing key priorities and areas of focus. The required change over this period translated into the following five priority areas of change-

- I. A Good Childhood
- II. Whole Family Support
- III. Supporting the Workforce
- IV. Building Capacity
- V. Planning

Plan 21-24 was intended to cover the period 21-24 as referenced in the Independent Care Review. COVID-19 has radically altered the landscape across Scotland, but the impact of the pandemic does not change the core work programme. It expands on it and creates a greater urgency for change.

In the Summer of 2024, The Promise Scotland launched Plan 24-30 which celebrates how far Scotland has come, whilst being clear on the distance still to travel. Plan 24-30 sets to build on the progress made so far within Plan 21-24, and outlines 'Who needs to do What and by When' to #KeepThePromise.

Plan 24-30 has identified 5 key areas that are acting as both the bridges and the barriers to The Promise agenda being kept and lifts these areas and illustrates how they relate to #KeepThePromise and how they are interlinked, each having an impact on the other. These 5 areas, together with foundations of The Promise have been reviewed and aligned with our Corporate Parent delivery activity to ensure that we #KeepThePromise for the children and young people within our region.

Governance

Given the significance of the Corporate Parent Plan and statutory requirements to fulfil these responsibilities outlined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, the Corporate Parent meetings, chaired by Lorna Meahan, Executive Director of Enabling and Customer Services, with our progress marked through the means of a scorecard by our young people.

The 5 Workstream Leads will be responsible for ensuring delivery on their priority area through the coordination, planning and allocation of work.

The aim of Corporate Parent meetings will provide a holistic governance framework for all key partners to deliver their Corporate Parent Plan actions in line with #KeepingThePromise for our children and young people within the region. Our Governance, Performance and Reporting mechanism have been refreshed in line with this change further strengthening our commitment to our children and young people.

Appendix 1 sets out our Corporate Parent Action Plan which demonstrates how we will deliver on this plan and will be regularly monitored and updated through the Corporate Parent Meetings and the Children Services Strategic and Planning Partnership Executive Group, together with our young people. The Corporate Parent Actions will span the lifetime of this plan, with emerging priority areas and activities added as and when agreed appropriately.

Performance

The Promise Progress Framework will be the performance mechanism that monitors and tracks our progress towards fulfilling our Corporate Parent Plan, as well as #KeepingThePromise. Our Corporate Parent Plan will be measured against the national indicators developed of which our data and analysis will be localised. The national indicators that have been developed are attached to each of the 10 vision statements and their outcomes and will provide a contextualised understanding of progress.



THE PROMISE PROGRESS FRAMEWORK

The Outcome Area's and Vision Statement

The Promise Progress Framework contains 10 vision statements taken directly from The Promise. Each vision statement has an associated set of outcomes that reflect the overall ambition of what #KeepingThePromise will look and feel like.

Outcome 1: Supporting Children to stay with their Families

Where children are in their families and feel loved, they must stay– and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way.

Outcome 2: Carers and Stability

Scotland must limit the number of moves that children experience and support carers to continue to care.

Outcome 3: Education

Schools in Scotland must be ambitious for care experienced children and ensure they have all they need to thrive, recognising that they may experience difficulties associated with their life story.

Outcome 4: Brothers and Sisters

Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.

Outcome 5: Physical Restraint

Scotland must strive to become a nation that does not restrain children.

Outcome 6: Mental Health and Wellbeing

Scotland must seek to uphold the wellbeing of care-experienced children and young people and ensure that there is timely access to mental health support before crisis point so that children can enjoy good mental health.

Outcome 7: Health

Care experienced children and young people have access to support ensuring that their health needs are fully met and potential for good health is maximised.

Outcome 8: Justice

Scotland must stop locking up children who have often experienced the failures of the state in the provision of their care.

Outcome 9: Aftercare

Young adults for whom Scotland has taken on parental responsibility must have a right to return to care and have access to services and supportive people to nurture them.

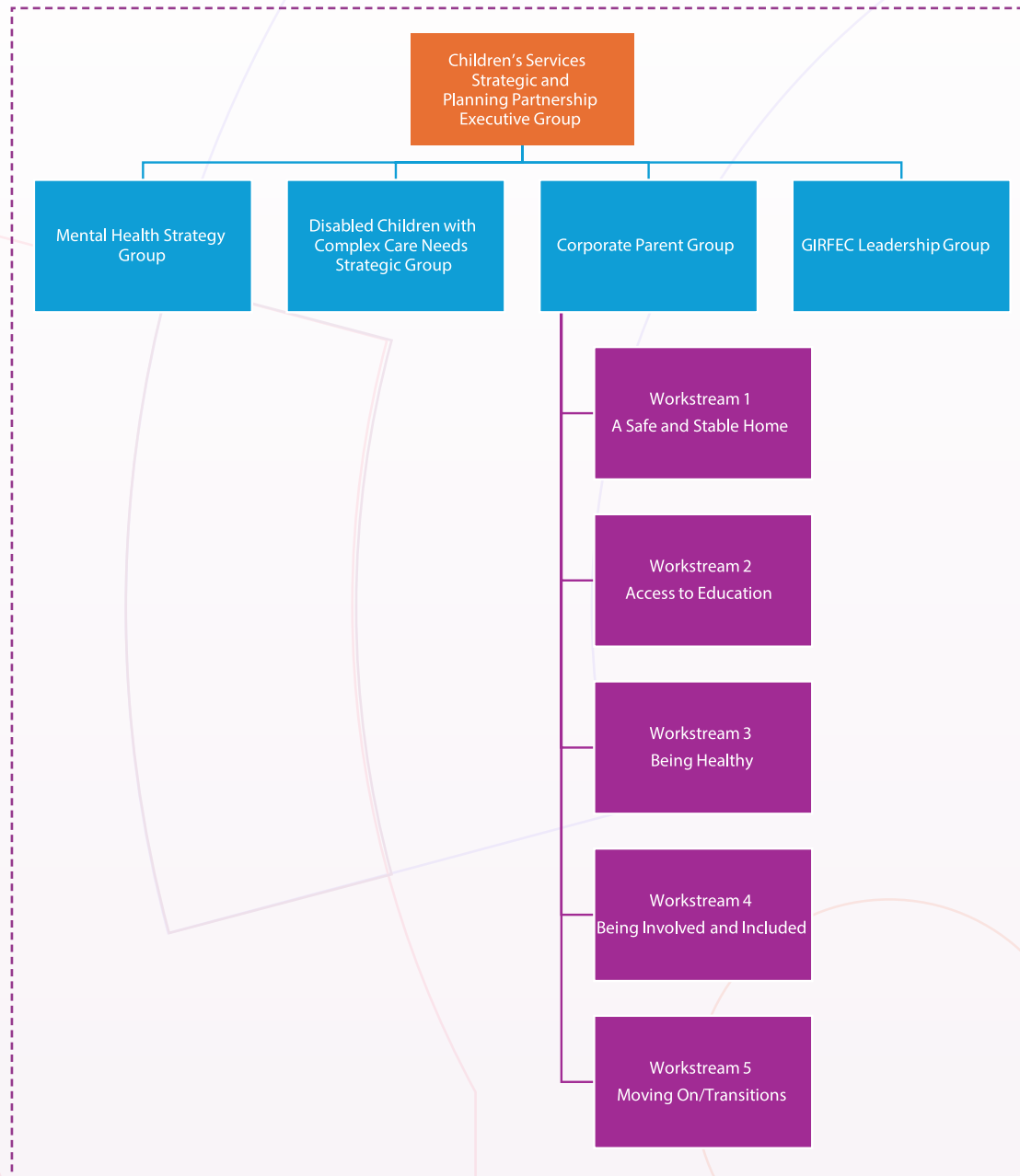
Outcome 10: Support for Care Experienced Adults

Care experienced adults must have a right to access to supportive, caring services for as long as they require. Those services and the people who work in them must have a primary focus on the development and maintenance of supportive relationships that help people access what they need to thrive.

Reporting

Progress on our Corporate Parent Plan and delivering on The Promise will be reported to our Children Services Strategic and Planning Partnership on a 6 monthly basis. The Corporate Parent Plan and delivering on The Promise progress report will form part of the joint annual report for Children Services and Care Experienced.

Performance Mechanism:
The Promise Progress Framework



Performance Mechanism:
The Promise Progress Framework

Appendix

Our corporate Parenting Plan 2025-2028

A Safe and Stable Home

We will improve and increase the accommodation and care options for our care experienced children and young people to ensure they have the right place to live with the right support when they need it. This will increase their opportunities to have stability and consistency which will allow them to access the other help and support they might need and so allow them to live their best lives.

Lead: Leanne Young, Locality Social Work Manager, Dumfries and Galloway Council

Workstream Members: Charles Rocks, Head of Children and Families, Justice and Resettlement Service, Sarah McGarva, Locality Social Work Manager; Sharon Fry, Team Manager Registered Services; Martin Loughrey, Senior Social Worker Kinship Team; Linda Biggar, Principal Educational Psychologist; Sharron Harper, Depute Educational Psychologist; Ashley Johnstone, Nurse Co-Ordinator Care Experienced H&W Team; Laura Kiltie, Senior Youth Development Worker; Kath Priest, Locality Social Work Manager; James Little, Team Leader Strategic Housing and Regeneration Investment and Katie Redpath, Senior Social Worker, Intensive Outreach Team.

No	Priority	Actions	Timescales	Outcome Measures
1	We will make sure we do as possible to keep you living at home with your family, for as long as it is safe for you to be there.	When we first get to know you and your family, we will talk to you about the who the important people are in your life, and we will create a family tree or genogram with you that shows this. This will help us to understand who the best people are to support you.	September 2025	<p>Our practitioners will know and have a more holistic understanding of our children's stories that enables them to provide the best care and support.</p> <p>We will reduce the number of children and young people living out with their family networks and increase the number of those growing up with their siblings and within their own family networks.</p> <p>Our children, young people and their families will understand the work that we have undertaken that has led us to our decisions and they will be fully included in this process.</p>
		We will work with you and your family to create a plan that keeps you safe while you are at home and gives you any support that you need. This will be created with you, in a way that best supports you to understand.	September 2025	
		We will complete an assessment which helps us to decide what is best for you and we will include you and your views in this process. We will make sure that the information is kept safe, so that only the people who need to know about your life, do.	September 2026	

No	Priority	Actions	Timescales	Outcome Measures
2	<p>If we believe that it is no longer safe for you to live at home, we will explore all of the safe adults that you have a close relationship with to see who the best person would be to look after and care for you.</p> <p>We know that relationships are important, and we will make sure that you stay together with your brothers and sisters, or where this is not possible, that you each other as much as possible.</p> <p>We will always explore your family and friends before we consider other caring arrangements, including foster care.</p>	Where we believe that it is no longer safe for you to be at home, we will help you understand why and explain what will happen and when.	March 2026	<p>Our children, young people and their families, will be supported to understand how we have reached this decision that it is no longer safe for them to remain living at home.</p> <p>Brothers and sisters will usually live together, when this is not possible, time will be prioritised to reflect on the reasons for this to reduce impact on the child, young person and family.</p>
		We will make sure that you have access to the right supports and services to support you during this time ensuring that you understand your rights.	March 2026	
		We are going to have a kinship team who will support friends and family who look after children so that things work well and we know you will be safe and well cared for throughout your childhood.	March 2026	
		We will help you to keep in touch with the important people in your life.	March 2026	

No	Priority	Actions	Timescales	Outcome Measures
3	If you need to be cared for by foster carers, we will ensure that we find a family that is best suited to you.	We will increase the number of foster carers we have across Dumfries and Galloway so there are more opportunities for you to live near you family and friends in your local community and stay at the same school where that is the best plan for you.	March 2026	Our children and young people will be able to live near their family and friends ensuring that the relationships that are important to them are supported to continue.
		Our foster carers will be fully trained in a trauma-informed approach in caring for you so that they are able to understand and respond to your needs in a way that focusses on supporting you through your journey and understanding your life experiences?	<p>March 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p>	<p>Our children and young people will experience fewer placements, as those caring for them will fully understand their needs and will be supported to do so for as long as our children and young people require.</p> <p>This will support to reduce the number of placement breakdowns and unplanned endings.</p> <p>When foster placements break down, we will understand why and use the learning to continuously develop our support to foster carers.</p> <p>Ensure robust practice around placement disruption, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeous unplanned ending meetings • Prompt carer reviews through Panel

No	Priority	Actions	Timescales	Outcome Measures
3		We will find foster carers and families who can look after children for their whole lives with their brothers and sisters.		Our children and young people will experience stability and nurturing care which will allow them to reach their full potential.
		We will make sure that you know as much about your foster carers before you live with them and any moves will be planned and allow you to meet with your new carers before you transition into your new home.		Our children and young people will be involved and included in their move in a way that allows them to be fully prepared.

No	Priority	Actions	Timescales	Outcome Measures
4	If we believe that the safest place for you to be cared for is in a Children's Home, we will only consider this once we have explored all other caring options for you.	We will make sure that if you are cared for in a children's home that is within Dumfries and Galloway and that there are resources and supports available for you locally.	March 2026	Our children and young people will be able to live near their family and friends ensuring that the relationships that are important to them are supported to continue.
			March 2026	Children and young people in residential care will be supported to remain engaged within their home communities. Children and young people want to know what is happening in their local area.
		<p>If we are unable to provide you with care in Dumfries and Galloway, we will work to ensure that you are as close to home as is possible and for the shortest possible time.</p> <p>We will explore alternative models to deliver care for our children that are unable to remain at home.</p>		We will work hard to ensure that we bring our children back to Dumfries and Galloway as soon as possible to ensure that they are within their local communities.

No	Priority	Actions	Timescales	Outcome Measures
5	We will develop a service that provides extra support to help families, including kinship	<p>We will work with you and your families to understand what support it is that you need when there is a crisis.</p> <p>We will look at all the information and data we have to help us make the best plans for this support so that it is available when you need it.</p> <p>We will also speak to other areas to learn about ideas they have tried so we can do the best we can to support all the children and families we work with.</p>	September 2025	<p>This will reduce the number of children and young people required to live away from home by ensuring that early help and support is available. Reduction in number of children and young people being looked after away from their families</p> <p>Reduction in number of foster and kinship care placement breakdowns</p> <p>Reduction in number of placements experienced by children and young people Young people want to be helped at home more before having to go and live with people that are not in their family.</p>
6	We will develop a service that provides extra support to families in a place that is accessible to them at the time that they need it	<p>We will create a repository of services that includes information about what services are available in our region and how to make contact with them in one place.</p>	October 2026	<p>Our children, young people and their families will have access to information that they need when they need it.</p>

Access to Education

We will work together across the partnership to improve and increase the opportunities for our care experienced children and young people to access education in a way which best suits their needs, giving them the best chance for success and preparing them for the future that they want and deserve.

Lead: Karen-Anne Bryden, Quality Improvement Manager, Education Skills and Communities

Workstream Members: Alison Gold, Principal Teacher Care Experienced; Jessica Burnett, Quality Improvement Officer; Linda Biggar, Principal Educational Psychologist; Jen Docherty, Headteacher – Lochmaben Primary, Kirsten Candish, Deputy Headteacher – Moffat Academy, Stacey Kyle, Social Work Transitions Team.

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
7	<p>We want to make sure that you always have a good education plan that helps you achieve as best as you can.</p> <p>We want to make sure that if you are struggling to behave well at school you will get support which means you won't be excluded.</p>	<p>Schools, supported by the Care Experience Education Team, will make sure the right supports are in place and prioritised for looked after children and young people. This will support you to achieve your National Qualifications in Literacy and Numeracy and other skills based on your needs.</p>	<p>June 2026</p> <p>June 2026</p>	<p>Amongst care experienced children and young people, we will see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in exclusions • Increase in attendance at school or alternative provision where appropriate. • Increase in amount of time spent in school or alternative provision where appropriate • Reduction in placement and family breakdown, where educational provision is cited as a factor • Reduce the number of placements that require a change of school
		<p>Some children have had reduced timetables, we will work hard to help all looked after children have good meaningful plans which means that they are learning well and finding out what they are good at. When children are finding it difficult to learn in the classroom, we have to get together to come up with other ideas to help them learn.</p>		

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
7		We will challenge schools to support you to have increased time in school or to participate in alternative education activities.	June 2026	Carers and families will feel better supported and have more time to rest and recuperate, improving the quality of care they are able to provide
		All of our partners will know their responsibility for how they support you to attend at school, and where this is difficult for you, they will be supported to understand why.	June 2026	
		As corporate parents we will support parents and carers who are finding it difficult to get their children into school. We will ask you and your parents what would help you the most.		
		We will support your attendance by developing a new D&G Attendance at School Policy.		

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
8	<i>We will together with our partners to improve individualised transitions support for care experienced school leavers into positive and sustained destinations</i>	<p>We will do this through enhanced tracking, monitoring and will support you for as long as we need to, to reflect any potential challenges that you may be experiencing that has an impact on you.</p> <p>We will support you to reach the positive destination that is best suited to your needs.</p> <p>Positive destinations include higher education, further education, training, voluntary work, employment, personal skills development and where applicable, activity agreements.</p>	June 2026	Care Experienced pupils will achieve qualifications that will support them to reach a positive destination that is tailored to them.
9	We will make sure as corporate parents we work together to make sure all Looked after and care experienced children have the supports they need at school.	<p>As corporate parents we will map out supports available to you in school so that you have the best chance that you can if you stay in your school or move to a new one.</p> <p>We will identify resources and partners who can offer you alternative education opportunities both skills based and wider achievement awards.</p> <p>We will plan, track and monitor intended outcomes for young people through alternative education opportunities.</p>	<p>June 2026</p> <p>June 2026</p> <p>June 2026</p>	<p>Care experienced children and those supporting them will know what supports are available with their school community and be more able to access them.</p> <p>There will be a reduction in waiting times for services as they are used more efficiently.</p> <p>Strategic leaders will understand how services are working together and where the gaps in service provision are.</p>

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
9				When additional or temporary finding becomes available there will be a clearer understanding across the partnership of where this can be best used to provide support to care experienced children and their families.

Being Healthy

We will work across our partnership to ensure that our care experienced children and young people are able to have their health needs met by attending their health appointments and that health services sufficiently reflect and accommodate the unique circumstances that our care experienced children and young people experience.

Lead: Fiona Paton, Lead Nurse/Child Health Commissioner, D&G NHS

Workstream Members: Ashley Johnstone, Nurse Co-Ordinator, Care Experienced Team, NHS; Mary Smeddle, Head of Child and Adolescent Psychology, NHS; Public Health Nursing Team Lead, NHS; Clinical Psychologist Care Experienced Team, NHS; Sharon Fry, Team Manager Centralised Services.

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
10	We will ensure that you are supported to attend your health and wellbeing appointments.	We will make sure that we support you to attend your appointments even if your family lives are very busy and complicated or they live in rural areas.	January 2026	Health services will have an improved understanding of the needs of care experienced children and young people and why some appointments might not be kept – and why it is important their health needs are met.
		Before services are ended for you where you have not been able to attend your appointments, we will always check with you to see if you still need the support from the service.	January 2027	<p>There will be better identification for care experienced children and young people who have not been able to attend their health appointments.</p> <p>There will be a joined-up approach across the partnership to ensure children's health needs are met.</p> <p>Carers will feel more supported in helping their children attend appointments.</p>

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
11	We will ensure that health knowledge and expertise is fully incorporated into assessment and decision-making processes for you, particularly where you are moving through permanence	Review and identify Health required contributions to Fostering and Adoption/Kinship/Permanence process at all stages.	January 2027	<p>Permanence and fostering and adoption panels will evidence constructive advice and guidance from a health perspective.</p> <p>This will highlight any gaps in provision of support to carers and the children they are caring for.</p> <p>Panel members will have a better understanding of a wider range of health issues for children, young people and their families and carers.</p> <p>Decisions for children will be better informed and more likely to lead to stable and longer-term placements.</p>

Being Involved and Included

We will ensure that the voices and rights of our care experienced children and young people are meaningfully and systemically embedded across all areas of activity and development that affect them including their rights to a safe and stable home, accessibly education and good health.

Lead: Laura Kiltie, Youth Development, Youth Work Services, Dumfries and Galloway Council

Workstream Members: Sarah McGarva, Locality Social Work Manager; Alison Telfer, Participation Lead NHS; Vanessa Morris, Education Support Officer Quality Improvement; Darren Little, Children Services Manager; Secondary Head Teacher; Selwyn McCausland, Barnardo's – National Children's Rights & Advocacy, Care Experienced Young Person, Listen2Us

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
12	We need to make sure that you can help us make the right plans and decisions for everyone. This means asking about plans for where you should live, learn and keep healthy as well as planning for moving on when you are older.	We will ensure that you are fully involved so that we make good decisions as corporate parents. We will let you know what we have done and you can tell us how things are working.	Review progress in January 2026	Care experienced children will feel that when they share their views, these are taken seriously and used in meaningful ways. They will know what is done with the information they share and how this is used to make a difference. There will be a reduction in the number of times care experienced children and young people are asked the same thing by different people. They will be able to share their views in ways which feel right and relevant for them. This will motivate them to be involved in future events. They will have an improved confidence in how adults listen to and hear them. They will feel their views matter.
		We will help you to understand your rights and be able to always have someone you trust to speak to; we will help you have an advocate and a solicitor if you need one.	December 2027	

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
13	We need to make sure that we communicate information to you in the best way possible, and in way that helps you to understand the things you need to know	We will have different ways of giving information to you in a format that best suits your needs and in a format that is understandable	December 2025 Evaluation of progress / audit by December 2026	<p>Care experienced children and young people will have an improved understanding of their rights to services and standards of care they are entitled to</p> <p>Develop information strategy to ensure that our children and young people understand the services that are available to them (Oasis, Barnardos, YES Service etc) and how they can access these.</p> <p>This will be evidenced though their plans and minutes of their review meetings.</p> <p>They and those caring for them will feel better supported and more confident to let people know when they feel their rights are not being met.</p> <p>Care experienced children and young people will feel less stigmatised.</p> <p>They will be supported to be proud of and celebrate their achievements.</p> <p>They and those caring for them will have a better understanding of how their experiences can be used to build resilience.</p>

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
14	We need to make sure that you are fully involved in meetings that are about you and that you are being heard	<p>We will make sure we are listening to you, and that when we ask you questions, we don't overwhelm you.</p> <p>We will ensure that when we ask you for your views, you will be able to share that with us in a way that best suits your communication needs. This will include, writing, drawing and reading.</p> <p>We will make sure you are offered an advocate or someone you trust to help tell us what your ideas and feelings are or someone you that you trust and feel happy talking to.</p> <p>We will work to make sure, where possible, that we hold your meetings in a better environment, where you feel comfortable.</p> <p>We will make sure that you prepared for your meeting and that you have access to activities whilst you wait.</p>	December 2027	<p>All care experienced children and young people will feel better prepared, supported and listened to when attending meeting about them.</p> <p>There will be an increase in care experienced children and young people participating directly in meetings that are about them.</p> <p>This will make their plans feel more meaningful to them as they will have been able to contribute more to them.</p> <p>Those supporting care experienced children and young people to attend meetings will have a better understanding of what is important and needed to help them contribute.</p>

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
15	We need to support you to understand what everyone's role is if they are involved with you and your family or are attending a meeting on behalf of you.	We will have information ready to share with you in a variety of formats including videos, leaflets and posters as well as on our websites.	December 2025	<p>Care experienced children and young people and their carers will have a better understanding of who can do what to help them and who they should go to when they have a specific need.</p> <p>This will increase their confidence in expressing their needs and wants.</p> <p>They will know who is responsible for what.</p>
		We will try to make sure that you have the same people supporting or helping you, we know it is difficult when you have lots of changes.		<p>Consistency in workers will be reduce the number of changes our children and young people experience.</p> <p>When there has to be a change in worker they will understand why and will be supported to adjust to the changes.</p>

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
16	To give you the right support, we need to know what is important to you and help you to understand your own journey	<p>We will make sure that the people who care for you understand you, who the people are that are important to you and what you like and dislike.</p> <p>We will make sure that your social worker does life story work with you when it is the right time so that you can understand why things have happened and how people have tried to make the best decisions for you.</p> <p>When your Social Worker is getting to know you, they will always do a family tree or genogram with you so they can see who the most important people are in your life.</p> <p>We will make sure you have all of the important things that support you with your identity including your birth certificate, passport and photos.</p>	December 2025	<p>Care experienced children and young people will have a better understanding of why they are looked after the way they are.</p> <p>They will understand the legal basis of them being looked after and their rights in relation to this.</p> <p>This will allow them to make sense of their circumstances and build resilience, self-esteem and self-identity.</p> <p>They will have a better understanding of their relationships with their families and why they have family time in the way that they do.</p> <p>When they are old enough to make their own decisions about family time they will be able to do this in an informed way.</p>

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
17	We need to make sure that our Looked After Children's Champions Board group and the Listen 2 Us group are the best they can be	We will make sure that we consult with your Champions Board Group and Listen2Us group as they can help us to understand what works best for you	March2026	There will be improved understanding from care experienced children and young people and those supporting them about the role of Looked After Champions.
		We will make sure that you, and all of our Looked after Children know about the Champions Board group and how it can help you.		This will encourage others to become involved and build on current capacity with an increase in the number of Looked After Champions.
		We will make sure that where possible, we take forward and implement/ evaluate any changes that the Champions Board Group share with us, and where we can't, we fully communicate this back and the reasons why.		Care experienced children and young people will feel an improved level of impact from this resource. This will encourage them to feel involved with other young people by building their sense of community. Young people will get the opportunity to get their voices heard through the Listen2Us group Young people who are involved in the Listen2Us group in local areas will represent young people on the Champions Board

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
18	We will make sure that you, and all of our Looked After and Care experienced children have access to the same opportunities that their peers do.	We will make sure that we make available to you opportunities for your development, learning, wellbeing and socialisation.	February 2026	This will enhance equity by widening opportunities and reduce the potential for our children and young people to feel stigmatised and increase their sense of involvement in their communities.
19	We need to continue the strong links between Dumfries and Galloway's Champions Board and Listen2Us Advocacy Group We need to develop stronger links between the Champions Board and the Youth Council	<p>We will ensure that you are represented on joint meetings or workshops where the Champion's Board and Listen2Us group members collaborate to share updates, discuss priorities and identified goals.</p> <p>We will establish a clear feedback mechanism for you to raise concerns and you will receive updates on how your input has been considered and/or addressed.</p> <p>We will celebrate successes and milestones together, recognising your contributions to decision-making and advocacy.</p> <p>We will work with Dumfries and Galloway's Youth Council to ensure that your ideas, views and opinions help to shape the work they do on behalf of young people they represent</p>	March 2026	<p>Improved relationships and trust between the Champions Board and Listen2Us Advocacy Group, leading to more cohesive and impactful decision making</p> <p>Young people feel their concerns are taken seriously and visibly acted upon, fostering empowerment and confidence</p> <p>Decisions better reflect the needs and priorities for young people</p> <p>Care Experienced young people's voices are considered within the work of the Youth Council</p>

Moving On/Transitions

We will work across our partnership in co-production with our care experienced young people so we can be confident that those moving on from care have an experience that is safe, loving and respectful.

Lead: Janet Drennan, Social Work Team Manager, Children and Families

Workstream Members: Stacey Kyle, Senior Social Worker; Holly Neil, Social Worker; Greg Cameron, Key Worker Coordinator, Employability, Skills and Partnerships, Joanne Weir, Team Leader Homeless

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
20	We know that transitions are a difficult time we will start planning with you as early as we can.	In your reviews we will start having conversations as early as 14 about the future.	Immediate	Reduction in the number of children and young people leaving care before they are ready. Young people feeling confident moving on. Young people will be aware that there is someone to support their transition, whenever they are ready to begin the process Young people will understand what support is available to them and how to access this as and when they feel they need it. Plans will be focussed on what our young people need. Young people will understand and make use of the grants that are available to them
		We will allocate you a worker from our Young People's Transitions Team before your 16th birthday so that you can get to know one another before any big changes happen.	Immediate	
		We will work with you alongside your parents/carers/support workers to create a plan of the things that you will need to know and do to prepare for adult life.	Immediate	
		If you are living out of the local area we will still support you but we might need to ask other people help us to think about what is available to you.	July 2025	

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
20		The plans that we use are being reviewed, a working group with young people is in progress to create plans that are meaningful.		<p>Young people will understand the housing options that are available to them and be able to make informed decisions about where they will live and how they will be supported.</p> <p>There will be a reduction in the number of tenancy breakdowns for our young people leaving care.</p>
21	We will make sure that there are different housing options available to you that suit your needs.	We will work with our local and national housing providers to ensure that our care leavers have priority access to housing	Immediate	<p>Young people will have the opportunity to meet with housing providers and have a better understanding of the process.</p> <p>We will work to reduce the number of care experienced/ looked after children and young people that are presenting as homeless.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of children and young people in temporary accommodation</p> <p>Children and young people leaving care will have the same scaffolding that other children have and a safety net to fall back on when they need it.</p>
		Housing protocol meetings will take place involving you so that you are fully involved in the housing application process.	Immediate	
		Whilst we would want you to be settled in a permanent home we will be involved in creating a new temporary supported housing for those that need it	June 2026	
		Look at what works in other areas to see what we could do better	May 2025	

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
22	We will make sure that you are able to keep in touch with people who are important to you	Where possible we will support you to source equipment to be able to keep in touch such as a phone. We will help you to maintain relationships with people who are important to you.	Immediate Immediate	Workers support young people to keep in touch with those important to them including siblings.
23	We will be in touch with you for as long as you want us to and make sure that you are updated on things that you are entitled to.	We will make information readily available so that you know what is happening and how to contact us if you move or change your number.	June 2025	Information will be accessible on council & partner's websites for young people to access.
		We will send you a newsletter 4 times a year	June 2025	Young people will have access to what is happening locally and nationally.
		We will hold drop-in sessions across the region where you can meet workers and other young people if you wish.	April 2025	Young People will have the opportunity to meet members of the team on an informal basis.
24	We will have a range of different education and training opportunities for you to access when the time is right for you.	We will work with other agencies to create work experience opportunities and programmes that suit you with people who are able to support you well.	August 2025 Immediate	Our young people will have a range of options to develop work experience and career development within their own communities.
		We know that getting around can be difficult we will look at ways to help you get to your place of work or training.		There will be employment opportunities within the council for our young people Young people under 22 currently have access to free bus travel

No	Priority	Activity	Timescales	Outcome Measures
25	We will provide help when you need it with your mental health.	We know that moving from children's services to adult services is difficult and that there are big differences in what they look like. We will offer support through our transitions mental health nurse to try and bridge the gap. Our nurse will be able to support you and help train our workers so that they have the right skills to help you when things are difficult.	Immediate	<p>Young people will have support for their mental health from the right people when they need it.</p> <p>Workers will feel confident in supporting young people through difficult times.</p>
26	Life after care can sometimes be lonely we will look at social opportunities for our Care Leavers to spend time with others.	We will help you find activities and opportunities to help build your confidence and meet people if you wish	June 2025	There will be opportunities for young people to meet with others if they wish to do so in a safe supported place.
		We will arrange activities at key points in the year such as Christmas and summer time which you can join in with.	Immediate	Young people open to the Young People's Transitions Team are invited to events at Christmas and in the Summer.

