



North Ayrshire  
**Children's Rights Report**  
2020/2023



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## Children's Rights Report 2020-23

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# North Ayrshire Children's Rights Report 2020-23

Our first priority in our new Children's Services Plan 2020-23, directly links to our commitment to promoting and protecting children and young people's rights. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 strengthens children's rights and places duties on local authorities, health boards and partner agencies.

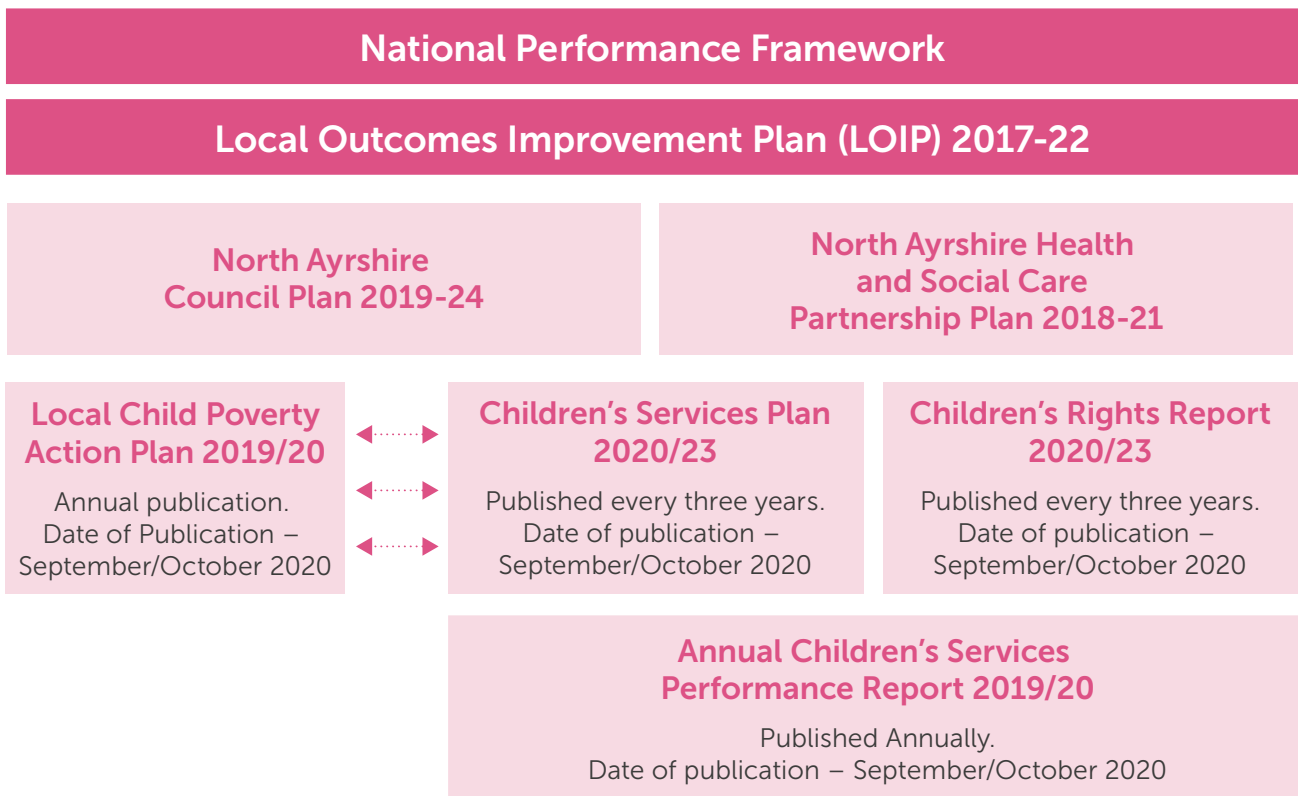
Our Children's Services Planning includes our Children's Rights Report and our Child Poverty Action Plan. They form our approach to giving Children and Young People in North Ayrshire the best start in life. - A representation of this can be seen in Figure 1 below.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a core international human rights instrument which was ratified by the UK Government in 1991.

The UNCRC articulates these fundamental rights within the framework of children's lives and experiences.

Children and young people have long been considered to require special attention in respect of their rights because of their particular vulnerabilities and their reliance on adults. Even though they are autonomous rights holders, children and young people are often dependent on others to give effect to their rights.

## Children's Services Planning 2020





Ensuring the rights, views and aspirations of children and young people are at the centre of everything we do



Children and young people have long been considered to require special attention in respect of their rights because of their particular vulnerabilities and their reliance on adults.

Children and young people:

- Have limited political and social power
- Are dependent on adults for food, shelter, clothing, care and protection
- Are subject to rules that do not apply to other population groups
- Are vulnerable to ill treatment, coercion and control by adults
- Are key users of public services, though not often asked to contribute to the planning, design, development, delivery and evaluation of those services
- Are often excluded from or unable to access effective complaints mechanisms when things go wrong

Children's rights cover every aspect of a child's or young person's life from birth up to the age of 18, and exist wherever the child is: at home, at school, in any institution, and in the community.

They recognise that children are key actors in their own development. They make it clear that children are *rights holders* whose ability to enjoy their rights can be impeded by attitudinal and structural barriers that need to be identified and changed.

## The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (UNCRC) is one of the core international human rights treaties – a universally agreed set of minimum standards setting out the range of rights children should enjoy.

The UNCRC sets out a holistic framework for the rights of all children. The different articles are interdependent – civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights all have equal status and are indivisible. Governments are expected to do all they can to implement the UNCRC – to make sure all law, policy and decisions which impact on children from birth to 18 comply with their human rights.

The general **measures** of the Convention include measures which give legal effect to the UNCRC, as well as 'non-legal measures' – for example, awareness raising, training, budgeting – or other processes that can be used to progress implementation of the Convention.

## The Rights of the Child in North Ayrshire

Article 1 of the UNCRC defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.



### What are the Rights of the Child?

Every child and young person under the age of 18 has rights, no matter who they are, where they live or what they believe in. Fundamental to those rights is the notion that children are entitled to expect appropriate care, protection and consideration from adults.

The UNCRC is based on four key principles –

- The best interests of the child should be the first consideration for actions that affect him or her
- All children have the right to life, survival and development
- All children have the right to participate
- All rights belong to all children without discrimination or exception

As a child-centred organisation, the UNCRC provides the Council with a platform to help us determine if we are improving and promoting the wellbeing of children.

The Convention Rights can also compliment the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators, which are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (SHANNARI).

The UNCRC has 54 Articles setting out the range of rights that children should enjoy. Following the Scottish Government model, 40 of these rights have been matched against the SHANNARI wellbeing indicators and these are outlined in Appendix 1.



### The Rights of the Child in North Ayrshire

**Definition of the child:**  
Article 1 of the UNCRC defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.



Our Vision is to create a North Ayrshire that is 'Fair for All' and we will do this through our mission of working together to improve well-being,

## Cluster 1: General measures of implementation

We are a Child Centred Council – children and young people are at the heart of everything we do. Work is ongoing across the Council to improve educational attainment and achievement, improve health and wellbeing outcomes, support parents and carers, reduce youth unemployment and ensure the participation of young people.

Our visions and aims reflect and promote the rights of the child. Through our Council Plan 2019-24, we are absolutely committed to supporting our young people and will do all we can to make sure the voices of children and young people are heard loud and clear. Everything we do is firmly centred on the well-being, hopes, dreams and ambitions of our children and young people.

Our Vision is to create a North Ayrshire that is 'Fair for All' and we will do this through our mission of working together

to improve well-being, prosperity and equity in North Ayrshire. Our priority is that our children and young people experience the best start in life.

The UNCRC Articles are used by all schools to underpin and build their Vision Values and Aims which in turn drives the curriculum.

## Child Centred Council

North Ayrshire Cabinet approved that North Ayrshire Council become a Child Centred Council in 2017. Resolutions include the importance of young people's voices, support for care-experienced young people and food security and work with the Children's Commissioner on equalities.

Additional commitments to supporting young people in North Ayrshire include our Children's Services Plan; our Fair for All equalities strategy pledges on child poverty, employment for care leavers, developmental milestones, raising attainment, fewer looked after young people and mental health; and our Joint Cabinet and extended youth participation structure, which is recognised as sector-leading.

Throughout 2018 young people used their participation and citizenship structures to feed into the Council's ambition to make North Ayrshire the best place for children to grow up and underline the Council's commitment to being a Child Centred Council.



The Year of Young People Ambassadors sat on the Council's Child Centred Council Working Group with elected members from all parties as equal contributors, seeking and representing young people's views and opinions.

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## Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessment (ECRIA)

Following a decision by the North Ayrshire Council Cabinet, we have now adopted a Children's Rights Impact Assessment process. This has been integrated into the Equality Impact Assessment process. New or adapted policies and procedures should be impact assessed using these tools. Details of our completed assessments are available [online](#).

The Children's rights element of the assessment is a tool for translating the UNCRC and specifically Article 3 (giving priority to children's best interests) into practice in a concrete and structured manner. To ensure all decisions made and affecting children must have the "best interests of the child" as the starting point.

The purpose of carrying out an ECRIA is to ensure that when developing policies, planning services or taking financial decisions we are not adversely affecting or discriminating against any of the different groups within the community and we are promoting equality and considering the needs in detail of our younger people. It is a tool to help us make sure our policies, and the way we carry out our functions, do what they are intended to do for everyone. This also ensures that the services provided fulfil the requirements of anti-discrimination equalities legislation and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.



The Council has a **statutory duty** to promote equality, and to assess the likely equalities impact of Council functions and policies on a range of stakeholders such as ethnic minority communities, disabled people, men and women, the gay, lesbian and transgender community, and religious communities.

All new policies and significant decisions of the Council, including those undergoing review, are subject to an ECRIA.

The ECRIA uses the UNCRC as its basis for the assessment process. In addition, the ECRIA process also considers the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and wellbeing for all children.

An initial screening should be carried out when considering a new or revised policy or another significant proposal to determine if a full ECRIA assessment is required. To make this easier this has been integrated into the wider Equality Impact Assessment tool.

The screening process asks you to consider the following points –

- What aspects will affect children and young people up to 18;
- What will the impact be – positive, negative, neutral. (If negative a full assessment should be carried out);
- Will some groups of children and young people be more affected than others (consider cross-cutting protected characteristics such as gender, ethnicity (race), disability, age (further breakdown by age), deprivation levels.

ECRIAs are carried out on a range of policies, procedures and strategies throughout the year. There is a particular focus on carrying out assessments

leading up to the Council's annual budget setting process.

Further details and completed assessments can be viewed on our website [here](#).

## Training

Children's rights training is arranged for Rights Respecting Schools (RRS) leads via a pan Ayrshire agreement with UNCRC RRS team. These leads then organise inhouse training in schools in line with the RRS guidance and assessment process.

As children's rights are at the heart of wellbeing and subsumed into the GIRFEC approach that underpins all our practice in terms of Child Protection, Additional Support Needs and Health and Wellbeing work. Schools and pupils are involved in the pupil participation in Scottish schools approach where pupil voice is a main theme (Article 12).

Our recovery strategy for Covid-19 will also be based on children's voice (Article 12), see section below for further details. This links into Nurturing North Ayrshire's Recovery (NNAR) where a series of 7 Professional learning packages have been prepared supporting returning to schools.





The Covid-19 pandemic has created a complex blend of changes and disruptions for children and young people to adjust to.



We also provide a comprehensive child protection training calendar which equips professionals to ensure that children are protected from violence and can recover from traumatic experiences. This includes training on children's rights, domestic abuse, trauma informed practice.

We held a Master Class training event with the Children's Commissioner Bruce Adams in September 2018. Delegates were a combination of Elected Members, Heads of Service, Youth Executive and practitioners that had Children's Rights in their remits. There was a focus on the key areas of Youth Advocacy, Leadership, Engagement, Policy Development and Culture Change. There was a presentation on our Child Centred Council approach and Quality Assurance. We were commended on our progress and the development of the integration of Children's Rights Impact Assessment with our Equality Impact Assessments.

Recognising and Realising Children's Rights Train the Trainer is a national training programme supported and endorsed by Education Scotland and Youth Link Scotland to ensure that practitioners are equipped to deliver Children's Rights training and to ensure that their practice is embedded in a rights-based approach. The training took place in October 2018 and we now have 12 staff working across all localities with this certification.

The Youth Work Lead Officer and young people from our Year of Young People Ambassadors delivered training to the Extended Leadership Team (ELT) in May 2018 on Recognising and Realising Children's Rights Training. This was part of the culture change approach to the Child Centred Council work and there were 18 participants. The result was an agreement of further regular updates to the ELT and Chief Officers Leadership Team, which resulted in several actions to ensure a Children's Rights approach is featured across council services. This training was continued to be delivered throughout 2018 and 2019 to Community Planning Partners and the Health and Social Care Partnership, a further 12 participants.

### **Equality and Equity in Recovery**

The Covid-19 pandemic has created a complex blend of changes and disruptions for children and young people to adjust to. We recognise that this could have a significant impact on children and young people, potentially affecting their wellbeing and ability to learn. Schools and Early Years Centres will consider how these changes may affect children and young people and what we can do to mitigate any negative impact.

In our recovery planning we will

- Ensure every child has the same opportunity to succeed through



Ensure increased needs for support as a consequence of disrupted learning, for example behavioural support as a result of increased distress

their blend of in-school and in-home learning,

- Ensure recovery planning mitigates against the potential for discriminatory practice either directly or indirectly against those with a protected characteristic.
  - Be mindful of closing the poverty related attainment gap which will have been exacerbated by the current crisis.
  - Prioritise learners at key points and/or with specific needs.
  - Consider the changing needs of children and young people after the prolonged period of remote learning and absence from school.
  - Promote reconnection and recovery within the curriculum through our nurturing North
  - Ayrshire's recovery programme (return recover respond refocus restart)
  - Implement an approach to digital learning that will mitigate negative impacts on equity. There will include a specific focus on providing digital access for pupils who do not have this at present.
  - Ensure special schools make the same considerations as primary and secondary schools in terms of the equipment and spaces to be used, for learning and teaching, and other support activities, including therapy provision, lunch provision, physical activity and break times.
- Ensure increased needs for support as a consequence of disrupted learning, for example behavioural support as a result of increased distress
  - Consider the needs of teaching and support staff in settings providing this support (including but not limited to Personal Protective Equipment).
  - Consider the need for increased numbers of appropriately trained staff and the identification of spaces in schools which can be used to support distressed children.
  - Consider the emotional, physical and mental health and wellbeing of learners.
  - Ensure support for leaders to work with the school community to explain local approaches and provide reassurance and support to learners and families.
  - Provide critical childcare for designated groups
  - Provide support in transition, for example from early learning into p1, or p7 to s1.
  - Provide commonality in education provision for whole families, where practicable, aligned across early years, primary and secondary.

## Children's Rights in Recovery Response

Given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children and young people, our schools will place children's rights at the heart of their response. The six articles relating to safeguarding, pupil voice, health, wellbeing, safety, play, learning and education will guide their thinking and shape their priorities during the recovery phase and beyond.

### All schools will require to:

- Be explicit about rights. This approach will reassure children, their families and carers and staff to know that an establishment's response is founded on the Convention.
- Be clear how coronavirus has impacted upon children's rights and that it is each school's duty (as a team) to address this.
- Be reassuring and optimistic. Keeping everything in perspective and draw out and share positives wherever possible.
- Be bold in quoting the UNCRC and asserting children's rights when advocating for children with local and national authorities

*And above all:*

- Be child-centred in their thinking, planning and communication. Schools should seek out and listen to children and young people's voices. We use the guidance on participation found [here](#).

### Impact assessment

The impact of school and early years closures has had a disproportionate impact on particular groups of children and young people and adults. We will ensure that the impacts experienced on different groups are considered as plans to re-open schools and early years settings progress.

Schools and early years centres will continue to work in partnership with their stakeholders, ensuring that they represent the interests of their communities and recognise and involve groups or individuals who may be disproportionately impacted.

Impact assessment being undertaken will consider children and young people and; support for adults (both workforce and parents, including any adult with primary care for a child).

Each group of people will be considered, where relevant, in the context of the following:

- The impact on persons with 'protected characteristics' (defined under the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- How to reduce inequalities of outcome as a result of socio-economic disadvantage.
- The rights children have under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) see above
- The impact on island communities of Arran and Cumbrae as applicable.

It is critical that education provision meets the specific needs of pupils with additional support needs and those with particular protected characteristics, including disabled pupils and pupils from minority ethnic communities who need support to overcome barriers to learning. A greater focus on online or digital learning has the potential to more greatly affect those who do not have the necessary technology available at home and these factors are also being mitigated for in our recovery planning.

# Cluster 2: General principles of the UNCRC

There are four guiding principles of the UNCRC: for rights to be applied without discrimination (Article 2); for the best interests of the child to be a primary consideration (Article 3); the right to life, survival and development (Article 6), and the right to express a view and have that view taken into account (Article 12).

This cluster deals with structures and resources to implement the UNCRC including legal and non-legal measures.

There is effective Curricular coverage of rights' education in PSE lessons and through Curriculum for Excellence Educational pathways from Early to 3rd and 4th level.

All schools use GIRFEC approaches to plan for wellbeing and additional support needs and the GIRFEC approaches draw on links with the UNCRC Articles.

Articles are flagged and celebrated in schools and annual UNCRC events are celebrated by schools e.g. The 30th anniversary of the UNCRC. Almost all schools are on their journey to Silver RRS Awards (becoming Rights Aware) and a few have achieved Gold status (Fully Rights Respecting) and have become Rights Ambassadors for others.

All policies and practices regarding children and young people, including those deemed vulnerable, take cognisance of Equalities legislation and the protected characteristics.

## Rights awareness in North Ayrshire Schools – Rights Respecting

The Gold: Rights Respecting Schools Award is the highest level of the award and is granted to schools that have fully embedded the principles of the

UNCRC into their ethos and curriculum. The accreditation is valid for a period of three years.

The following schools have achieved **GOLD** status:

- Beith Primary School, Primary
- Dalry Primary School, Primary
- Dykesmains Primary School, Primary
- Whitehirst Park Primary, Primary

The Silver: Rights Aware level is granted to schools that make good progress towards embedding the principles of the UNCRC into their ethos and curriculum.





A focus on inclusion and equality by our schools and centres ensures increasing opportunities are provided for those with protected characteristics.



The following schools have **SILVER** status:

- Ardrossan Academy, Secondary
- Brodick Primary School, Primary
- Corrie Primary School, Primary
- Dregghorn Primary School, Primary
- Elderbank Primary School, Primary
- Gateside Primary School, Primary
- Glebe Primary School, Primary
- Hayocks Primary School, Primary
- Kilmory Primary School, Primary
- Lawthorn Primary School, Primary
- Pirnmill Primary School, Primary
- Mayfield Primary School, Primary
- Shiskine Primary School, Primary
- St Anthony's Primary School, Primary
- St Bridget's Primary School, Primary
- St Luke's Primary School, Primary
- St Mary's Primary School, Primary
- St Winning's Primary School, Primary
- Whiting Bay Primary School, Primary

Rights education and the Rights Respecting Schools approach remain areas of success and strength. There is scope for more schools to move from silver to gold. Local annual pan-Ayrshire training is in place to encourage this to develop.

Our local authority Quality Assurance visits look at the journey each school has made in terms of strengthening the teaching of children's rights.

Overwhelmingly this approach is evident in all schools with success being shared through their social media platforms and via attractive school and classroom displays. Focus groups of children reveal that they are knowledgeable about their and others' rights. Increasingly children and young people are taking on elements of responsibility ensuring that all schools listen and involve pupils fully in decisions that affect them and their school community

A focus on inclusion and equality by our schools and centres ensures increasing opportunities are provided for those with protected characteristics.

### Year of Young People and Legacy Themes

In 2015 the Scottish Government announced the plans for 2018 to become Year of Young People. The aim was to give young people aged 8 to 26 new opportunities to influence decision making on issues affecting their lives and be involved in cultural and sporting opportunities across the country. Scottish Government then commissioned three youth organisations (Children in Scotland, Scottish Youth Parliament and Young Scot) to directly engage young people to co-design the shape the Year of Young People 2018 should take. Young Scot were also given the lead to recruit, support and



We proposed to establish a workstream to engage with a wide range of young people from across North Ayrshire to ensure that we have the right approaches and mechanisms in place to ensure their voices are heard.

provide training for YOYP Ambassadors. In North Ayrshire 17 young people applied and completed the training.

Final agreement was reached on the priority themes (based on wide ranging engagement).

One of the three main themes being **Young People's Voice and Rights**.

The key proposal was to refresh the "Step Up and Speak Out Youth Citizenship and Participation Strategy 2015 – 2019."

We proposed to establish a workstream to engage with a wide range of young people from across North Ayrshire to ensure that we have the right approaches and mechanisms in place to ensure their voices are heard.

The current Joint Cabinet approach was reviewed, and the contribution it makes to improving the overall agenda for young people. A paper was produced and passed by Cabinet to ensure the structures can be strengthened and conversations related to direct actions from the Council and its partner organisations.

### **Citizenship and Participation Structure and Strategy**

Our award-winning strategy (COSLA Gold award) created a road map to meaningful engagements and conversations with young people for all services across North

Ayrshire with a rights-based approach at the heart of it.

The refresh of the Youth Participation and Citizenship Strategy is currently underway and has direct links to how young people can be included in decision making council wide with a co-production and co delivery approach.


The consultation for the strategy has a key group of young people who have consulted with their peers widely on what they feel is important to them in having their voices heard. During the Covid-19 pandemic, this has been strengthened further with concentrated consultation on digital tools, accessibility and links to mental health wellbeing.

### **Right Here Right Now (MSYPs) Campaign 2017**

Our MSYPs carried out a year long campaign with Scottish Youth Parliament that ensured the rights of young people living in Scotland would be upheld, respected, and taken into account by our nation's decision-makers, and the Scottish Youth Parliament's campaign, *Right Here, Right Now*, fought to do just that.

This campaign was successful and the Scottish Government has since confirmed its intention to fully incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law by 2021.

local authorities have certain duties to provide additional support for children who without such support would be unable to benefit effectively from school education.



LOVE TO  
LEARN

SYP's 2016-21 youth manifesto, *Lead the Way*, which received more than 70,000 consultation responses, found that 76 percent agreed that:

*'The United National Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) should be fully incorporated into Scots law, and the rights of children and young people should be protected and promoted'.*

Furthermore, *Right Here, Right Now* called for Scotland's decision-makers to take a human rights-based approach to all policy-making, service provision, and planning, ensuring young people's voices are at the heart of decisions affecting them.

All reports and more information can be found [here](#).

### **Additional Support for Learning**

Some children need extra support to help them overcome barriers to learning. Under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, local authorities have certain duties to provide additional support for children who without such support would be unable to benefit effectively from school education.

The nature of that additional support should be tailored to the needs of the specific child.

The local authority has a key role in this provision, including to:

- identify additional support needs and respond to requests for assessment from parents
- provide relevant additional support
- monitor the needs and support provided.

Information on how to make a complaint is provided to parents, carers and pupils in their school handbooks and on our website.

We are aware of the national review of the implementation of additional support for learning (ASL) in schools. We will keep under review progress made nationally in response to the review and if appropriate, any changes that should be made to practice locally.





All of our activities and events are free and all create a safe environment for young people to engage with each other and their communities

## Cluster 3: Civil rights and freedoms

This cluster focuses on children's civil rights and freedoms including children's right to move freely in public space, to access information and to privacy.

As part of the Year of Young People legacy and the Health Foundation Inquiry work in 2018, one of our actions was to identify safe places for young people to engage with each other in communities, especially for those who cannot afford to pay for activities and this information should be promoted.

All of our activities and events are free and all create a safe environment for young people to engage with each other and their communities. The information on the groups are widely promoted through social media, schools, partner organisations and through our locality work. Through all of our localities there

are groups based on young people's needs and preferences and young people are consulted throughout the process on what safe spaces and groups that they want in their local area.

During the Covid-19 pandemic we have had to adapt the way that we deliver these activities and have moved to an online model with safe spaces for young people to meet in groups alongside our staff and sessional workers.

We have recently completed a survey of young people to ask about their mental health and wellbeing during and post the Covid-19 lockdown period. The findings from this report will shape our future

services and group work delivery post lockdown. The survey was co-created with young people and the findings will be available to widely share with our partners.

Since the Health Foundation report in 2018, the majority of our Youth Services team have been on mental health training and in particular suicide prevention training. All of our sessional staff and core staff have access to an in-depth training calendar that includes this training, and it is expected that all staff should complete this training.

We also create spaces for young people to lead on projects and activities that create safe environments for young people to enable them to open up and feel safe in doing so in addition to our core group work.

This includes:

- Joint Cabinet
- Youth Councils
- Youth Forums and Executive Youth Council
- Expect Respect Sessions (cohesion and suicide prevention group work sessions)
- Creation of 13 Ways Suicide Prevention Campaign.

## Data Protection

All personal information is held and processed by North Ayrshire Council in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

Under Data Protection legislation, individuals have the right to request access to information about them that the Council holds. Further details can be found [here](#).

Individuals also have the right to:


- object to processing of personal data that is likely to cause, or is causing, damage or distress
- prevent processing for the purpose of direct marketing
- object to decisions being taken by automated means
- in certain circumstances, have inaccurate personal data rectified, blocked, erased or destroyed
- in certain circumstances, transfer their data to another organisation (data portability)

Our data sharing and handling and privacy statements are published in all school handbooks and on our website.

We publish a range of information, reports and documents in in various formats and produce child friendly versions and summaries where appropriate. Some of our Services use social media to actively engage with our children and young people.



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We promote a child centred approach as much as possible to ensure children and young people's views are taken into account.

## Cluster 4: Violence against children

This cluster focuses on violence against children including abuse and neglect and the right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Our processes support and promote children and young people to recover from violence including abuse, neglect, maltreatment and exploitation.

Our Child Protection Committee works to reduce vulnerability and promote, support and safeguard well-being by nurturing children at all stages of their lifespan, from pre-birth to adulthood, providing additional support where required in specific circumstances when in need of protection and within the changing legislative and policy landscape.

We promote a child centred approach as much as possible to ensure children and young people's views are taken into

account. We offer advocacy support from Children 1st when children are placed on the Child Protection register.

To support children and young people in recovering from their experiences there are a range of services offered from agencies such as Break the Silence (although this is limited to young people aged 13 and over who have experienced sexual abuse), North Ayrshire Women's Aid, Barnardos and Children 1st. Within the partnership there is also support available from the Charlie Project, The Young Person's Support Team and the Rosemount Project. There is also the school counselling service offered in secondary schools.

During 2018/19, North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee initiated a Short Life Working group to take forward a qualitative piece of work on children's experiences of child protection processes. Eight young people were asked in some detail about their experiences, with the support of the Rosemount Project and the Children 1st child protection advocacy support service. A report was completed which analysed and made recommendations from the feedback collated from the young people.

### Positive Relationships

All of our schools are committed to developing a nurturing approach and promoting positive relationships. Like all communities, schools are built on the relationships within it, across it and its connections with others. Every member of staff is responsible for establishing and maintaining positive relationships with each other, with parents and with partners and most importantly with the young people in our care.

Our expectations of behaviour for children and young people are high. Some children may require additional support in relation to their behaviour, and schools will work positively with the young person and the parents, and other partners, as appropriate, to ensure positive outcomes are achieved.

We are committed to the principles of restorative practices. This is a solution-focused approach to managing behaviour and resolving difficulties and promotes healthy relationships that enable better behaviour and better learning.

All schools have a carefully devised and constructed policy for maintaining good discipline in schools.

We encourage children and young people to show positive attitudes to staff, parents and each other while improving their own self esteem. All staff and pupils are committed to promoting positive behaviour and relationships and we have systems of Rewards and Incentives in operation. Pupils are motivated and stimulated by these and every opportunity is taken to celebrate success and offer encouragement to all pupils to be the best they can be.



We are committed to the principles of restorative practices. This is a solution-focused approach to managing behaviour and resolving difficulties and promotes healthy relationships that enable better behaviour and better learning.





The Champions Board is the way that we bring young people together and reflect their views back to the Corporate Parenting Steering Group via the teams update report. We also hold consultation events.

## Cluster 5: Family environment and alternative care

This cluster focuses on the family environment, the right of children to be well cared for if they live apart from their parents, and the right to be protected from all forms of violence and abuse.

We are aware of the publication of the Independent Care Review Report in February 2020. We will keep under review progress made nationally in response to those findings and if appropriate, any changes that should be made to practice locally.

### Champions Board

In North Ayrshire we have a **Champions Board** made up of young people who are all care experienced aged between 15 and 22 who come together weekly and look for ways to change the care system as well as producing tools and advice for their care experienced community.

The Board is supported by the North Ayrshire Corporate Parenting Team. The Champions Board is the way that we bring young people together and reflect their views back to the Corporate Parenting Steering Group via the teams update report. We also hold consultation events.

We held a peer research event called **Who am I?** that was organised by the Champions Board and North Ayrshire Youth Work modern apprentices, where the voices of Care Experienced young people and professionals came together to discuss the language, stigma and behaviours this community experience and to make recommendations for change.

This resulted in 7 recommendations that the Champions Board supported by the Corporate Parenting Team are taking forward.

**Monthly Children's House meetings** are attended by members of the Corporate Parenting Team, acting to empower the voice of the young people if needed. Issues and changes are fed back to House Managers and Senior Management if needed.

**Get Connected, KA Leisure and Sportswear Grants** are administered by the Champions Board with the support of the Corporate Parenting Team that assists in this community to have the right to access sports and leisure and to have the technology to connect to peers, family and friends.

## Corporate Parenting

As Corporate Parents we are responsible for looking out for our children in the same way as other parents do, helping our children and young people to grow up to be happy, healthy and achieving in life.

Corporate parenting involves us making sure children's rights are protected. This includes caring about how children and young people grow up physically, spiritually and socially, and about education attainment.

We listen to what children and young people say about their lives and the support given. We spend time getting to know our children and young people to better understand their needs. Children and young people have regular time with members of the care team to talk about things.

We provide information which will explain why children and young people are in care. Lead Professionals make sure that the views of children and young people are listened to, taken seriously and recorded. As such, ensuring that children and young people are appropriately included in all the decisions that affect them.

Our care teams ensure that there are plans in place when children and young people move on into independent living when the time is right. Our care teams work with children and young people to make the best use of their skills, and help to take on new challenges and opportunities of work and further study. If children and young people are still looked after at 16, there is access to Throughcare support which can support young people up to the age of 26. We provide allocated support to help young people go on to higher or further education, training or work.

We work to help build strong circles of support around children and families, including developing mechanisms to identify and support young carers at the earliest stage



Children and young people who are looked after in Children's Houses have complaints procedures explained to them, are made aware that they can make a verbal or written complaint and are told how it will be dealt with. Paperwork is in place to capture complaints and any suggestions. Advocacy is provided if the young person wants this.

Our Children's Houses have admission guidance booklets for children and young people and this explains that we are committed to children's rights.

Every child and young person has an individual care plan. All of our behaviour support procedures are positive and emphasise the need for understanding behaviours. We are committed to nurture principles and all our staff members are trained in nurturing approaches. We hold regular training sessions for staff.

All children and young people who are admitted to Children's Houses have a say in the review of their placements. Advocacy workers can speak on behalf of children and young people during review meetings if they do not want to speak themselves. Children and young people are involved in all decisions that affect them including choosing their own clothing, food, activities and how their bedrooms are decorated.

As part of Corporate Parenting, the Champions Board has worked with KA Leisure to implement free entry for looked after children and young people. There are regular meetings with other corporate parents.

**Our Senior Management Teams are aware of their responsibilities as corporate parents.** This is carried out through the Corporate Parenting Steering Group where part of the remit

of the group is for individual Corporate Parents to report on their activities and responsibilities. Updates are also provided to the Children's Services Strategic Partnership by the Corporate Parenting Manager. We also produce an annual report for elected members and elected members were recently briefed at the Health and Social Care Partnership Elected Members briefing. The Corporate Parenting Plan was presented at the Integration Joint Board (IJB), full Council and the Health Board.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic we had arranged further briefings to Senior Managers at the IJB, Extended Partnership Senior Management Team and the North Ayrshire Leadership Conference.

How children and young people are involved in the decisions making processes – The Champions Board is the way that we bring young people together and reflect their views back to the Corporate Parenting Steering Group via the teams update report. We also hold consultation events.



All children and young people who are admitted to Children's Houses have a say in the review of their placements. Advocacy workers can speak on behalf of children and young people during review meetings

## Young Carers

North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Carers Team are responsible for ensuring young carers rights are promoted, young carers voices are heard and that we meet our duties under the Carer (Scotland) Act 2016.

In North Ayrshire young carers are supported by Unity who provide information/advice, emotional support via either one-one or group support, outreach within local communities and schools, social and seasonal activities as well as family breaks from caring.

Our young carers are identified across all Council, Health and third sector services and offered a Young Carer Statement. It is completed by having a conversation with their Head Teacher (Primary) or Guidance staff (Secondary) if they are still in school and 18 years or under. For young carers not in school (16-18 years) the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) will support the young carer to identify individual needs and what matters to them as a young carer.

All young carers are asked for a carer card to help identify them as young carers in school, with health professionals and in their local community. The Carer Team designed and produced this with our young carers and extended the card to offer discounts and concessions from a number of local businesses including KA Leisure, Premier Leisure (Cinema), Rainbow Arts & Crafts, Shells & Scoops Ice Cream Parlour, Irvine Cycles and many more. We also promote the Young Scot Card which has a special range of opportunities for young carers.

We help young carers to access the right local and national information/ advice/ support and learning at the right time on our 24/7 Digital Resource, purchased from Carers UK. This online resource is customised to bring together all young carer digital products and resources to help find specific information, build support networks and help them manage their care more effectively through the free Jointly app which is part of the resource.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Carers Team began working with Education, Unity and the Family Learning Team to extend the range and reach of initiatives, interventions and programmes to include young carers and their families. The idea is to enhance family engagement in learning, increase confidence, find alternative peer support networks, have their voices heard and provide a space to socialise together.

Another focus for the Carers Team is working with the Additional Support Needs schools and a member of the Family Learning Team to look at further involvement in family events and engagement with young people, staff and families.





## Housing

The Housing Advice Team carry out office based interviews within Galt House, Irvine with families who have a need for Housing Options or Homelessness Assistance.

Staff are trained to identify concerns regarding the welfare of children during the interviews. Staff may visually be concerned by the child's appearance or by the way they are treated. Parents who do not bring their children to the interview may say something that raises concerns for their welfare. If staff are concerned regarding a child or children they will complete a Child Protection Referral and make telephone contact with Reception Services or existing Social Workers. Staff have read only access to Care First which allows them to check involvement and any concerns or risks that are known to Social Services.

All staff take part in child protection training including e-learning and receive CP bulletins/ updates.

Staff attend multi-agency meetings and provide a chronology of contacts with the family. They will liaise with other services and also refer to other supports where required.

Families who are homeless or threatened with homelessness are referred to relevant professionals.

Staff provide advice/assistance to parents regarding Housing Options including prevention of homelessness and strive to attain the best outcome to meet the needs of the household. This includes providing assistance to prevent homelessness occurring therefore avoiding the child(ren) being uprooted from their home with the potential of being accommodation in temporary accommodation.

## Positive about parenting

We want everyone in a parenting role in North Ayrshire to feel supported. Caring for a child can be rewarding but sometimes it may be challenging. We help to identify the right parenting support for those who need it.

Our [Positive Family Partnership Strategy \(PDF, 556kb\)](#) contains information on how we to help all families in becoming confident and supportive.



We want everyone in a parenting role in North Ayrshire to feel supported. Caring for a child can be rewarding but sometimes it may be challenging.





We provide high quality early learning and childcare that benefits all children and their parents and carers.



## Cluster 6: Basic Health and welfare

This cluster focuses on the health and welfare of all children and the consideration of disabled children's rights.

We provide high quality early learning and childcare that benefits all children and their parents and carers. We are creating indoor and outdoor learning environments that are fit for purpose and are equipped to deliver the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to 1140 hours.

Our early learning and childcare settings offer stimulating and innovative environments to ensure children receive the best start in their learning and development. Environments also support emotional wellbeing. Early learning centres are at the heart of communities and engage parents in their children's learning and development.

We offer a range of family learning opportunities available our Programmes of Intervention menus and our Family Learning Team has strong links and relationships with schools, families, communities, parent/family volunteers

and relevant partners to enhance the provision of family learning.

We are continuing to strengthen staff capacity, wellbeing and confidence through a comprehensive programme of professional learning (including Safe Talk, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, Mental Health First Aid). We are working to improve approaches to tracking and monitoring children and young people's health and wellbeing.

We have a range of approaches and structures that support children's resilience, wellbeing, and reduce stigma associated with mental health.

The impact of Covid-19 on children and young people's mental and wellbeing will be key focus in terms of our recovery planning.



Our school meals are nutritious and of a high standard. Menus are free from GM ingredients and undesirable additives, with at least 15% organic ingredients, including vegetables, dry goods and milk.

We provide free school meals and £100 (per child) worth of school footwear and clothing to children whose parents are on certain benefits. Our school meals are nutritious and of a high standard. Menus are free from GM ingredients and undesirable additives, with at least 15% organic ingredients, including vegetables, dry goods and milk.


We are proud to have achieved the Gold Standard award from the [Scottish Soil Association Food for Life Scotland programme](#).

As part of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we set up multiple catering hubs to support the free school meals and community food provision, run by our Facilities Management team with deliveries undertaken by staff redeployed from other services. Contact details for registration for free school meals were widely promoted on local and social media, in schools, by teaching and support staff and by Community Hubs. Education staff made personal contact with families who did not sign up to encourage registration. Food packs contained fresh ingredients to encourage food preparation and healthy eating and were intended to supplement the food requirements of the whole family rather than only meeting the needs of eligible children.

Free school meals vouchers are being provided over holiday periods. Elected Members approved the voucher scheme at a meeting of Cabinet on Tuesday 30 June. The food vouchers will be worth £20 per week – £4 per day – and can be used in a variety of stores.

All Children are universally offered assessments as per the National Health Visiting Pathway. Any additional health care needs are identified with referral made to most relevant services to meet the needs of the child and their family. Team around the Child processes are in place to ensure effective care planning and communication for all involved with the child/ family, including Speech and Language, Early Years Establishments.

The Health Visitors initiate transition plans when the child is due to attend primary school and involve School Nurses to ensure smooth transition of care, this includes the identification of training required for education staff. This also includes the delivery of training for services to meet the needs of children and young people who have long term conditions



Our teaching in schools takes account of individual pupils' pace of learning.

## Cluster 7: Education, leisure and culture

This cluster focuses on the right of all children to have a right to an education that will help them achieve their potential without discrimination.

### Education

In North Ayrshire educational provision is open to all pupils, regardless of sex, age, religion, race, disability or any other potential barrier and all reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that the curriculum is available to every child.

Schools also have a duty to promote equality and to eliminate racist and other discriminatory behaviours. The Equality Act 2010 aims to tackle inequality and prevent discrimination against people on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. That Act also introduced a new single public sector equality duty, which requires public bodies to actively advance equality

(how the Council assesses equality impact is addressed earlier in this report). The duties set out in Part 6 Chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010 apply to all schools. These provisions protect pupils at the school and in the case of admissions, those applying or wishing to apply for admission.

Our teaching in schools takes account of individual pupils' pace of learning with core, revision and progression material available to ensure learners can progress at a pace and to a level suited to his or her ability. Pupils experiencing barriers to learning receive the support and assistance of specialist Support for Learning staff.

We have a clear and visible anti-bullying policy in our schools called 'It's Never Acceptable'.

Progress towards 'challenging gender stereotyping in career choices and promotion of 'non-traditional career roles, e.g. through STEM and Early Years career pathways.

We ensure that our young disabled people have access to work experience placements and vocational educational experiences.

There are numerous examples of children and young people becoming involved in the decision making process through Pupil Councils, Pupils on Curricular Boards of Studies and in a few cases on Community Planning Groups.

Our counselling, educational support services and Pastoral Care arrangements are all predicated on the need to involve children and young people in the decision making process to plan with them to sustain positive destinations and support them to thrive and meet their fullest potential.

## Active Schools

The Active Schools programme aims to provide more and higher quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity:

- before school
- during lunchtime
- after school

The team consult with young people to identify needs and wants on types of sports and physical activity opportunities on offer. They then work with schools staff, volunteers and students to provide these opportunities.

Active Schools also looks to develop effective pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community. Active Schools has worked with schools for over 15 years providing opportunities for children and young people to become involved and stay involved in sport. It will continue to make a significant contribution to a world class sporting system in Scotland.

## North Ayrshire Sports Academy and Leadership Forum

North Ayrshire Sports Academy (NASA) is a sports coach education and training programme in sport and physical activity. It provides an opportunity for over 50 young people to become qualified leaders in Sport. The course provides training and mentoring opportunities with qualifications and awards delivered by sport's governing body approved tutors as well as the Active School Team.

NASA enables participants to boost their CV and gain valuable experience as well as developing life skills such as confidence, communication, leadership, time management and organisation skills. The programme is a year long course and runs throughout the Academic year. By the end of the course the young people's portfolio is populated with up to 22 leadership awards, coaching and generic qualifications.

The young people involved in this programme volunteer in a variety of capacities. Some of these include

- Delivering sessions to younger pupils at breakfast, lunch and after school clubs in your own school or local community,
- Helping to deliver Active Schools events,
- Officiating at festivals and tournament,

- Supporting local clubs in their delivery
- Promoting sport across their school cluster and the wider community.

Active Schools has a Leadership Pathway from P6- S6. Young people not only have the opportunity to be part of our pathway as a participant but also to help shape each of the different stages. The Leadership Forum was established last year and is made up of North Ayrshire Sports Academy pupils, S3/S4 leaders and Young Ambassadors. The group has representatives from all 9 Secondary schools. The Forum also work with the Scottish Institute of Sport to evaluate our leadership work and make sure the programme content is correct and shapes our young people and prepares them for the world of work.

### Events programme

Active Schools produce two events calendars per year – Primary and Secondary. This is a joint venture with KA Leisure. The events we run across the year are both competitive and non-competitive which allows our children and young people to take part and enjoy sport at the level that's suitable for their development. The range of sports we offer links with local, regional and even national competitions which makes sure our young people can progress in any given sporting field.

### DrEAM

DrEAM (Drop Everything and Move) is a North Ayrshire campaign to encourage people to have fun, whilst living a healthier and more active life. Active Schools work directly with young people and schools to either introduce new activities or enhance current provision. We work in collaboration with various partners to support this work and allow more opportunities to be created and tailored for the young people of North Ayrshire.

### Equipped Playparks

The vision for equipped playparks is: 'To improve the quality of life for all children and young people in North Ayrshire through high quality playpark provision.'

Children's play is recognised as being essential to healthy, happy lives and is fundamental to learning and development. More play, more fun, more often. There are currently 104 playparks provided, inspected and maintained by the Council. There has been significant investment in playpark equipment in recent years which has resulted in high quality playpark provision.

However, there are a minority of playparks which are rarely used, have a small number of pieces of equipment and suffer from location, in some cases by being closely located to larger, more popular, high quality playparks. It is therefore planned to reduce the number of playparks to ensure all provided playparks are high quality and in appropriate locations.



Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is an evidence-based programme aimed at improving the outcomes for young people aged 11- 18.

## Cluster 8: Special protection measures

This cluster focuses on groups of vulnerable and marginalised children who require special protection.

### Functional Family Therapy

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is an evidence-based programme aimed at improving the outcomes for young people aged 11- 18. It is a family based intensive intervention programme that builds on the existing strengths within family relationships. The programme works with some of the most vulnerable young people including those who are demonstrating significant behavioural difficulties, involvement in offending, violent behaviour and substance misuse.

FFT has been available to North Ayrshire since January 2019 with around 30 referrals per year. The current agreement is that FFT will continue to be available

until at least March 31st, 2022. This will give a good opportunity to understand the positive impact of the Service at a local level.

FFT interventions range from 12 to 30 sessions over a three to five-month period. The intensity and duration are dependent on the levels of risk that the young person is deemed to be exposed to. There are 5 key phases of intervention: engagement, motivation, relational assessment, behaviour change and generalisation.

The FFT Ayrshire Lead provides quarterly evaluation and progress reports detailing the impact of the service.

## Programmes Approach Team

Programmes Approach Team (PAT) is a youth justice service adopting a whole systems approach to reduce the number of under 18s referred to courts, reduce the number of under 21s in custody, reduce offending and prevent reoffending. The team works with young people aged 12 to 21 years old who display problematic behaviour, including offending or sexually harmful behaviours. The team aims to promote social inclusion where young people learn how to reflect on how their actions affect others, take responsibility for their actions and make positive choices for the future.

## Rosemount

The Rosemount Project is a crisis intervention and intensive support service designed to prevent children and young people from being accommodated. The service provides immediate support to vulnerable children, young people, families and carers who are assessed as high level of need and risk. The team deliver a high quality, responsive and personalised service to maintain children and young people at home with their families/ carers and within their communities. A solution focused and whole family approach is implemented to avert family breakdown with the delivery of intensive support packages to meet the unique needs of children, young people and their parents or carers. Support is also provided to children and young people who have been accommodated to assist their return to the family home. The age range for the service is 8 to 16 years of age and the team can provide daily contact and support out with regular working hours including evenings and weekends.

Staff work in partnership with the Lead Professional and other agencies and services such as Education to support and empower children young people and their parents/ carers. The young people/ families referred to the service have a combination of issues including, mental health, alcohol/substance use, relationship difficulties, sexual exploitation, offending behaviour, etc.

To assess the impact of the service the team use a tool called the Rickter Scale in their work which is a person centered assessment solution for working with service users. The Rickter Scale helps staff and young people to measure soft outcomes, progress made and impact, whilst giving individuals a meaningful experience that provides ownership and choice.

Using the Rickter Scale helps demonstrate accountability and transparency whilst giving young people the confidence to take steps towards positive life changes.

Young people and families are encouraged to have their say throughout their involvement with Rosemount to enable ongoing service improvement and development. There is an identified staff member within the team who has responsibility for following up on all cases that are closed to obtain feedback on the impact of the service.



## **Children Harmed by Alcohol Toolkit (CHAT) Training**

The Alcohol and Drug Partnership invested in staff training and development by funding CHAT training sessions which took place through several cohorts during 2019. These sessions were attended by 44 Health and Social Care staff members with representation from Universal Early Years, Fieldwork Locality Teams, Children's Houses, Kinship Team, Rosemount Crisis Intervention Team.

A follow up evaluation of the training will be undertaken to establish how the training has been embedded in practice and the subsequent impact on children, young people and families. Alcohol Focus Scotland will support this evaluation.

## **Syrian Refugee Co-ordinator**

Initially, North Ayrshire agreed to support and provide safety to 100 Syrian Refugees (roughly 20 families) under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme within a 5-year period. That aim was achieved within a two-year period allowing us to increase the support to a further 100 people over the next 5 years. Families are met as they arrive at the airport in Scotland and the team are aware of their medical needs prior to arrival. A multi-disciplinary team offers access to housing, education, health services, benefits and recreational activities in the community. The Police meet with each family and explain the differences in legislation. Finances available to Refugee families decrease over the 5-year period so the team support the family to build their independence over this time. If it is unsafe for families to return after the 5-year period they must apply for 'Leave to Stay' 4 weeks prior to the expiry of their Refugee status. The team will signpost

families to legal services to allow them to progress this of their own accord. The team link with Universal Services to support families as appropriate and may choose to refer to the family for Children and Families support.

The numbers of migrant children are not set but the number of families and those involved is agreed by the Council. So far, 201 people on the Syrian VPR programme have been settled within the North Ayrshire area with a further 30 due to do so in 2020/21 – however this is all on hold at this time. We carry out pre and post arrival assessments of all individuals including children and young people to ensure any required service is identified and appropriate referrals made, for example, NHS referrals or to services such as counselling, With Kids, or to other third sector organisations such as Barnardo's.

Each child will be assessed, and services offered as and when required and depending on the needs of individual children. The Refugee Support Team works with families for a period of five years therefore this is an ongoing approach throughout that time. We also work in a multi-disciplinary manner to offer any support required.

Should a child or young person enter the criminal justice system, the support would be tailored to the needs of that individual although the team would also liaise with judicial services, Police Scotland and anyone else working with the young person such as Locality Children and Families Team/ Programmes Approach Team.

Our Child Poverty Action Plan contains a variety of actions to improve the lives of children, young people and their families.



## Areas for Improvement

What next steps or actions do we need to take.

We will continue to implement UNCRC training for our staff in schools and other relevant teams.

We are developing a new online module for ECRIA training for relevant staff. This will be launched later in 2020.

We will continue to work across the Community Planning Partnership to ensure Children's Rights are given due regard in partner organisations.

A programme of Children's Rights Training will be established across all localities, as part of the Leadership Collective Training. This is currently being scoped out in terms of e-learning modules with Youthlink.

The refresh of the Citizenship and participation strategy which has been developed from a rights perspective, will contain statements of actions including how we continue to ensure Children

and Young People Rights are realised and promoted.

Our Child Poverty Action Plan contains a variety of actions to improve the lives of children, young people and their families. We will continue to ensure that children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.

We will work to further develop and sustain the empowerment of children and young people in order they:

- learn about their right to participate voluntarily in decision making
- be enabled to participate through a variety of ways of expressing their views
- have a say in shaping educational provisions in their setting and beyond
- learn through participating in decisions within a wide variety of educational



We will ensure that all Education Policies and Practices reflect Equalities legislation through the regular use Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessments.

activities and processes leading to meaningful impacts and outcomes

- be involved and become effective contributors.

We will ensure that all Education Policies and Practices reflect Equalities legislation through the regular use Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessments.

Our schools and early years settings will use the Learner Participation Strategy and will use the following challenge questions when planning their strategy:

- To what extent do we have a shared understanding of what learner participation involves?
- Do the values and practices within our setting, respectfully include children and young people in active participation?
- How well do we embed participation in each of the 4 arenas of learning including: learning, teaching and assessment; personal achievement; decision making groups and wider community?
- Do we recognise the impact and benefits that embedding learner participation in our setting can bring –

in areas such as learning and teaching, attainment, relationships and culture and ethos?

- How ready are we to fully develop and embed learner participation in our setting?

Ensure that schools use [7 Golden Rules](#) (on CYPICS website) helping schools to develop authentic participation.



Do we recognise the impact and benefits that embedding learner participation in our setting can bring – in areas such as learning and teaching, attainment, relationships and culture and ethos?



We will work to increase the proportion of children's views recorded in social work documents and ensure that workers are considering the child's experiences



## Children's Rights and Recovery from Covid-19

The UNCRC is a powerful tool to support school improvement. Given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children and young people, we will place children's rights at the heart of our response.

The six articles relate to safeguarding, pupil voice, health, wellbeing, safety, play, learning and education will be essential to our recovery planning. (Articles 12, 24, 19, 28, 29, 31)

Schools and establishments will require to be

- **explicit about rights.** This will reassure children, their families and carers and colleagues to know that the authority response is founded on the Convention.
- **clear how coronavirus has impacted upon children's rights** and recognise that it is our duty (as an educational team) to address these impacts.
- **reassuring and optimistic.** NAC staff will keep everything in perspective and draw out and share positives wherever possible.
- **bold in quoting the UNCRC and asserting children's rights** when advocating for our children.
- **child-centred in our thinking, planning and communication.** Seek out, listen and respond to children and young people's voices.

## Other Areas for Improvement

A recent piece of qualitative evaluation work highlighted gaps in relation to our approach to Advocacy Services from Children 1st, when children are placed on the Child Protection register. A workstream is taking this work forward.

Due to the numbers of children on the CP register, there was also a long waiting list for the advocacy support service and children and young people were not receiving the support quickly enough.

- We will work to increase the proportion **of children's views recorded in social work** documents and ensure that workers are considering the child's experiences – regardless of their age and needs, so that this isn't always just interpreted verbally.
- Our **Child Protection Committee** will continue to focus on working in partnership with young people in taking forward child protection improvements as a priority. We remain committed to the focused drive to protect children and young people from harm, and a newly developed emphasis on outcomes will ensure that there is meaningful monitoring and scrutiny of the ways in which we are addressing the protection of children in North Ayrshire and making a meaningful impact.



In the event of family breakdown, it may help identify extended family who are able to support and look after a child or young person to prevent them being accommodated.

- We have plans in place to restructure our **Joint Cabinet** and improve the ways that these are carried out. This includes consulting with young people.
- Our **Participation Strategy** is currently being refreshed and will strengthen links to UNCRC and concentrate on the Year of Young People legacy, mental health and wellbeing and connecting digitally as part of this.
- We will continue to support schools to move from Silver to **Gold level** in the **Rights Respecting Schools** approach.

We will review our complaints procedures and develop information to ensure children and young person are aware of how to make a complaint.

- The **Rosemount** Team Manager/ staff will be focusing on
- better use of the information including the feedback from young people/ families to inform service development.
- Training and information events with Children's Panel Members to increase their knowledge of the service.
- Team members will be expected to compile a genogram detailing a pictorial display of a young person's family relationships, history and psychological factors that have impacted on family relationships. The process will focus on family strengths and resilience

and will help staff understand the key people and relationships in a child/ young person's life. In the event of family breakdown, it may help identify extended family who are able to support and look after a child or young person to prevent them being accommodated.

- A referral pathway will be drawn up between Rosemount and Functional Family Therapy to prevent duplication and that Functional Family Therapy is considered as an exit route for children, young people and their families.



As part of the development of this Plan our subgroups and workstreams will be reviewed by the CSSP and identify the best ways to support our aims and priorities.

# Appendix 2

We want our children and young people to know their rights. In the summary below Governments also refer to North Ayrshire Council.

## 1. Definition of a child

A child is any person under the age of 18.

## 2. No discrimination

All children have all these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what language they speak, what their religion is, what they think, what they look like, if they are a boy or girl, if they have a disability, if they are rich or poor, and no matter who their parents or families are or what their parents or families believe or do. No child should be treated unfairly for any reason.

## 3. Best interests of the child

When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for children. Governments should make sure children are protected and looked after by their parents, or by other people when this is needed. Governments should make sure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job.

## 4. Making rights real

Governments must do all they can to make sure that every child in their countries can enjoy all the rights in this Convention.

## 5. Family guidance as children develop

Governments should let families and communities guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way. The more children grow, the less guidance they will need.

## 6. Life survival and development

Every child has the right to be alive. Governments must make sure that children survive and develop in the best possible way.

## 7. Name and nationality

Children must be registered when they are born and given a name which is officially recognized by the government. Children must have a nationality (belong to a country). Whenever possible, children should know their parents and be looked after by them.

## 8. Identity

Children have the right to their own identity – an official record of who they are which includes their name, nationality and family relations. No one should take this away from them, but if this happens, governments must help children to quickly get their identity back.

## 9. Keeping families together

Children should not be separated from their parents unless they are not being properly looked after – for example, if a parent hurts or does not take care of a child. Children whose parents don't live together should stay in contact with both parents unless this might harm the child.

## **10. Contact with parents across countries**

If a child lives in a different country than their parents, governments must let the child and parents travel so that they can stay in contact and be together.

## **11. Protection from kidnapping**

Governments must stop children being taken out of the country when this is against the law – for example, being kidnapped by someone or held abroad by a parent when the other parent does not agree.

## **12. Respect for children's views**

Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children seriously.

## **13. Sharing thoughts freely**

Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms other people.

## **14. Freedom of thought and religion**

Children can choose their own thoughts, opinions and religion, but this should not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents can guide children so that as they grow up, they learn to properly use this right.

## **15. Setting up or joining groups**

Children can join or set up groups or organisations, and they can meet with others, as long as this does not harm other people.

## **16. Protection of privacy**

Every child has the right to privacy. The law must protect children's privacy, family, home, communications and reputation (or good name) from any attack.

## **17. Access to information**

Children have the right to get information from the Internet, radio, television, newspapers, books and other sources. Adults should make sure the information they are getting is not harmful. Governments should encourage the media to share information from lots of different sources, in languages that all children can understand.

## **18. Responsibility of parents**

Parents are the main people responsible for bringing up a child. When the child does not have any parents, another adult will have this responsibility and they are called a "guardian". Parents and guardians should always consider what is best for that child. Governments should help them. Where a child has both parents, both of them should be responsible for bringing up the child.

## **19. Protection from violence**

Governments must protect children from violence, abuse and being neglected by anyone who looks after them.

## **20. Children without families**

Every child who cannot be looked after by their own family has the right to be looked after properly by people who respect the child's religion, culture, language and other aspects of their life.

## **21. Children who are adopted**

When children are adopted, the most important thing is to do what is best for them. If a child cannot be properly looked after in their own country – for example by living with another family – then they might be adopted in another country.

## **22. Refugee children**

Children who move from their home country to another country as refugees (because it was not safe for them to stay there) should get help and protection and have the same rights as children born in that country.

## **23. Children with disabilities**

Every child with a disability should enjoy the best possible life in society. Governments should remove all obstacles for children with disabilities to become independent and to participate actively in the community.

## **24. Health, water, food, environment**

Children have the right to the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food and a clean and safe environment to live in. All adults and children should have information about how to stay safe and healthy.

## **25. Review of a child's placement**

Every child who has been placed somewhere away from home – for their care, protection or health – should have their situation checked regularly to see if everything is going well and if this is still the best place for the child to be.

## **26. Social and economic help**

Governments should provide money or other support to help children from poor families.

## **27. Food, clothing, a safe home**

Children have the right to food, clothing and a safe place to live so they can develop in the best possible way. The government should help families and children who cannot afford this.

## **28. Access to education**

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child. Children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. Discipline in schools should respect children's rights and never use violence.

## **29. Aims of education**

Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.

## **30. Minority culture, language and religion**

Children have the right to use their own language, culture and religion – even if these are not shared by most people in the country where they live.

## **31. Rest, play, culture, arts**

Every child has the right to rest, relax, play and to take part in cultural and creative activities.



### **32. Protection from harmful work**

Children have the right to be protected from doing work that is dangerous or bad for their education, health or development. If children work, they have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

### **33. Protection from harmful drugs**

Governments must protect children from taking, making, carrying or selling harmful drugs.

### **34. Protection from sexual abuse**

The government should protect children from sexual exploitation (being taken advantage of) and sexual abuse, including by people forcing children to have sex for money, or making sexual pictures or films of them.

### **35. Prevention of sale and trafficking**

Governments must make sure that children are not kidnapped or sold, or taken to other countries or places to be exploited (taken advantage of).

### **36. Protection from exploitation**

Children have the right to be protected from all other kinds of exploitation (being taken advantage of), even if these are not specifically mentioned in this Convention.

### **37. Children in detention**

Children who are accused of breaking the law should not be killed, tortured, treated cruelly, put in prison forever, or put in prison with adults. Prison should always be the last choice and only for the shortest possible time. Children in prison should have legal help and be able to stay in contact with their family.

### **38. Protection in war**

Children have the right to be protected during war. No child under 15 can join the army or take part in war.

### **39. Recovery and reintegration**

Children have the right to get help if they have been hurt, neglected, treated badly or affected by war, so they can get back their health and dignity.

### **40. Children who break the law**

Children accused of breaking the law have the right to legal help and fair treatment. There should be lots of solutions to help these children become good members of their communities. Prison should only be the last choice.

### **41. Best law for children applies**

If the laws of a country protect children's rights better than this Convention, then those laws should be used.

### **42. Everyone must know children's rights**

Governments should actively tell children and adults about this Convention so that everyone knows about children's rights.

### **43 to 54. How the Convention works**

These articles explain how governments, the United Nations – including the Committee on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF – and other organisations work to make sure all children enjoy all their rights.

Source – [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

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