

Improving Outcomes for Children, Young People and Families: Review of Children's Services Plans (2020-2023) and Strategic Engagement Activity

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Foreword

We are delighted to share this report providing an overview of Children's Services Planning across Scotland.

Children's Services Planning Partnerships (CSPPs) are key to delivering our ambitions for children, young people and families, bringing together all those organisations that have a part to play in improving outcomes.

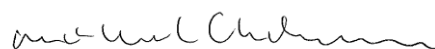
CSPPs were established through the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Part 3). The legislation requires them to develop and publish their Children's Services Plans every three years, setting out how the partnership will work together collaboratively to improve outcomes for children and young people in their area.

The legislation also requires those Plans to be reviewed against set criteria, on behalf of Scottish Ministers. This report reviews the extent to which Scotland's 30 Children's Services Plans for the period 2020-2023 meet the criteria. Recognising that Plans only tell part of the story, the analysis has been supplemented with findings from strategic engagement activity to provide further insight into the current delivery context and the effectiveness of the planning process. The review has highlighted areas of strength in Children's Services Planning, as well as areas where improvements are needed.

We look forward to working with the Strategic Leads of CSPPs, through the Strategic Leads Network, to improve the effectiveness of strategic planning and to ensure CSPPs continue to play a strong role in shaping and delivering services as we work together to navigate the changes ahead.



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Executive Summary

This report sets out key findings from the review of Scotland's Children's Services Plans (CSPs) published in 2020-2023¹ and highlights areas of strength and improvement and examples of good practice. Review of the Plans only tells us part of the picture, and the report also describes the evolving policy context and impacts relevant to outcomes for children, young people and families since the previous review in 2019. This draws on findings from engagement with the Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network and other stakeholders which have helped to shape recommendations for improvement. Together, these provide an overview of the current delivery context and effectiveness of Children's Services Planning across Scotland, and inform future national and local decision-making on Children's Services Planning.

The analysis of CSPs was structured around 15 Criteria which relate to the content, format and process of developing a Plan, outlined in [Part 3 Statutory Guidance \(Children's Services Planning\)](#). Table 1 shows a list of the Criteria and the number of CSPs that achieved, partly achieved, or did not achieve each Criterion based on the information provided in the Plans. Criteria highlighted in green indicate areas of strength, and those in amber or red require further development, across the Plans as a whole.

Table 1 - Summary of extent to which CSPs met the Statutory Guidance Criteria (N=30)

Statutory Review Criteria	Achieved	Partly Achieved	Not Achieved
1. Vision	29	0	1
2. National Performance Framework	16	11	3
3. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	18	8	4
4. Include Analysis of Data	13	12	5
5. Manageable and Measurable Priorities	11	19	0
6a. Children's Services	22	7	1
6b. Related Services	20	6	4
7. Prevention & Early Intervention	25	5	0
8. GIRFEC	27	3	0
9. Children's Rights	28	1	1
10. Engagement & Ownership	14	16	0
11. Family Support	21	7	2
12. Resources	10	9	11
13. Monitoring Indicators	17	1	12
14. SMART	5	25	0
15. Links to Plans & Reports	30	0	0

The following areas of strength emerged from the analysis:

- A clear and shared vision
- Services offered with a focus on prevention and early intervention
- Incorporation of the GIRFEC practice approach
- Incorporation of children's rights and UNCRC
- Presentation of links to aligned national/local plans
- A narrative on children's services offered
- Setting out how services provide whole family support

¹ COVID-19 legislation permitted delayed publication of Children's Services Plans for 2021-2023 rather than 2020-2023, where Children's Services Planning Partnerships wished to adapt these to address emerging needs in light of COVID-19.

- Presentation of **robust governance arrangements**.

The majority of Plans also addressed COVID-19, referencing the impact of the pandemic and lockdown restrictions on children, young people, families, and local communities, as well as describing innovative services and supports developed locally in response to emerging needs.

Areas for further development identified were:

- Presentation of sufficient **budget and resourcing information**
- Use of **data and evidence** to explain the rationale behind the choice of strategic priorities, and stronger reference to joint strategic needs assessment data
- **Measurable** and **time-related** Plans to meet the SMART Criterion
- **Engagement** with parents/carers/families, the wider community, and local workforce, including the Third Sector
- Reflection of the **National Performance Framework (NPF)**
- A third of Plans needed to include more information on the provision of **related services**.

The strengthened collective role of the Strategic Leads Network has enhanced the development of key policies and strategic activity, by highlighting experiential learning from Children's Services Planning Partnerships in the planning and delivery of services and support. Building on what children, young people and families have told us matters, and with improved strategic connectivity and an ethos of collaboration, the Network has contributed to the co-design of new tools and resources to support Children's Services Planning Partnerships in working collaboratively to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

Together with findings from the analysis of Children's Services Plans, the learning from engagement has highlighted a number of areas where further action will help refine Scotland's approach to Children's Services Planning. Actions will be progressed in alignment with transformational change programmes and improvement activity over the next CSP cycle (2023-2026). They include:

- Supporting more cohesive strategic planning/reporting requirements
- Building capacity for improved analysis and use of data to evidence impact on outcomes
- Embedding truly collaborative decision-making with strengthened visibility of the Third Sector and Adult Services
- Developing sustainable joint strategic commissioning and procurement, based on wellbeing
- Ensuring realisation of children and young people's rights through UNCRC incorporation and service co-design with families
- Work to #KeepThePromise, embed GIRFEC, and make holistic whole family support available
- Establishing a National Care Service (NCS)
- Recovery and renewal from the COVID-19 Pandemic and tackling Child Poverty.

1. Introduction

This report is the second national report on Children's Services Planning, and provides an overview of key findings from the review of Children's Services Plans (CSPs) published for 30 areas of Scotland in 2020/21² (a list of external links to all CSPs can be found in [Appendix A](#)).

The report considers learning across Scotland based on the opportunities and challenges faced in improving outcomes for children, young people and families that were highlighted through a range of stakeholder engagement undertaken by the Scottish Government since the last review. This includes views and feedback from the COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group, the Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network, governance and short-life working groups, Scottish Government policy teams, organisational stakeholders, and children, young people and families. The review of Plans and stakeholder engagement highlights areas of strength and potential areas for improvement activity. This follows a similar approach to the 2019 national report.

In line with legislative requirements to review Children's Services Plans under Part 3 of the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#), the report presents information on the extent to which CSPs met statutory review criteria. This includes evidence-based strategic priorities, evidence of joint decision-making, and information which clearly articulate how Children's Services Planning Partnerships (CSPPs) are working collaboratively to improve outcomes for children, young people and families through provision of services, supports, and improvement action.

The report summarises key themes from the overall review, to inform and support policy development and decision-making at the national and local level, and builds on the findings from the previous review of CSPs, shared with stakeholders in 2019. The analysis of Children's Services Plans gives us valuable information on the ways in which Children's Services Planning contributes to improved outcomes for children, young people and families, however this does not provide the whole picture.

Methods

Analysis of CSPs was conducted by the Scottish Government Children and Families Analysis Team, working in conjunction with the Strategy Team in the Strategy, GIRFEC and the Promise Division. The analysis was structured around 15 Criteria based on requirements of Children's Services Planning Partnerships regarding the content, format, and process of developing a CSP to plan services and supports with an overall aim of improving outcomes for children, young people and families in each area of Scotland. These Criteria are explicitly outlined in [Part 3 Statutory Guidance \(Children's Services Planning\)](#), with the list of Criteria provided in [Appendix B](#).

Examples of good practice in relation to key Criteria, identified in the Children's Services Plans, are highlighted in this report. This is an illustrative rather than exhaustive list, and other CSPs not mentioned may also have fully met the Criteria in question.

Structure of the report

Section 2 provides information on the policy and legislative background, along with recent developments relevant to the delivery context of Children's Services Planning. Sections 3 to 11 are structured around the review Criteria in Part 3 of the Statutory Guidance and present the analysis of the Plans, and, where relevant, additional information on policy development and stakeholder engagement. Criteria are not discussed in order, but grouped in broader categories as needed for the purposes of this report. Section 12 provides a summary of key points and reflections for next steps.

² For each geographical local authority area, with a Tayside Collaborative for Angus, Dundee, and Perth & Kinross.

2. Background

Legislative Requirements

Part 3 of the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) seeks to improve outcomes for children, young people and families across Scotland through a number of duties over each three-year cycle. These require the local authority and health board to work collaboratively with public bodies, specified service providers, the Third Sector, and children, young people and families, to jointly plan and develop a Children's Services Plan for their local area. There are requirements to engage with stakeholders at different stages of the Plan's planning, development, delivery, review, and progress reporting.

Each CSPP must publish an annual report detailing the extent to which the aims of their Children's Services Plan have been achieved. This should demonstrate how wellbeing outcomes have been improved for *all* children, young people, and families, as well as for those with specific wellbeing needs (for example unaccompanied asylum seeking children; young people moving through the transition from children's and adult services; families affected by poverty; young people with care experience; young carers; children in conflict with the law; and those impacted by complex health needs or other socio-economic considerations).

Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 sets out the statutory aims for Children's Services Planning:

(a) that children's services in the area concerned are provided in the way which;

- (i) best **safeguards, supports and promotes the wellbeing** of children in the area concerned,
- (ii) ensures that any **action to meet needs is taken at the earliest appropriate time** and that, where appropriate, action is taken to **prevent needs arising**,
- (iii) is **most integrated from the point of view of recipients**, and
- (iv) constitutes the **best use of available resources**

(b) that related services in the area concerned, are also provided in a way which, so far as is consistent with the objects and proper delivery of the service concerned, safeguards, supports and promotes the wellbeing of children in the area concerned.

"Taken together, these aims are about creating and maintaining a local environment which facilitates effective Getting it right for every child practice for individual children and young people. The Children's Services Plan itself is the description of how public bodies and their partners will work together to achieve this, providing services which are organised and equipped to deliver high quality, joined-up, trauma-informed and responsive, and, where possible, preventative support to children and families..."
(p. 16 Pt 3 Statutory Guidance (2020)).

A Children's Services Plan should describe how services, support and improvement activity will be delivered in the local area in line with local and national priorities, and should consider provision of both related and children's services (those provided directly to children and young people). Further detail can be found in [Section 8](#).

'Related Services' are not provided directly to children, but have an impact on children and young people's wellbeing. These services would include consideration of streamlined support through the transition between children's and adult services, provision of adult services to address drug or alcohol use, mental health needs, or offending, and community-based services such as housing providers, libraries, welfare advisory services, and recreation facilities.

Context since the 2019 review of Children's Services Plans

The initial review of 2017-2020 Children's Services Plans was carried out in 2018 with a national report shared with key stakeholders, the Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network, and the Deputy First Minister in 2019. This provided summarised themes from analysis of individual Plans, alongside findings from a programme of national appreciative enquiry strategic engagement visits undertaken by Scottish Government officials with each Children's Services Planning Partnership.

The 2019 report concluded by identifying aspects of Children Services Planning on which to focus support and improvement in Scotland's evolving approach. Key themes were:

- The majority of CSPs reflected the views of children, young people and families; Better demonstration of how those views influenced the priorities, aims and actions of the local CSP was needed;
- The majority of Plans clearly presented governance and accountability mechanisms;
- The majority of CSPPs completed a joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) to inform development of their Plan; but greater alignment between the identified needs and the CSP's stated priorities, actions and services was required;
- All Plans addressed the needs of looked after/care experienced children and young people, but only 3 referred to provision of support for families on the edges of care (Part 12);
- Disability/complex health needs were mentioned in most CSPs, but not often as a strategic priority;
- All Plans included reference to the Third Sector, but with variation in the extent to which Third Sector organisations were integrated in the development of the Plans' priorities and actions, use of data to identify needs, and in strategic planning and local delivery of services;
- Greater reference to the contribution of 'related services' to Children's Services Planning was required, including clearer links between children's and adult services through transitions, and in the support provided to parents/carers by adult services in relation to mental health needs, or addressing drug and alcohol use.

Following the 2019 review of CSPs, the Scottish Government carried out a [formal public consultation](#) to evaluate whether Part 3 of the Statutory Guidance should be amended to make improvements to this based on learning from its application in practice. Following analysis of the [responses](#), the Scottish Government published a [consultation response](#) and carried out further stakeholder engagement to inform revisions to the Statutory Guidance. This was published in 2020.

Coronavirus

The COVID-19 pandemic which began in the UK in March 2020, has seen unprecedented impacts on the wellbeing of children, young people and families across Scotland. The collaborative role of Children's Services Planning Partnerships has been key to galvanising a collective local response across statutory and Third Sector organisations, to rapidly assess emerging local needs, adapt current service provision, and develop flexible, innovative support to address the needs of infants, children, young people and families, during and after lockdown restrictions.

As a result of the pandemic, in July 2020 the CSP Strategic Leads Network³ was advised of flexibility in statutory submission timescales for publication of 2020-2023 Children's Services Plans, with an extension to 31 March 2021⁴.

This recognised that CSPPs may wish to update their CSP to reflect current and emerging needs of children, young people and families in light of the pandemic. Those CSPPs not in a position to publish their Plan in April 2020, were asked to publish a statement which provided clarity on the interim Plan driving local joint working, and set out a timetable for finalising the new CSP.

It was acknowledged that:

- Plans may initially need to be published in draft, pending the conclusion of impacted internal governance processes;
- CSPPs may elect to set local priorities and outcomes focussed more immediately on resilience and pandemic recovery;
- Pandemic circumstances may impact longer-term planning. The process of annual review was highlighted as an opportunity to revise Children's Services Plans as needed, to adapt to the changing circumstances and needs of local children, young people and families;
- While the extent and nature of stakeholder engagement would inevitably have been impacted, CSPPs were expected to facilitate engagement with children, young people, families, and other stakeholders to the fullest extent possible.

Eleven Children's Services Plans were submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 March 2021, and the remaining 19 Plans were received by the end of October 2021.

Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network

A national conference - Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People - was held in June 2019 to share learning from the appreciative enquiry strategic engagement visits (see above). The conference provided CSPPs with an opportunity to share experiential learning, innovative ideas and emerging practice. The value of a continuing forum which facilitated Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads to meet collectively and contribute to improvements in Children's Services Planning was recognised.

The Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network (the Network) was convened in October 2019, and is co-chaired by the Director for Children and Families, Scottish Government, and a representative on behalf of the CSP Strategic Leads. The Network's membership includes the Strategic Lead for each CSPP, Scottish Government policy teams with an interest in wellbeing of children, young people and families, and representatives from key public and Third Sector organisations.

Network Development (2021-2022)

An engagement exercise with the Network took place in December 2020 to consider opportunities for its development, with an aim of strengthening shared ownership and interaction of the Network, and identifying areas for improvement. A number of these were put in place over 2021-2022.

Engagement feedback informed revision of the Network's Terms of Reference and membership in March 2021 (found in [Appendix D](#)). This more clearly set out the Network's broad improvement intentions, and provided clarity on its role and strategic context at both a national and local level.

³ The CSP Strategic Leads Network is a national stakeholder forum including CSP Strategic Leads for each area of Scotland, national organisations and Scottish Government policy leads.

⁴ In accordance with paragraph 10(2) of the *Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 Act*, public bodies were required to comply with this duty "as soon as is reasonably practicable".

Other improvements included adaptation of the Network's form and function, and reflecting expectations of Strategic Leads as the liaison point to/from their local CSP strategic governance forum and the Scottish Government, with a role in ensuring the wider views of each Children's Services Planning Partnership contributed to Network decision-making.

Strategic Leads emphasised the value of the Network in sighting CSPPs on priority national developments and workstreams, and welcomed opportunities for peer support as part of its agenda, with colleagues sharing emerging local practice and experiential learning. *'What Good Looks Like'* has become a regular feature of Network meetings, where CSPPs showcase how improvements have been made in the local approach to a particular aspect of Children's Services Planning.

These have included planning considerations (for example children and young people's participation in determining local strategic priorities and improvement actions), as well as a deeper-dive focus on improved collaborative approaches in areas of service delivery aimed at improving local outcomes in relation to a particular aspect of wellbeing (e.g. children and young people's mental health).

The Network initially met quarterly, with introduction of additional topic-specific engagement sessions in 2021 to facilitate more in-depth discussion and wider participation by other colleagues from CSPPs. From December 2020 to March 2022, these sessions have included:

- The COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group Action Plan
- Establishment of the National Care Service (NCS)
- Development of the Children, Young People & Families Outcomes Framework
- Whole Family Wellbeing
- GIRFEC Policy and Practice Guidance refresh.

Collaborative working has also been strengthened between the CSP Strategic Leads Network and other stakeholder and governance fora, where CSPPs have a key role in piloting tests of change, influencing development of policy and practice, and implementing national approaches at a local level. CSP Strategic Leads have subsequently been included within membership of a number of aligned stakeholder groups (below) and the Network reports to the COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group (CLG):

- GIRFEC Leads/Stakeholder Network
- Family Support Advisory Group (Commissioning and Framework Sub-Groups)
- UNCRC Implementation
- Alcohol and Drugs: Partnership Delivery Framework Implementation
- Workforce Resilience Subgroup
- National Child Protection Leadership Group.

As a result of the pandemic social-distancing restrictions, face-to-face meetings have been replaced by virtual meetings, with Network feedback supportive of hybrid working and a blended approach of face-to-face and virtual meetings. This acknowledges travel implications for Strategic Leads from remote and rural areas, and reflects members' views that online engagement has increased Network participation, as well as facilitating ad hoc engagement. Opportunities for Network interaction have been enhanced through creation of a virtual space, which facilitates online discussion of topics relevant to Children's Services Planning, and provides an additional platform for provision of feedback on policy and practice developments and signposting to resources.

A Children's Services Planning Strategic Lead⁵ began a year tenure as the CSP Strategic Leads Network Co-chair in December 2021, building further on an ethos of shared ownership and collaboration.

COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group

The COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group (CLG) was established by the Scottish Government in May 2020 with a remit to review data, intelligence, research and policy in order to identify and respond to immediate concerns for children, young people and families with vulnerabilities during the pandemic. The work of CLG has also focussed on broader cross-cutting issues relevant to wellbeing of children and young people, including mental health, child poverty, whole family support, and workforce development, underpinned by engagement with, and feedback from children, young people and families.

In January 2021, CLG developed a 3-month action plan focussed on urgent action across 10 priority themes. This included: Access to services, Child Protection Awareness, Workforce Resilience, Domestic Abuse, Respite Care, Early Years/Under Fives, Care Leavers, and Children's Hearings System. Updates on the action plan were shared with a number of key strategic forums, with recommendations made on intermediate and longer-term action required.

The CLG Action Plan was informed by and contributed to by a number of strategic forums. This work strengthened connections between CLG and the Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network, which worked closely to obtain data and progress the action plan. The contribution of Children's Services Planning Partnerships was acknowledged as central to two CLG Action Plan workstreams: Access to Services and Workforce Resilience. Summarised details of these can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Longer term actions for CLG relate to broader work to improve outcomes for children, young people and families with a focus on: recovery and renewal from the pandemic; developing a Children, Young People & Families Outcomes Framework, holistic whole family support and Keeping The Promise.

2021 Review of Children's Services Plans

In line with legislative requirements, the Scottish Government, on behalf of Ministers, is required to review all Children's Services Plans in the year of their submission and provide individual feedback reports to each Children's Services Planning Partnership. Review of the 2020-2023 CSPs was undertaken with individual feedback reports provided to each CSPP in December 2021.

Analysis of CSPs considered the extent to which each CSPP has provided information to demonstrate it has met the statutory review Criteria for Children's Services Planning set out in Part 3 Guidance. Feedback was intended to supplement local self-evaluation activity and to contribute to a cycle of continuous improvement activity throughout each 3-year strategic planning period by identifying areas of strength and for development in how the CSPP has articulated the development and delivery of its Children's Services Plan.

Feedback was not a statement on individual organisational compliance with associated legislation, nor an assessment as to the quality standards of associated service delivery. These are determined through a combination of local quality assurance approaches, and scrutiny and inspection activity.

⁵ From Fife Children's Services Planning Partnership.

The Scottish Government is also required to produce an analytical evaluation report which provides an overview of the findings from review of all Children's Services Plans. This is the report for the 2020-2023 planning cycle.

3. Governance of Children's Services Planning

The vast majority of Plans included a dedicated section to discuss governance arrangements for their Children's Services Planning Partnership, outlining contributing partners and how local structures worked to provide oversight of service delivery and progress of the Plan. Only three Plans either did not reference partnership work, or needed to include more information on governance to make their Plan manageable and robust.

Most Plans highlighted the importance of multi-agency collaboration and reflected on the role of both single services and multi-agency support across the CSPP. Common membership of CSPPs included Local Authority and NHS Boards as the co-statutory lead partners, specified organisations such as Police Scotland, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, Integration Joint Boards/Health and Social Care Partnership, along with Third Sector organisations, and partnership forums, such as Child Protection Committees, Alcohol and Drug Partnerships, etc.

Most Plans included a diagram showing overarching responsibility for development and delivery of the area's Children's Services Plan, as well as governance arrangements. Some diagrams also included the role of different groups involved in monitoring delivery of the Plan. These diagrams were useful and highlighted the collaborative approach of CSPPs. The more robust diagrams showed clear links between different groups, their role in delivery of the aims and priorities of the CSP, and how partners were involved in the development, delivery and evaluation of services.

Examples of best practice identified here included:

- Inclusion of a diagram to show the structure of the CSPP's governance arrangements and how these collectively contributed to delivery of the CSP
- Clearly identifying lead partner(s) responsible for each priority and outcome of the CSP
- Showing how the CSP drove wider partnership working to improve outcomes for children and families across both children's and adult services.

Good Practice Examples

North Ayrshire: The Plan includes a section dedicated to governance arrangements. The section lists all partners and includes two clear and useful diagrams, one illustrating the structure of the Children's Services Strategic Partnership and the other the structure of the Community Planning Partnership, making local governance arrangements for the CSP clear and transparent.

North Lanarkshire: The Plan includes a list of all partners and a dedicated section on governance. A diagram illustrates the local governance structure and the links between the North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership Board and other partners.

Renfrewshire: In a short dedicated section, the Plan lists all the partners involved in Children's Services Planning. An example of good practice is the inclusion of a table (in an appendix) which identifies which partners are responsible for the delivery of specific actions and further clarifies accountability for different aspects of the Plan.

The analysis of Children's Services Plans indicates that CSPPs have identified connections between the aims of their CSP and a number of other aligned or supporting planning requirements, such as local Corporate Parenting Plans or Child Poverty Action Plans. However the views of CSP Strategic Leads and other stakeholders make it clear that this current strategic planning/reporting landscape on improving outcomes for children, young people and families is complex, difficult to navigate, and has overlapping legislative requirements.

Feedback highlights that new national strategies and action plans with a focus on improving outcomes often result in the emergence of additional governance and stakeholder groups, and additional reporting requirements. This is experienced as disconnected with a risk of disjointed decision-making, duplication of resource, and increased burden on public bodies. The Promise Scotland has similarly highlighted the complex landscape of systems surrounding care experienced children, young people and families and emphasised the importance of capitalising on opportunities to reduce complexity and achieve a more cohesive approach.

4. Engagement and Ownership of Plan (Criterion 10)

A Children's Services Plan should convey a shared sense of ongoing engagement and ownership with children, young people, families, the local workforce and wider community, with each CSPP demonstrating how they have made full use of stakeholders' ideas and suggestions from engagement activity in the development, delivery and evaluation of their Plan.

CSPs which fully met this Criterion included evidence on engagement with service users (children, young people and families); service providers (including frontline workers); and communities.

Engagement with Children, Young People, Families and Workforce

CSPs that demonstrated strong engagement included examples of local activities with children, young people, their families, staff and the wider community to describe the CSPP's process of engagement. This included details of engagement events and tools used, who participated, and how (in-person, virtually, via online survey, etc.), and when and where engagement took place. Strong Plans also included key findings from engagement and linked them directly to specific strategic priorities and actions to demonstrate how local engagement activity had informed different aspects of the CSP.

All CSPs fully or partially satisfied this Criterion, with 14 CSPs fully meeting requirements set out in the Guidance. The remaining 16 Plans would have benefitted from adding further information to include more detail on one or more of the following:

- The type of engagement undertaken (type of event, organiser, tools used, participants, etc.)
- Engagement with parents/carers and families
- Engagement with the local workforce (Statutory and Third Sector children's/adults services)
- Engagement with the wider community
- Discussion of key findings from engagement activities
- Clarity on how key findings have contributed to the development of the CSP and informed its priorities and actions.

The tools most commonly used for engagement were surveys, consultations, focus groups, social media, apps, as well as participation opportunities. Participation opportunities included Youth Voices; Youth Councils; youth forums/other youth platforms; children and young people's advisory/planning groups; Champion Boards; and participation groups for specific groups of children and young people with particular needs, such as those with care experience or with a disability.

A few Plans captured the *lived experiences* of local children and families, incorporating these into the design of local children's services. This was reflected in CSPs through reference to *re-design*, *co-design*, and *co-production* of services with children, young people, families and providers working in partnership.

Less than a third of CSPPs referred to offered or planned *advocacy* support/services available to all children and young people, or for particular groups.

Among examples of good practice identified were:

- Dedicated section(s) in the Plan discussing engagement with children, young people, families, frontline workforce, Third Sector and other stakeholders
- Evidence of engagement with groups of children and families with specific needs, such as care experience, Gypsy/Travellers, those experiencing poverty
- Ensuring participation of children, young people, and families, as well as service providers in evaluating progress of the CSP
- Inclusion of quotes from engagement events, linked to chosen priorities and actions
- Active involvement of service users and service providers in identifying the strategic priorities for the CSPs.

Good Practice Examples

East Dunbartonshire: Children, young people, families, and other stakeholders were consulted for the development of this Plan, with young people and parents co-producing it. Examples of the engagement tools used included online questionnaires, experience of service questionnaires, and feedback from children, young people, families and professionals. The CSPP uses the National Standards for Community Engagement. It has moved towards digitalisation, using Teams and social media, extending content of web pages and resources, developing and sharing mental health care videos and audio files. Among the Plan's actions are to empower children, young people and their families to express their views regarding needs and services, to ensure there is regular consultation with looked after young people, and to establish Corporate Champions. Findings from consultation events with young people were used to identify emerging needs.

East Lothian: East Lothian's Children's Services Plan includes 2 sections on hearing voices of children and young people; and consulting on the Plan. This shows clearly how the results of local engagement with children, young people, families, and Third Sector partners were used to develop each of the strategic priorities. Building on feedback from children, young people and providers, and findings from the Youth Summit and Champion's Board, East Lothian's CSPP ran an online public consultation on the proposed priorities. The Plan includes key themes and the proportions of respondents who agreed with the specific wording of each priority. This layout of evidence demonstrates best practice in adopting a children's rights-based approach to the development of East Lothian's Plan, and robust engagement with the Third Sector.

Glasgow: Glasgow's Children's Services Plan provides details on engagement activities and their key findings. Development of Glasgow's CSP was based on an extensive consultation process which included children, young people, parents/carers, and the workforce. This used a variety of engagement formats, with a diverse set of organisations and agencies involved. An appendix in the Plan provides comprehensive information on their consultation approach, which included events with children and young people via schools, meetings with the Young People's Champions Board and Children's Services Advisory Group, one-to-one and group interviews with key stakeholders including Third Sector organisations, as well as webinars, a survey, and polls. Engagement findings are then clearly linked to key themes within Glasgow's Plan.

One of the CSP priorities focusses on promoting children and young people's involvement in the development and design of services. The CSP outlines improvement aims and high-level actions, such as the co-production of tools with children and young people to support their engagement, and the development of innovative engagement methods. Glasgow's CSPP have invested in a range of engagement tools, such as Viewpoint and Direct Workbag, which provides alternative ways of seeking children and young people's views and addresses preferences for use of online communication methods.

Orkney: Orkney's Children's Services Plan has engagement and empowerment of children and young people in the Plan's development at its centre. The Plan includes an information-rich and concise section discussing in detail the engagement events conducted, and information on key findings. Some engagement findings are incorporated into Orkney's Children's Services Plan, and the rest have been used to contribute to development of Orkney's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

Engagement with the Third Sector

Collaboration and engagement with Third Sector organisations is an essential part of the development and delivery of each area's Children's Services Plan.

Most CSPs referenced collaborating with the Third Sector. In detail, 13 CSPs provided robust information on this, while 10 CSPs needed to include additional information on how Third Sector organisations participated in development and delivery of children's services. In the remaining seven CSPs there was no mention of the Third Sector.

Those Plans that included information on the Third Sector, usually made reference to this as being a wider partner within the CSPP, or mentioned Third Sector organisations among service providers. They recognised the importance of joint working with universal services of health and education, as well as provision of targeted services, and pandemic-related services.

Good Practice Example

Glasgow: Glasgow's CSP demonstrates use of a range of stakeholder ideas and suggestions, including Third Sector organisations, gathered through extensive local engagement. Third Sector partners work as part of the CSPP, and are involved in service decision-making and improvement activity to address local commissioning processes to ensure that Third Sector organisations can reliably and consistently provide services. Among the improvement aims of Glasgow's CSP is that Third Sector and statutory agencies will continue to widen and strengthen collaborative working in order to support and enhance the experiences of parents/carers, and to promote participation in parental engagement programmes.

The CSP Strategic Leads Network has focussed on strengthening the contribution of the Third Sector within Children's Service Planning at a local and national level.

This was progressed in a number of ways over 2021/22:

- Children in Scotland's 'Supporting The Third Sector Project' Project Lead has presented on Third Sector issues at CSP Strategic Leads Network meetings, and is a standing Network member
- Two national Third Sector Interface (TSI) Forum colleagues joined the CSP Strategic Leads Network
- Presentations to raise awareness of opportunities for strengthened Third Sector participation within Children's Services Planning have been delivered at the national TSI Forum, and Children's Sector Strategic Forum (to elected representatives of national Third Sector organisations)
- Network engagement sessions are open to Third Sector colleagues
- Increased Third Sector contribution to the GIRFEC Policy and Practice Guidance refresh.

Supporting the Third Sector Project

'Supporting the Third Sector Project' (STTSP) is led by Children in Scotland, and the project aims to support strengthened participation of Third Sector partners in strategic Children's Services Planning and delivery of GIRFEC practice. This includes sector capacity-building, promoting local and national connectivity with Third Sector Interfaces, and increased Third Sector participation in national strategic planning groups focussed on improving outcomes for children and families.

Project aims for 2022/23 are focussed on further enhancing the presence and influence of the Third Sector in a number of strategic planning arena. This includes: building strategic capacity of the Third Sector through training and development; additional support to TSI's focussed on improving their facilitation role with local forums such as CSPPs; developing mechanisms which ensure national policy development is influenced by the voices and experience of the Third Sector; and facilitating CSPPs to evolve local approach to Children's Services Planning in a way which fully integrates the wider Third Sector in planning, service delivery, and progress reporting.

The STTSP has engaged proactively with the Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network to co-develop a self-evaluation tool 'How Good is Our Third Sector Participation in Children's Services Planning?'. This is being piloted through early adopter CSPPs and aims to support them to evaluate the extent and quality of Third Sector participation locally. It does this by exploring different aspects of the Children's Services Planning cycle, and considers associated service delivery and improvement activity.

The tool provides a series of challenge questions which help the CSPP (with their local TSI and wider Third Sector partners) to identify areas of collaborative strength and areas for development, and is designed to be part of a wider suite of resources under development on whole family wellbeing. Use of the tool facilitates meaningful dialogue on opportunities for enhanced Third Sector participation in different elements of the three-year planning, delivery and reporting cycle locally, and generates a robust evidence-baseline from which CSPPs can target improvement activity. It is anticipated that experiential learning from the pilot will be collated as a summarised report, and offers an opportunity to better articulate and strengthen the role of the Third Sector in Children's Services Plans for 2023-2025.

5. Vision and Strategic Priorities (Criteria 1 and 5)

Vision (Criterion 1)

Each area's Children's Services Plan should set out a clear, ambitious and compelling vision, shared across CSPP partners.

All CSPs (except one) contained a clear vision, shared with local partners. CSPPs overall had similar visions which focussed on improving outcomes for children and young people. These mostly had a focus on keeping children and young people loved, safe and respected; enabling them to realise their full potential; offering the right support, in the right place, at the right time; ensuring opportunities and life chances; ensuring children and young people are included as valued contributors; and offering the best possible start in life for babies and families.

More than half the Plans referred to their guiding key values and principles, which built on ambitions of Getting it right for every child, Children's Rights, and Keeping The Promise.

Good Practice Example

Dumfries and Galloway: Dumfries and Galloway's Children's Services Plan includes an appendix which states its vision, going on to explain what a vision is, and who it is for. This also has a helpful section on what the vision (broken down into smaller segments) means for local children and young people; parents/carers; and for those who work in services for children. This is a good example of directly communicating the Plan's vision to different stakeholders in a user-friendly way.

Strategic Priorities (Criterion 5)

To fully meet Criterion 5, a Children's Services Plan should cover the following:

- Identify a manageable number of strategic priorities
- Include priorities linked to measurable indicators
- Ensure that the rationale for chosen priorities is explicit and clearly linked to the joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA).

All Children's Services Plans identified clear strategic priorities for the period of the Plan. 11 out of 30 Plans fully met this Criterion, while the remaining 19 would have benefitted from inclusion of further information on one or more of the above aspects.

CSPs identified an average of five priorities, ranging between three and nine priorities. Table 2 below presents a list of strategic priority themes by the number of Plans which included that priority, with the most commonly identified priorities being Child Protection, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Corporate Parenting/ Children and Young People with Care Experience, and Child Poverty.

The vast majority of CSPs identified a manageable number of priorities, with a clear governance structure to oversee progress described (see Section 3). 18 out of 30 Plans included measurable priorities, i.e. priorities linked to a set of measurable progress indicators, and 15 Plans set out priorities clearly linked to data and evidence which explained the rationale behind their choice.

Around half the CSPs needed to more clearly set out their rationale for their chosen strategic priorities. Even though some Plans identified evidence-based priorities, these did not clearly explain how priorities were linked to data and evidence from JSNA and engagement activity. A short section which briefly discussed the rationale for choosing each priority would have enhanced this element.

In a few Plans, strategic priorities were at a very high level, based on the overarching statutory aims of a Children's Services Plan, such as promoting, supporting and improving wellbeing, and shifting resource towards early intervention and prevention. Strategic priorities ideally should guide the specific outcomes and actions a CSP will focus on over a 3-year period in order to achieve its overarching aims. This could include a mix of specific aspects of wellbeing of children and young people (for example mental health, early years, or a focus on the needs of specific vulnerable groups), and/or improvement activity focussed on different processes or aspects of the approach to Children's Services Planning (such as collaborative data use, service improvement, commissioning, or rights and participation of children, young people and families).

Examples of good practice were identified in Plans which contained the following detail for this Criterion:

- Clear and specific priorities on one page, together with the CSP's vision (user-friendly)
- The governance arrangements in place for each priority
- The scope of each priority discussed in some detail
- Priorities broken down into single/multi-agency objectives with short/mid/long-term outcomes
- Inclusion of a table which linked priorities, aims, actions, outcomes, performance measures, leads and timescales
- A section on why these priorities matter to local children, young people and families
- Rationale for each priority using local data and evidence.

Table 2 – Strategic Priorities by number of CSPs

Strategic Priority	Number of CSPs (N= 30)	Details on priority area
Child Protection / Safety	30	Health needs, children and young people being safe and free from harm, access to a safe place and someone they can talk to, community safety, feeling safe at school and online, safe care, reducing offending. This includes reduction of violence against women/ domestic abuse/ safe home environment (4 Plans), as well alcohol and drug use/ parental alcohol and drug use (5 Plans).
Mental Health & Wellbeing	28	Address gaps and reduce inequalities, equitable access to appropriate health provision and advice, improve mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, respond to needs, support and promote, whole community approach, increase range of alternative services.
Care Experience/ Corporate Parenting	25	Looked after children, care experienced children and young people, attainment, improve outcomes, deliver The Promise, nurturing relationships, permanent placements, early intervention and prevention, inclusion, safe and stable home environment, health needs.
Child Poverty	20	Financial support, reduce child poverty and impact of poverty on children, young people and families, reduce inequalities, gender equality, inequalities of health and educational outcomes linked to deprivation, stigma, improve life chances.
Children's Rights and Voice/Participation	17	UNCRC, children and young people's voice, respect and promote children and young people's rights, children and young people involved and included in the development and delivery of services, participation, listen and respond to views of children, young people and families, empowerment.
Physical Health	16	Improve timeous assessment of health needs of children and young people, improve health, healthy lifestyle, obesity, physically active, health inequalities and equitable access to appropriate health provision and advice.
Education	14	Educational attainment, improve achievement, inclusive education, reduce educational attainment gap, options and opportunities, equal opportunities, quality learning experiences, extend potential.
Disability/Complex/ Additional Support Needs	12	Support children and young people with a disability and/or complex needs and/or additional support needs, enable them to reach their potential, support them to overcome barriers to inclusion at home, school and communities, reduce inequalities in learning, improve attainment and achievement, improve outcomes.
Early Years	12	Support in early years of life (pre-school age group), best start, maternal health, speech and language, nurturing environment.
Family Support	12	Support parents and carers.
Other	8	Workforce support, partnership work, Youth Justice, employability.
GIRFEC	6	Almost all CSPPs incorporated GIRFEC in their CSPs, this category is just for those who clearly mentioned GIRFEC among their key priorities.

Good Practice Examples

Glasgow: Glasgow's CSPP identifies clear priorities for its Children's Services Plan, which are measurable and manageable. The CSP includes very useful tables for each priority, which link each priority to specific outcomes, improvement aims, and high-level actions. The priorities are clearly linked to local needs, identified through an extensive consultation with children and young people. The Plan discusses the consultation approach and its findings in detail showing shared ownership over its development.

Tayside: Tayside's Children's Services Plan includes clear priorities, which are measurable and manageable. They are clearly connected to the themes identified through a joint strategic needs assessment and consultation. Consultation activity included several engagement events with children, young people and families, which are described in the Plan.

Reference to COVID-19

Although it was not a requirement set out in the Guidance specifically, communication via the Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network encouraged inclusion of pandemic-related information within revised Children's Services Plans, where these had not been finalised pre-pandemic. All but three Plans mentioned COVID-19, referencing the impact of the pandemic and lockdowns on the wellbeing of children, young people, families and local communities. This included information on workforce resilience, service developments and adaptations, and impacts on service delivery. Key words often used in relation to the pandemic were *impact, adaptation, new supports, flexible, adjust, digital, innovative and creative, and recovery*.

Among the impacts of the pandemic identified in CSPs were:

- Increased poverty, child poverty, and food insecurity
- Impacts on emotional and mental health of children, young people and parents/carers
- Increased health and social inequalities
- Interruption of services (mainly due to school closures and physical distancing requirements)
- Impact on learning and attainment, including digital exclusion
- Increased incidents of domestic abuse.

Among new supports and adaptations developed by CSPPs to tackle the impact of the pandemic were:

- COVID-19 Wellbeing Hubs
- Use of local/national pandemic data
- Establishment of taskforces
- In-school education for vulnerable children, at-home learning programmes, attainment support
- Food and medication deliveries, Food initiatives
- Wellbeing packs of activities for children and young people
- Tackling digital exclusion through provision of devices, Wi-Fi, data
- Bereavement support.

6. National Policy (Criteria 2, 8 and 15)

This section considers the extent to which Children's Services Plans reflected National Performance Framework Outcomes, articulates how CSPPs are working together to implement Getting it right for every child, and illustrates connections with aligned strategic plans and associated delivery.

National Performance Framework (NPF) (Criterion 2)

The Guidance set out that "it is expected that all actions, activity and initiatives are aligned with, and seek to deliver the ambitions contained in the NPF". Each CSP should therefore clearly link its priorities, objectives, aims and actions to the outcomes of the NPF.

16 of the 30 CSPs demonstrated strong links with the NPF, 11 CSPs were underpinned by the NPF but needed to make stronger and/or more explicit links between their strategic priorities and outcomes and the NPF Outcomes, while the remaining three CSPs did not mention the NPF at all.

A best practice approach to fully satisfy this Criterion would be to reference the relevant NPF Outcomes in reference to specific strategic priorities and outcomes and draw more explicit connections.

Good Practice Examples

Inverclyde: Inverclyde's Children's Services Plan provides a table for each area of strategic priority which clearly links the Plan's outcomes and actions to specific NPF Outcomes.

South Ayrshire: South Ayrshire's Children's Services Plan maps its priorities against the 11 NPF Outcomes in a very useful table, which is user-friendly and concise.

The Children, Young People & Families Outcomes Framework

A key recommendation of the 2019 national report on Children's Services Planning was to embed a more joined-up strategic narrative on improving outcomes for children and young people across government, with improved use of data to support this. The report also highlighted a need for greater clarity on national performance outcomes and indicators of wellbeing, with local areas indicating that development of a model which could be applied on a cross-sector basis would be helpful.

The 2019 and current review of Children's Services Plans identified significant variation in the indicators being used across Scotland to demonstrate improvements in the wellbeing of children, young people and families. While variation in reported data to take account of local needs and priorities remains important, consultation feedback⁶ highlighted that clearer articulation of national outcomes, alongside development of a core wellbeing indicator set was important to enhance consistency of approach, and to support comparative benchmarking.

Development of the Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) Outcomes Framework has aimed to address this, by providing an over-arching holistic approach to understanding wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland, rooted in GIRFEC and with children's rights at its core. Further information on the Outcomes Framework is provided in [Appendix E](#).

⁶ [Effectiveness of Part 3 Children's Services Planning Statutory Guidance - Consultation Analysis \(September 2019\)](#)

Constructive engagement with partners on development of the framework took place in 2019, and included the Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network, COSLA, and a range of national stakeholder organisations and governance fora.

In March 2022, the COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group and Directors Group for Improving Outcomes for Children endorsed recommendations to approve outputs from the current phase of development, and supported a phased implementation of the Outcomes Framework, starting with the Wellbeing Outcomes, Shared Aims, and Core Wellbeing Indicators being available for use from April 2022.

The CYPF Outcomes Framework is a first step in Scotland's data improvement journey, with further activity planned. This aims to build capacity in collaborative analysis and use of data, and to progress data development including more meaningful indicators where gaps are identified. Adopting a cross-sector collaborative approach has enriched development of the Outcomes Framework so far, and ongoing engagement with stakeholders, including CSPPs, will take place to understand readiness for implementation, identify barriers and co-design supporting resources.

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) (Criterion 8)

Children's Services Planning Partnerships have a collective responsibility to provide strategic oversight of local multi-agency GIRFEC practice which ensures a joined-up approach is in place to support children and families in their area. CSPs should set out local priorities and actions aimed at embedding GIRFEC practice and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of practice in improving outcomes for children, young people and families.

In September 2019, the Deputy First Minister, John Swinney, confirmed the Scottish Government's commitment to GIRFEC as Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes for children, young people and families, and this lies at the heart of policy development and service delivery. The Deputy First Minister also set out that named person and child's plan would be taken forward on a non-statutory basis, with refreshed practical guidance developed to support professionals in using the GIRFEC approach. Planned work to refresh the GIRFEC approach was paused during 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and recommenced in early 2021.

This Criterion for the review of CSPs considered how Children's Services Planning Partnerships had embedded the GIRFEC practice approach within their Plan. Key words used to analyse the content of Plans included aspects of wellbeing across SHANARRI⁷, My World Triangle, Child's Plan, Resilience Matrix, Named Person and the review explored reference to transitions to adult services, training the workforce, self-evaluation activity, trauma-informed practice, improvement activity (CYPIC) and nurturing approaches.

The majority of Plans (27 out of 30) included information which met this Criterion, while three CSPPs needed to include more information on how the GIRFEC practice approach was incorporated into development and delivery of their CSP. Most CSPPs were offering training and development opportunities to the local workforce (25 out of 30) and provided trauma-informed services and/or trauma-informed training for staff (22 out of 30). Many CSPs referenced wellbeing using SHANARRI (19 out of 30) and provided details on availability of Named Person through practitioners in Universal Services of Education and Health (Family Nurse Practitioners and Health Visitors were mentioned in half the CSPs), and use of the Lead Professional role.

⁷ SHANARRI: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included. For more information on Wellbeing and GIRFEC see [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/getting-it-right-for-every-child-girfec/).

Less than half the Plans (11 out of 30) referenced any completed or planned self-evaluation on elements of the GIRFEC approach. Fewer than five mentioned use of the Child's Plan, My World Triangle and Resilience Matrix, or made reference to nurturing approaches, or supporting young people through the transition to adult services. Only two Plans mentioned engagement with Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) advisors and/or use of the Model for Improvement.

An example of good practice adopted within some Plans was the inclusion of diagrams/tables to show how strategic priorities of CSPs were aligned to GIRFEC principles, how actions and outcomes were aligned to aspects of wellbeing (SHANARRI) and how performance indicators were mapped against their contribution to SHANARRI. Best practice included a breakdown of the Children's Services Planning Partnership's vision to include specific references to how GIRFEC underpinned this, and recruitment of a GIRFEC implementation work-stream lead.

Even though most Plans met this Criterion, this aspect of Children's Services Planning would be improved by CSPPs providing more detail on how GIRFEC is incorporated through specific aspects of their CSP, and examples of how collaborative multi-agency GIRFEC practice is leading to improved outcomes and experiences for local children, young people and families.

Good Practice Examples

Aberdeenshire: Aberdeenshire's Children's Services Plan clearly set out that it was built upon the GIRFEC approach, and briefly provides some context on what the GIRFEC approach means. The Plan highlights a collaborative and joint approach by the CSPP with the GIRFEC Strategic Group responsible for development and governance of the Plan. A review of GIRFEC practice arrangements in 2019 concluded that there were strong foundations and commitments between partners to embed GIRFEC and work collaboratively, and made recommendations for further improvement activity, such as support for a programme of self-evaluation of practice by Local GIRFEC Groups.

GIRFEC-focussed activity set out in the Plan includes learning and development opportunities for the workforce and volunteers; multi-agency resources provided through Aberdeenshire's GIRFEC website; Named Person Service; a focus on responding to ACES; and use of the Lead Professional to coordinate support through a Child's Plan. A very useful table links the Plan's aims, actions, performance measures, leads and timescales, with aspects of wellbeing (SHANARRI) and relevant UNCRC articles.

Argyle and Bute: Argyle and Bute's Children's Services Plan is underpinned by the GIRFEC framework, and shows that all partners have adopted its shared language and overarching aims of promoting wellbeing. The first priority of the Plan focusses on the CSPP's collaborative leadership and communication, driven by the GIRFEC collective leadership approach. A dedicated section of the Plan maps services and actions against aspects of wellbeing across SHANARRI and highlights services informed by attachment-led and trauma-informed practice approaches. Use of the Named Person and Lead Professional roles has been embraced by partners, with a named midwife approach to coordinate the antenatal care plan for pregnant women. Argyle and Bute's workforce is offered training opportunities on ACEs and trauma-informed support, as well as learning about UNCRC.

Argyle and Bute CSPP mentions engagement with CYPIC and use of Quality improvement (QI), setting out a very ambitious plan of measuring and monitoring progress. The Performance, Quality Assurance (PQ&A) Group is responsible for monitoring and reviewing progress of the CSP and reporting on its progress using QI and the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) strategic planning cycle. The Plan also details how PQ&A are conducting shared self-evaluation of partnership service delivery, and will develop refreshed improvement priorities annually.

Scottish Borders: It is clear that the GIRFEC approach is incorporated throughout the Plan and its strategic priorities, adopting a multi-agency approach and a commitment to workforce planning and development. Among the Plan's strategic priorities there is a focus on developing trauma-informed practice and Trusted Adult services for children, young people, and families.

West Dunbartonshire: An example of best practice of this Plan is the inclusion of tables which connect each strategic priority and related outcomes, actions, and mostly measurable indicators of progress to relevant SHANARRI aspects of wellbeing, as defined by the GIRFEC approach, and UNCRC articles.

Refreshed GIRFEC policy and practice guidance have been co-produced by working groups involving practitioners from adults and children's services in the public and Third Sector. Revised materials were consulted on with stakeholders to ensure these support confident and clear practical delivery of GIRFEC, underpinned by necessary, relevant and proportionate information-sharing.

Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads provided feedback to inform revision of the GIRFEC materials. An analysis report of consultation responses is expected in May 2022, at which point consideration will be given to any necessary changes to the materials ahead of final publication in summer 2022.

Opportunities for strengthened collaboration between the GIRFEC Stakeholder Group and CSP Strategic Leads Network will be explored over the coming year. This will include implementation of revised GIRFEC guidance following its publication, and learning from practice to inform future activity to overcome any barriers to putting GIRFEC into practice through implementation and improvement support.

Research on the experiences of children and families through the pandemic⁸ has highlighted the importance of supporting continuity of professional relationships with children, young people, and parents/carers to provide the care and support needed. Effective safeguarding, support and promotion of children and young people's wellbeing means ensuring early and responsive support is in place before urgent action is needed, so that families get the help they need, when they need it. This is a central aim of GIRFEC and Children's Services Planning.

Links with Plans & Reports (Criterion 15)

This Criterion refers to whether Partnerships have illustrated links between the CSP and other statutory planning/reporting. GIRFEC and UNCRC are discussed in more detail elsewhere in this report.

Key plans and reports that were considered include local Child Poverty Action Plans, Children's Rights Reporting, Integrated Health and Social Care Plan, Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan, and underpinning plans and strategies such as Child Protection Plans, Corporate Parenting/Promise Implementation Plans, the National Improvement Framework, Community Learning and Development, Early Learning and Childcare, Community Child Health Plans, GIRFEC Implementation, Locality Plans and other single service plans.

All Children's Services Plans referenced links with other national and local policies, plans, strategies and reports. Examples of good practice were seen in those Plans where the CSP not only mentioned, but clearly discussed the links between the aims and strategic priorities of the CSP and aligned plans, as well as the links with associated local delivery of children's services, related services and improvement activity. Another example of good practice was including diagrams or tables of relevant national and local strategic policy drivers, strategies and/or plans which were linked to specific priorities and actions of the Children's Services Plan.

All CSPs mentioned The Promise⁹ and many were built on the foundations of the Independent Care Review (Voice, Care, People, Family, Scaffolding), making reference to its findings. A few CSPs included The Promise as a strategic priority or linked their strategic priorities to elements of Keeping The Promise. Two CSPs created a dedicated local Promise Team to implement and deliver The Promise locally, with the need for close connection with any local Corporate Parenting action plans highlighted.

The majority of CSPs referred to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and Local Child Poverty Action Plan. More than half of the Plans mentioned the local Corporate Parenting Strategy. Other plans commonly referenced in CSPs included Child Protection Plan, Health & Social Care Partnership, Violence Against Women Plans/Gendered-based Violence strategies, Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Mental Health Strategy. A few CSPs also mentioned their Community Learning and Development Plan,

⁸ [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): children, young people and families - evidence summary - June 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-evidence-summary-june-2021/pages/children-young-people-and-families.aspx)

⁹ [The Promise Scotland.](https://www.promise.scot/)

local Housing Strategy, and Disability Strategy Group Plan. Other national and local plans and strategies were mentioned but are not discussed in detail in this report.

Good Practice Examples

Aberdeen: The Plan includes a dedicated section on the Partnership's contribution to the wider strategic and statutory agenda. The section discusses how the Partnership is aligned with the work and services of other multi-agency strategic partnerships which work alongside it in a collaborative way. The Plan does not just reference plans, but briefly explains how they are linked to the CSP and delivery of children's services.

Dumfries and Galloway: The Dumfries and Galloway CSP links each strategic priority with specific action plans. A useful diagram maps the Plan's priorities against the NPF, Dumfries and Galloway's LOIP outcomes, and with action contained in supporting plans. This represents a great example of careful linking delivery of the aims and intent of the CSP with other aligned local plans.

Stirling: Stirling's Plan reflects good practice through illustrating its links with Keeping The Promise. The Plan presents an appendix with a table setting out Stirling's 'I-statements'. These statements were provided by a group of care experienced young people who reflected on their own experiences, linked to the foundations of The Promise. The CSPP has shared ownership of the Stirling Promise Action Plan, and is planning to develop a 10-year strategy to implement the outcomes of the Independent Care Review locally within Stirling.

Feedback from the CSP Strategic Leads Network and other multi-agency forums highlighted the challenges faced by public services in navigating a complex strategic planning and reporting landscape. This echoes findings from the Independent Care Review¹⁰, which described a "complex, incoherent and inconsistent landscape, with a vast array of structures, status, accountability and lines of responsibility in relation to Scotland's care system". Change Programme ONE¹¹ further highlights the difficulties faced in implementing siloed policy and legislation, with a need for strategic cohesion which takes account of overlapping areas of policy.

The CSP Strategic Leads Network has provided a national forum through which CSPPs collaborate and evolve Scotland's collective approach to improving outcomes for children and families. This highlights the important role of each area's Children's Services Plans in driving local community planning for children and families through a joined-up strategic approach across partners resulting in integrated delivery of services and support. The Network facilitates a collective forum from which CSPPs influence development of policy approaches and initiatives relevant to children's services planning, and through which Strategic Leads can inform and participate in improvement activity.

In addition to services for children and young people, it is essential that Children's Services Planning arrangements continue to develop in a way which better incorporates actions to address community and societal impacts such as child poverty, and the contribution of adult services to create a truly cohesive and coherent policy environment which better supports joined-up delivery of services, and joined-up experiences for children, young people and families.

7. Children's Rights (Criterion 9)

During the 2020-2023 Children's Services Planning cycle, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill was passed on 16 March 2021. On 6 October 2021, The

¹⁰ [Independent Care Review – The root and branch review of Scotland's care system.](#)

¹¹ [Change Programme ONE - The Promise](#)

Supreme Court ruled that some of the Bill's provisions lay outside the competence of the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government remains committed to the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child¹² (UNCRC) to the maximum extent possible as soon as is practicable.

While The Supreme Court judgment means the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill cannot receive Royal Assent in its current form, the majority of work on implementation of the UNCRC can proceed and is continuing at pace. The Scottish Government is working closely with public authorities, the Third Sector, and children, young people and families to implement the UNCRC with the intent of delivering a proactive culture of everyday accountability for children's rights across Scotland's public services. Children's Services Planning Partnerships and Children's Services Plan are key mechanisms through which to ensure the delivery of local services and supports is resulting in children and young people experiencing their rights as fully realised.

Analysis of Children's Services Plans found they all included aims to promote children's rights, and the vast majority of Plans (28 out of 30¹³) were well aligned to the UNCRC. 10 Children's Services Planning Partnerships have included children's rights as a strategic priority.

One of the main actions to promote children's rights included in CSPs focussed on ensuring that children and families were actively involved in the development and evaluation of the CSP, and in local service-design, with their feedback taken into consideration. Good practice identified for this Criterion included involvement of children and young people in local recruitment processes and in interviewing candidates for a range of jobs that directly impacted them (two Plans) as well as involvement of children and young people in organisational budgeting of council funds (two Plans). Another common theme in CSPs was actions to raise awareness around children's rights among children and young people themselves, within schools, and across the wider workforce.

An example of best practice seen in several CSPs was the inclusion of specific examples of how CSPPs planned to promote children's rights locally. These included:

- Becoming a UNICEF accredited Child Friendly City
- Creating a Children and Young People's Charter engagement on Children's Rights
- Development of UNCRC resources
- Providing local youth participation opportunities and developing participation networks for children and young people
- Increasing the number of Rights Respecting Schools
- Organising youth summits/talks
- Specific action to enhance the rights of certain groups (i.e. young carers, children and young people with disabilities)
- Using Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments (CRWIAs) to evaluate involvement of children and young people in the design and delivery of children's services
- Promoting Champions Boards, Youth Forums, Youth Chamber Debates.

Some CSPPs offered training on UNCRC and children's rights, including learning and development opportunities for specific partners, within schools, and to the wider workforce. Two CSPPs had recruited a dedicated children's rights officer.

¹² [Children's rights - Human rights - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/topics/childrens-rights)

¹³ One Plan needed to describe in more detail how the CSPP is using children's rights to inform development of their Plan, and another Plan did not mention children's rights at all.

A number of Plans included mention of specific UNCRC Articles. An example of best practice identified was provision of a table in CSPs which linked strategic priorities, actions and intended outcomes to relevant UNCRC articles either within the main body of the Plan itself, or in an appendix.

Good Practice Examples

East Lothian: East Lothian's Plan shows clearly how the results of engagement with children, young people, and families had been used to develop each of the strategic priorities. This layout presents the underpinning evidence and demonstrates how partners applied a children's rights approach to the development of the Children's Services Plan.

Falkirk: Falkirk's Plan clearly demonstrates how children's rights have been considered in each step of developing this CSP. Young people were asked to identify which of the UNCRC articles were most important to them, and this was then used as a basis for choosing the Plan's strategic priorities.

The review of Children's Services Plans has highlighted a range of innovative practice by CSPPs across Scotland and a commitment within CSPs which demonstrates how partners are contributing to the realisation of children's rights in a number of ways. Details on delivery of universal services of health and education shows how specific rights are being upheld for all children, with targeted/specialist services upholding rights for groups of children with specific needs, such as those with care experience, unaccompanied asylum seeking children, or children in conflict with the law.

The Children's Services Strategic Leads Network has a keen interest in UNCRC implementation, and continued opportunities for UNCRC development activity to be actively informed by CSPPs will be proactively explored.

8. Services Offered and Activities Planned (Criteria 6, 7 and 11)

Each Children's Services Plan should provide a narrative of the services offered locally to safeguard, support and promote wellbeing, including details of both children's services and related services. The review of CSPs considered the extent to which this information was included to clearly set out how CSPPs have a collaborative and comprehensive local strategy for supporting families. This strategy is intended to describe the rationale for how and where family support is provided through a broad range of services and support that fulfils a continuum of need spanning prevention, early intervention and targeted/intensive support.

Part 3 of the Children and Young People Scotland Act 2014 (Section 7) defines Children's Services Planning duties as these relate to 'children's services', 'related services', 'other service providers'¹⁴ and Scottish Ministers¹⁵ in exercising their functions under the Prisons (Scotland) Act 1989 and through certain powers.

A children's service is: Any service in the local authority area provided wholly or mainly to, or for the benefit of, children.

¹⁴ (a) the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Scotland, (b) the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, (c) the Principal Reporter, (d) the National Convener of Children's Hearings Scotland, (e) the Scottish Court Service.

¹⁵ Who have powers (following consultation and by order) to: a) specify services to be considered as included within or excluded from the definition of "children's service" or "related service" b) specify matters in relation inclusion or exclusion of services which fall within either of those definitions and c) add, remove or vary the list of those defined as an 'other service provider.'

A **related service** is: Any service in a local authority area which does not fall into the definition of a 'children's service' but still has a significant effect on the wellbeing of children and young people. Examples of this include community-based services such as welfare rights, libraries or sports centres, and services for adults which address parents/carers' needs in their own right, such as support for mental health, disability, drug and alcohol use, or involvement with the justice system.

Children's Services (Criterion 6)

Most Children's Services Plans (22 out of 30) met this Criterion and included a narrative on the types of children's services offered in the local area. Seven CSPs did not provide much detail on existing/new services, and one CSP did not include any information on children's services.

Although the majority of Plans made some reference to provision of children's services, most would benefit from a more detailed narrative on specific services planned to meet its strategic priorities, and by including examples of the different types of children's services available over the period of the CSP. A robust CSP would present a clear distinction between services and supports already in place, and what new services developments (if any) were planned for the next three years. Best practice would include clear information setting out availability of universal, and targeted/specialist services, as well as information on whether support is delivered on a multi-agency and/or single service basis, describing partners' individual and collective contribution to each strategic priority of the Children's Services Plan.

Across all Children's Service Plans for 2020-2023 the types of services mentioned included (list not exhaustive):

- Services to tackle the impact of **low income** on children and young people: free school meals, Community Kitchen, Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods, access to school holiday meals, access to uniforms, sanitary products, food and clothes banks.
- **Early Years:** healthy start vitamins and vouchers, early learning, pregnancy/maternity, early years expansion funding, childcare, breastfeeding support, developmental milestones, Bookbug, baby massage, infant mental health.
- **Learning and Education:** young apprenticeships, employability programmes, support to overcome barriers to learning and life-skills programmes for specific interest groups such as gypsies/travellers and refugees including English as an Additional Language, The PeterDeen Scholarship, Lifelong Learning, positive destinations, careers week, placement opportunities, internships.
- **Physical Health:** Community Child Health services, initiatives such as Eat, Play, Grow Well, The Childsmile dental programme, Grow Well Choices, sexual health advisory services, alcohol and drug education, smoking cessation, Active Schools, healthy weight programmes, support in teenage pregnancy, promotion of outdoor play, immunisation programmes, Duke of Edinburgh Award physical activities, sports programmes, allied health professionals.
- **Mental Health and Mental Wellbeing:** school counselling, educational psychology, support from Named Persons, perinatal and infant mental health support school nurses, digital therapeutic interventions, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Healthier Minds, bereavement support, anxiety management, play programmes.
- **Targeted /Specialist support** with a focus on: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), child protection, disability, neglect, young carers, support for neurodiversity (ADHD and autism), post-school transitions for young people with Additional Support Needs, transition to adult health and social care services, Effective and Early Intervention/ Whole Systems Approach to Youth Justice, speech and language therapy, children's services social work, support for care experience (Looked After Children, throughcare and aftercare, continuing care, residential homes, fostering, kinship and adoption services), suicide prevention, domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, anti-bullying, allied health professionals.

- **Engagement and Participation:** Youth forums, Young People's Advisory Panel, Connecting Voices, 'Pizza and Coke' sessions, Corporate Champions, Mini Champs and Champions Board for care experienced children and young people, Mind of My Own app (further examples in Children's Rights section).
- **Other services:** leisure and arts programmes, social spaces, volunteering, digital inclusion, advocacy, support for LGBTI young people, housing.

Related Services (Criterion 6)

Development of each area's CSP should also include information on local provision of related services. This includes both community-based supports which improve quality of life for children and families, and support provided to families by adult services to meet individual needs of parents/carers, and/or care experienced young people up to the age of 26. The Plan should also demonstrate how partners across the Children's Services Planning Partnership are working in a joined-up way to make sure young people have positive experiences in the transition between children's and adult services.

A key finding from both the 2019 and 2022 reviews of Children's Service Plans was that greater reference to the role of adult services should be made within Plans. From the 2022 review, 20 out of 30 Plans made some mention of related services, six Plans needed to add further information on this, and four Plans did not make any reference to related services at all.

As mentioned above, related services can be distinguished between adult services and community-based services. Examples of related adult services mentioned in the 2020-2023 Plans included support for parental drug and alcohol use, services for young parents, adult/family learning, and adult protection. Examples of community-based related services included financial support and advice for families (to overcome poverty (including in-work poverty) and food insecurity), housing/homelessness initiatives, employment support, affordable transport, training opportunities, and digital literacy.

The CSPs which robustly met this Criterion included a short section on local provision of related services, both adult and community-based, over the period of the Plan. This demonstrated alignment with children's services, and the contribution of related services to relevant strategic priorities and/or outcomes of the Plan.

Some CSPs also mentioned training opportunities aimed at the wider workforce, such as trauma-informed training; continuing professional development on child protection (e.g. identification and response to abuse, neglect and child sexual exploitation); and learning and development opportunities raising awareness around children's rights.

Good Practice Examples

Stirling: Stirling's CSP provides a great narrative on local provision of children's and related services, which covers:

- universal services for every child and young person (e.g. health visiting)
- enhanced services for children who need additional support (e.g. speech and language therapy)
- targeted/specialist services to address more complex needs impacting on wellbeing (e.g. CAMHS)
- compulsory intervention for (very few) children - and intensive support to overcome significant adversity (e.g. child protection services)
- services which could positively impact on outcomes for children and young people (e.g. services for families, and community-based supports, such as reduction of barriers to employment).

Stirling's CSP discusses the services offered over the period of the 2017-2020 Plan and new services and actions planned to achieve the priorities and outcomes for 2020-2023. It provides clear information on several services aimed at tackling the impact of low income on children and young people's participation and achievement, such as breakfast clubs and action to address period poverty.

The Plan sets out how the CSPP is working collaboratively to increase the capacity and confidence of the local workforce, such as provision of learning and development and resources by educational psychology, and developing trauma responsive practice, as well as training opportunities for young people. Initiatives, like Stirling's Champions Board, have been set up to facilitate children and young people's active participation in local decision-making. Finally, Stirling's Plan sets out planned improvements to service delivery, such as the development of a local framework of services for children and young people with disabilities.

Primary Prevention and Early Intervention Services (Criterion 7)

Among the overarching statutory aims of Children's Services Plans is a focus on early intervention and prevention.

Effective **primary prevention** is usually characterised by:

- Support and help directed to parents, carers and families, as well as directly to children
- Support provided in the first few years of child's life (pre-birth to pre-school)
- Families accessing wider community supports to improve their quality of life.

Early intervention means:

- A workforce able to respond to the needs of families in a safe, effective, person-centred and trauma informed way, as soon as there are signs of difficulty
- Recognising wellbeing needs may emerge at any age, without warning, and that the speed/nature of response significantly impacts on the success of addressing those needs.

The majority of CSPs (25 out of 30) included information which met this Criterion. In the remaining five CSPs, providing more detail on how this was being achieved by the CSPP would have strengthened this element of the Plan's content.

The CSPPs which did this well described the local offer of services with a focus on prevention and early intervention. This included services for children and families in the early years and aimed at the best start in life, preventative approaches regarding alcohol and drug use, and pathways to positive mental health with a focus on prevention and early intervention, as well as timeous assessment in response to identified health needs of children and young people.

Some CSPPs had identified prevention and early intervention as one of their strategic priorities, which further emphasised the focus on this area, with examples of developing new services, improvement activity, and embedding use of the GIRFEC national practice model in both children's and adult services (early identification of need, assessment of wellbeing, Child's Plan, Team Around the Child and Family).

Many Plans did not make explicit links between services being offered over the period of the CSP and their role in prevention or early intervention, often with a lack of examples of the services fulfilling those aims. Most of the Plans that partially met this Criterion did not mention how services were focussed on prevention.

CSPPs could more fully meet this Criterion in future Plans by:

- Being more explicit on their preventative approach, presenting specific examples of how services are delivering preventative support/ actions
- Stating explicitly which services are aimed at early intervention, what support is provided and how its impact will be evaluated
- Discussing how the CSPP is shifting resource towards early intervention.

Good Practice Examples

Highland: Highland's CSPP has implemented the GIRFEC approach locally by using the THRIVE model to differentiate between children, young people and families who are:

- 'Getting By' (and benefit from prevention and general promotion of wellbeing)
- 'Getting Help' (mainly from support of universal services)
- 'Needing More Help' (from early intervention services and targeted/specialist supports).

Highland's Plan adopts a nested and layered preventative approach, spanning universal services (primary prevention) and health promotion, to working preventively as health needs, vulnerability and risks present (secondary prevention), and provision of sustained intervention and support (tertiary prevention) where health care risks and needs require intensive support, either temporarily or over longer periods of time.

Shetland: One of the Plan's strategic priorities appears to place strong emphasis on continuing to develop Shetland's primary prevention and early intervention services. This is aligned to work around preventing abuse, reducing poverty and inequality, enhancing child protection, developing a 'holistic Early and Effective Intervention approach' for the youth justice system, and early intervention around the care system.

West Lothian: Early intervention and prevention is a strategic theme that runs across all the strategic priorities and services offered through West Lothian's Plan. The Plan dedicates a one-page section on how multi-agency partnership working will ensure there is enough focus on preventing crises for children and young people, as well as offering support at the earliest opportunity. The Plan focusses on both early years support, and support needed during childhood and adolescence, providing many examples of the services offered locally to meet wellbeing needs.

West Lothian CSP refers to a shift in resources from managing crisis, to prevention and building resilience, and makes a commitment to investigate best practice in early intervention and preventative approaches to implement in West Lothian. The CSPP also undertook a thematic strategic needs assessment on Early Intervention and Prevention, to inform the future development of children's services locally.

Strategy for Supporting Families (Criterion 11)

Family support includes universal support for all families, support for families in need and on the edges of care, and families in need of intensive/specialist support where they face complex needs, high levels of risk, or crisis. This includes parental and parenting support, support for carers, and whole family wellbeing. It involves the provision of multi-agency holistic support wrapped round the needs of the whole family, in line with the GIRFEC approach which understands wellbeing of children and young people in the context of their network of family and care.

The COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group (CLG) developed the "Holistic Family Support – Vision and Blueprint for Change" (the 'Vision') which sets out that families should be able to access preventative, needs-based support when they need it, for as long as they need it. The principles within this Vision were drawn out by the Family Support Advisory Group (FSAG) and informed a "Routemap and National Principles of Holistic Whole Family Support" (the 'Principles'). The Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network have actively contributed to their development. The FSAG and CLG established a clear principle that there should not be nationally imposed model(s) for delivering holistic whole family support, in recognition that local solutions will vary to meet

differing local needs. However, the Principles set out the core elements of what ‘good’ should look like and these are further articulated through the “How Good Is Our Family Support?: A National Self-Assessment Toolkit,” which is currently in development.

The review of Children’s Services Plans identified a range of examples of universal, targeted and specialist services that aimed to provide support to families with different types of wellbeing needs. These included support for pregnant women and new parents, support for families with children experiencing behaviours consistent with ADHD, support for families with children with a disability or complex health needs, support for Gypsy/Traveller families, family learning opportunities, family therapy, family counselling, family money advice and financial support, encouraging healthy family lifestyle. An interesting approach set out in one Plan was to bridge the gap between school and home to create a child’s family network and adopt a blended model of support.

Each CSPP should have a clearly described strategy for holistic family support which adopts a whole systems approach, and refers to the role of children’s and related services, and how these are delivered in a joined-up way. Most CSPPs (20 out of 30) referred to a local family support strategy, or to planned services aimed at delivering whole family support within their Plan. Eight CSPs would have been strengthened through providing more details on the services provided or planned to ensure available support to the whole family, with specific examples of universal, targeted and specialist services available in their area. Two Plans did not mention a holistic whole family approach at all. Family support was a strategic priority for six CSPPs.

Good Practice Examples

Clackmannanshire: Clackmannanshire's Plan includes a dedicated section setting out the local approach to whole family support as one of its strategic priorities. This work-stream includes:

- Development of a wellbeing economy and community wealth-building focussing on opportunities presented to develop sustainable food and heating as part of the Alloa Transformation Zone
- Establishment of a Wellbeing Hub and Learning Estate development
- Alloa Transformation Zone linking Place developments with wellbeing opportunities for promoting health and learning. This includes public spaces such as footpaths and parks
- STRIVE (Safeguarding through Rapid Intervention) draws on the GIRFEC practice approach and takes a "whole systems" approach to delivering better outcomes, faster, for the most vulnerable people in Clackmannanshire. It does this by gathering and sharing information at an early stage to try and prevent the need for further intervention and supports existing systems already in place to respond to child and adult protection concerns in Clackmannanshire. The STRIVE team is a multi-agency team made up of police officers, social workers, and housing officers, as well as a part-time education officer and Third Sector partner organisation, Wellbeing Scotland.

Clackmannanshire's CSP also includes use of the Icelandic Prevention Model for alcohol and drug use; preparing young people for life, work and the future; and tackling poverty.

Falkirk: Falkirk's Plan clearly defines its family support pathway through a user-friendly diagram which includes:

- Primary drivers: GIRFEC – Building Resilient Families; Funding, Resources and Planning, Transitions; and Systems and Process
- Secondary drivers: Co-production of the pathway with families to design coordinated and accessible supports, based on local data, following the GIRFEC pathway with training for staff, and use of Child's Plan, coordinated funding, ensuring child to adult transitions, service to service collaboration, and central request for assistance process, etc.
- Specific change ideas: focus groups with families, JSNA Data, Tests of change for new coordinated approach in one locality, etc.

North Lanarkshire: Throughout the Plan there is mention of supporting families, as well as children and young people. Examples of family supports include parenting support and early years of parenting, support for families with children with a disability, financial and employment supports, food poverty and its link with neglect, breastfeeding support, infant mental health, and maintenance of family relationships, especially between siblings.

One of the Plan's priorities is to support families, including support for the early years of parenting, children supported at home and support for good mental health, emotional resilience and trauma recovery. The Plan aims to develop consistent family support approaches based on the 10 Family Support Principles identified in The Promise. A strategic priority on Care focusses not only on those who are experiencing care/care experienced, but also on their families, including brothers, sisters, parents and peers.

Whole Family Wellbeing Funding

The approach to holistic whole family support has continued to evolve as CSPPs focus on strengthening joined-up delivery of local services. As was the case in the 2019 review of CSPs, there is a continued need for stronger articulation of the role of related services across the 3-year planning cycle, and in the associated delivery of services and support to families.

The Scottish Government has committed to investing at least £500 million over the life of this Parliament for Whole Family Wellbeing Funding (WFWF). This is intended to:

- Enable the building of universal and holistic support services across communities in Scotland, helping to reduce the need for crisis intervention
- Give families access to the help they need, where and when they need it
- Ensure we are providing the right kind of support to families to enable them to thrive
- Facilitate the system change required to transform how family support is delivered by ensuring families can access seamless holistic support that wraps around individual needs
- Contribute to improving people's lives across a wide range of wellbeing areas, including: child and adolescent mental health, child poverty, alcohol/drugs use, and educational attainment.

£50 million of the WFWF will be deployed in 2022-23, with a focus on building capacity for a more significant investment from 2023-24 onwards. Distribution of this funding and wider implementation of the Whole Family Approach will have significant influence over the development of the next round of Children's Services Plans (2023-2026), with CSPPs as the local leadership mechanism for planning and delivery of services and supports to improve outcomes for children, young people and families in each area of Scotland.

The Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network have been working collaboratively with the Family Support Advisory Group in developing these proposals, and ensuring provision of holistic whole family support will be a continued priority focus within Children's Services Planning.

National Care Service

The Independent Review of Adult Social Care was led by Derek Feeley, a former Scottish Government Director General for Health and Social Care and Chief Executive of NHS Scotland, with its report on findings published in February 2021¹⁶. This recommended the establishment of a National Care Service (NCS) for Scotland to:

- ensure that care is person-centred and human rights based
- provide greater recognition and support for unpaid carers
- improve conditions for the workforce
- commission for public good, and
- ensure more effective approaches to scrutiny and improvement of social care services.

The National Care Service Bill was introduced to Parliament on 20 June 2022. The Bill sets out principles for the National Care Service (NCS) and places a duty on the Scottish Ministers to promote a care service designed to secure improvement in the wellbeing of the people of Scotland. The aim of the Bill is to ensure that everyone can consistently access community health, social care and social work services, regardless of where they live in Scotland. It provides for a National Care Service, accountable to Scottish Ministers, with services designed and delivered locally.

¹⁶ [Adult social care: independent review - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/adult-social-care-independent-review)

The Bill therefore provides for a power to transfer accountability for a range of services, including adult social care and social work services, children's social work and social care services and justice social work services, to the Scottish Ministers, subject to Parliamentary approval.

The Bill requires further public consultation to be held and the results to be laid before Parliament alongside any regulations prior to any potential transfer of children's services and justice social work services. This recognises that those areas were not specifically examined by the Independent Review of Adult Social Care.

The overall position is that a final decision on the inclusion of justice social work and children's social care and social work services in the NCS will not be taken until further detailed consideration and evidence gathering with key partners has been carried out. Instead, the NCS will be designed so that children's services and justice social work services can be included if that is considered appropriate in due course.

The implications of this change, regardless of whether Children's Services are transferred to the NCS or not, will have an impact on future Children's Services Planning/Plans. This will be a key consideration for CSPPs over the next planning and reporting cycle.

9. Collaborative Use of Resources (Criterion 12)

Criterion 12 of the Guidance considers how Children's Services Plans included information on their collective children's services budgets (and related services budget where this has an impact on child wellbeing), and how these were spent across different services and partners over the period of the Plan.

One third of CSPs (10 out of 30) provided sufficient information to meet this Criterion. Nine CSPs included some information on finance but not information on budgeting allocations, and the remaining 11 CSPs mentioned (almost) nothing about resources and/or budgets. This remains an area of challenge in relation to Children's Services Planning, with two thirds of the Plans not providing information set out in the Statutory Guidance for this Criterion.

Almost all CSPs (23 out of 30) referred to local offers of training and development opportunities for their workforce, with nine CSPs highlighting recruitment of new staff to increase capacity. Examples of this included recruitment of a Mental Health Officer, a dedicated GIRFEC lead, and a Children's Rights Officer. Only some CSPs provided details of their current children's services workforce across different key agencies.

Slightly more than half of the CSPs referred to their use of specific funds, mostly Pupil Equity Funding, Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund, and Scottish Attainment Challenge Funding. Most Plans would have been enhanced through further detail of new services being planned, the re-design of existing services, and a shift in investment towards more preventative and early intervention services and supports. Only a few CSPs mentioned this, and with limited detail.

Eight CSPs mentioned commissioned services, plans to commission future services, or referred to their Commissioning Strategy/ Strategic Commissioning Plan, but with minimal details on this. A few CSPs highlighted increased uptake of participatory budgeting opportunities.

A robust Children's Services Plan would include information on the following:

- The children's services budget and how this was being spent across services, partners and users; information on available funds/investments and how they were used

- Information on development of new services and how these were being funded; how resources across the CSPP were being shifted towards prevention and early intervention services and supports, with a clear approach to disinvestment
- Information on commissioning of services
- Details of relevant children's and related services workforce, recruitment strategies and workforce training and development.

As mentioned above, few CSPPs provided information to fully meet this Criterion based on the above description, and this is a key area for development for the next cycle of CSPs and as part of annual reporting.

Good Practice Examples

Moray: A section in Moray's Plan is dedicated to the 2019/20 children and families budget and how this was being spent across universal and targeted services, across different service providers, and in relation to different age groups of children and young people. The Plan mentions an investment shift towards prevention and early intervention as an action which will be monitored through use of a specific measurable performance indicator. Moray's Plan also provides details of planned future investments and uptake of participatory budgeting opportunities to meet local needs. The Plan set out training opportunities to enhance skills and knowledge of the children's services workforce.

Outer Hebrides: The Plan briefly mentions how the 2019/20 children and families budget is spent across partners and services. The Plan references the recruitment of new workforce and describes the use of specific funds to provide support to children and young people. The CSPP offers training opportunities to ensure workforce development.

South Lanarkshire: South Lanarkshire's Plan includes an informative and clear section on finance, which reports on the 2019/20 children and families budget and how this was being spent across services and users, as well as specific commissioned services and prioritised investment areas with aligned funding across partners. The Plan discusses how the CSPP has utilised available funding streams, such as the Care Experienced Children and Young People Attainment Fund and the Infant Mental Health Fund, as well as referencing the contribution of Third Sector organisations and commissioned services. It also describes how the CSPP allocates funding and resources for re-designing of services, for early support services, and for commissioning new services. Finally, the CSP details planned training opportunities for the children's services workforce and wider partners.

The Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network have highlighted a number of barriers faced in moving towards collaborative use of resource across Children's Services Planning Partners. This includes:

- Joint commissioning and procurement processes which can be slow, inflexible and present challenges to innovation
- Allocation of national funding via specific partners does not facilitate truly collaborative cross-sector solutions and use of resource by CSPPs
- Limitations in longer-term planning are faced due to receipt of short-term or temporary national funding streams, which creates uncertainty as to future sustainability
- A disconnect between children's service and adult service budgets.

A Commissioning and Procurement Subgroup of the Family Support Advisory Group is progressing work to explore these barriers, with an aim of co-developing toolkits which provide solutions, and better

support development of joint commissioning strategies and processes to deliver whole family support in an integrated way. The Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network have been fully involved in these developments and will continue to be engaged in next steps.

Establishment of the NCS will provide further opportunities to consider local and national workforce planning and development as well as funding structures, to support better alignment between children's and adult services alongside any recommendations made by the CLG Workforce Development Subgroup.

10. Use of Data and Evidence (Criteria 3, 4 and 13)

This section of the report discusses the use of data and evidence¹⁷ in the development and evaluation of Children's Services Plans.

Use of Data in Strategic Planning (Criteria 3 and 4)

Criterion 3 considers whether the CSPP have developed their Plan through a robust evidence-based joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) of the population of children, young people and families in the local area. Criterion 4 refers to whether each CSP has included analysis of quantitative and qualitative evidence and data, relating to both service performance and child wellbeing.

An overview of key statistics regarding the population of children, young people and families was helpful in setting out the local context and needs, highlighting achievements from delivery of the 2017-2020 Children's Services Plan, and any new or changing needs which had emerged. A key aim of using data and evidence from the JSNA and other sources, is to identify emergent needs and areas for improvement, to inform the choice of specific strategic priorities and actions through a clearly evidenced rationale.

18 out of 30 CSPs included a JSNA. Eight CSPs could have been improved through provision of additional information on the local needs of children and families, and four CSPs did not make any reference to an assessment at all.

The following were identified as examples of best practice in relation to Criterion 3:

- A section of the Plan which clearly presented a JSNA and described how this was conducted, together with data and evidence on the local area, population of children, young people and families, key demographics, and the current delivery context
- Quantitative and qualitative data from several sources, such as surveys, consultations, focus groups, engagement events
- A short summary of key findings from the JSNA
- Data and evidence on groups of children and young people with specific needs (for example Gypsy/Travellers, care experience, complex health needs or disability, young carers)
- Clear links between the data included, achievements/milestones of progress, identified areas for improvement activity, and to inform identification of the strategic priorities for the Plan
- Presentation of data and key findings in a user-friendly way – graphs and tables where appropriate, and supported comparisons between local and national averages, or changes in indicators of wellbeing over time, to show whether each area was showing improved outcomes for children and families, or suggested further improvement was required
- Explanations of data trends, indicators used, and data sources.

¹⁷ A list of commonly used indicators and data sources in CSPs can be found in [Appendix F](#).

Focusing on **Criterion 4** on evidence and data, Part 3 of the Guidance asks Children's Services Planning Partnerships to include a section with data relating to service performance and child wellbeing, including evidence of progress being made against national and local objectives to improve outcomes for all children and young people. This also includes a summary review of the previous Children's Services Plan (2017-2020) and findings from self-evaluation, audit and inspection on service performance. The aim of drawing on collaborative use of data and evidence is to enable the CSPP to demonstrate improved outcomes and successes, alongside identifying areas where further action and/or development was needed.

More than half the CSPs did not provide enough information to fully or partially satisfy this Criterion, with only 13 CSPs meeting it in full. 12 CSPs needed to strengthen their use of data by providing additional detail, and five Plans did not provide robust data and evidence.

CSPs that met this Criterion well, had included a section with data on key areas of wellbeing, such as education, early years, health, additional support needs etc. and used this as a basis for understanding local needs and to review provision of services and supports to children and families over the period of the Plan.

An example of good practice was provision of clear information on what services were being offered over the period of the CSP to meet identified local needs, and their impact on outcomes using statistics, quotes from service providers and from children, young people and families on their lived experiences. Another example of best practice was discussion of each strategic priority with presentation of local data and evidence to show why this was important, and what it aimed to achieve. Some CSPs included a summarised review progress made in delivery of their 2017-2020 Plan which highlighted their achievements and areas identified for further improvement.

Robust Plans presented their data in a clear and user-friendly way, with specific timeframes, data sources, graphs and tables where appropriate, explanations of data trends and indicators used, and benchmarking comparisons across national and local performance and for the CSPP area over time. Another example of best practice, noted in three CSPs, was to link data and evidence with aspects of wellbeing (across SHANARRI) and with relevant children's rights.

Those Children's Services Plans that would have been strengthened through inclusion of additional information (12 out of 30) would have been improved by providing detail of the following:

- A summary review of the 2017-2020 Children's Services Plan (eight CSPs did not include this)
- Evidence of service performance (eight CSPs missed this information)
- Clearer links between local data and evidence, and the selection of strategic priorities (nine CSPs did not include this)
- More quantitative and qualitative data to identify emergent needs of children and families, and identify areas for improvement.

Good Practice Examples

East Ayrshire: The Plan includes a section on the successes of the 2017-2020 CSP presented with the use of data and evidence, including statistics and testimonials from young people, as well as active links to case study examples of improvement work that was undertaken through 2017-2020. The section is clear and user-friendly. Another section presents findings from engagement events and data in order to identify the main challenges which led to the development of the CSP.

Orkney: Orkney's CSP showed great use of data and evidence-based strategic priorities. The Plan used local data to explain the rationale for each priority and services to be delivered, highlighting the areas where Orkney has made good progress in improving outcomes, as well as the areas that needed further development. Data and evidence from engagement events and consultation with young people were included, linked to wellbeing across SHANARRI, and a set of measurable indicators is in place to monitor progress of priorities and actions. Data had been presented in a clear and user-friendly way and showed very clearly a direct link to the services and actions contained in the Plan.

Stirling: Stirling's CSP showed excellent use of data and evidence, which were discussed in several sections of the Plan. A multi-agency working group is responsible for the joint strategic needs assessment, to provide data which helps the CSPP prioritise action. Stirling's Plan included a section with key findings from the JSNA, a section evaluating progress made over the period of the 2017-2020 Plan (using outcome measures), and two sections which summarised findings from local engagement activity (focus groups, interviews, lived experiences) with children, young people, families, and professionals. It also presented data from local surveys, alongside data on children's wellbeing, and service performance information.

The Plan included statistics on Stirling's population and specific figures on outcomes for children in poverty, in need of protection, with care experience, affected by disabilities, and in need of support with mental health and mental wellbeing. Where there was no local data available, Stirling drew on national data to identify groups of children and young people with poorer outcomes and considered this within the local context. An online appendix has been attached providing further details on how the CSPP had gathered data and evidence through the JSNA. This detailed evaluation of service impacts and engagement with professionals, children and families showed how the evidence had informed the development of Stirling's Plan. The appendix included a very clear table which showed outcome indicators from the 2017-2020 Plan, and highlighted where progress had been made, and where it had not. This concise and clear appendix made Stirling's Plan very robust through being explicit about its evidence base.

Use of Data in Monitoring Progress of Plans (Criterion 13)

Part 3 of the Guidance indicates that clear indicators of progress should be detailed to support the CSPP to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of any action and service delivery contained within the Children's Services Plan.

Just over half the Plans fully met this Criterion (17 out of 30). One CSP had some measures of progress, but needed to build on this by including further detail, and 12 CSPs did not contain clear progress indicators or performance measures.

A robust CSP should include a set of measurable indicators which enables the CSPP to monitor the progress of each strategic priority and any aligned actions. This should also provide information on how

the CSPP plans to monitor and evaluate the Plan overall, including data on the performance and impact of children's and adult services.

Among the tools used to monitor and evaluate services mentioned in the CSPs reviewed were:

- (Joint) Self-evaluation activity
- Quality Assurance Framework and internal audit
- Quality Improvement Methodology (QI) utilising support from the Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC)
- External audit, scrutiny, and service/ thematic inspections
- Annual reporting/ Periodic performance monitoring
- Qualitative and Quantitative data and evidence, including feedback from children, young people and families and service providers, analysis of administrative data, surveys and consultations
- Logic models
- Scottish Government's Three Step Improvement Framework for Public Services.

18 out of 30 CSPs included a set of measurable indicators to monitor the progress of their strategic priorities. Best practice included:

- Tables breaking each strategic priority down into concrete aims, actions, with one or more measurable performance indicators
- Measurable indicators aligned with aspects of wellbeing across SHANARRI
- Baseline, current performance, and target percentage or intended change for each measurable indicator
- Inclusion of data source(s) for each indicator.

Good Practice Examples

Edinburgh: Edinburgh's Plan included a clear section on measuring success, describing ongoing collection of feedback from children, young people and their families, periodic reporting to the CSPP from delivery groups, and a set of population measures relating to the CSP's aims. This presented measurable indicators of progress for each of the 3 aims of Edinburgh's Plan, including the current baseline percentage. Nine indicators were used in total for the high level aims, which is a manageable set of indicators.

East Renfrewshire: East Renfrewshire's Plan included measurable indicators (31) to monitor different elements of the Plan's success and impact. These measures were listed under each of the Plan's priorities, with clear detail of how East Renfrewshire CSPP will also measure progress of these via analysis of local improvement and evaluation activity, as well as feedback from children, young people and their families. The Plan also included two dedicated sections providing information on local evaluation of implementation activity, and measuring success.

Fife: Fife's Plan included a list of measurable indicators, which were presented in a clear and robust way. Each indicator is attached to the current Fife performance, benchmark and improvement goal (all in percentages). This way of presenting the indicators reflects an area of best practice. The list included 8 indicators, which is a manageable number. The Plan described how other methods of evaluation will also be used to supplement this, such as the use of a quality improvement approach, feedback from children, young people, families and staff, the Scottish Government's Three Step Improvement Framework, and the 4DX Methodology.

11. SMART (Criterion 14)

Criterion 14 considers the format of CSPs and whether information is presented in a SMART way. To have fully satisfied this Criterion CSPPs should have met all SMART requirements:

Specific – be specific about priorities, actions, outcomes and which services are contributing

Measurable – include measurable priorities and a set of measurable indicators of progress

Achievable – have clear aims and robust governance arrangements

Relevant – include a narrative on services offered

Time-related – specify timescales for priorities and/or actions.

Five out of 30 CSPs fully satisfied this Criterion, while the remaining 25 only partially satisfied it as they needed to add further information.

CSPPs could fully meet this Criterion in future Plans by including:

- a one-page summary of the Plan at the start of the report
- an accessibility section with information on how different audiences can access the Plan and publishing this in different formats (website, videos, alternative languages etc.)
- a child/ family-friendly Plan or have a version of the Plan specifically aimed at children, young people and families
- information on timescales and leads for each strategic priority/high level action
- measurable priorities and a set of measurable indicators used to monitor progress
- clear and short sections, with clear headings.

Plans with many acronyms are not particularly child-friendly. A few Plans included a table with acronyms and a glossary of terms used, both useful additions. A couple of Plans included a section dedicated to children and young people or addressed directly to them. Another example of best practice was the development of an accessible version of the CSP to ensure that children and young people are aware of the key priorities driving local services and understand what actions are planned to improve support and services.

The two SMART components that were mostly unmet by CSPPs were 'time-related' and 'measurable'. All CSPs that only partially satisfied this Criterion (25 out of 30) needed to provide information on timescales for their strategic priorities, while 12 out of 30 Plans were not measurable. Other problems encountered were very long Plans, Plans addressed only to technical audiences, and Plans which were not well-structured (very long sections and/ or unclear headings). There is need for the Plans to be concise, but at the same time, rich in information with a clear narrative around the development of the CSP and services offered. Including tables that link priorities, aims, actions, performance indicators, leads and timescales could help achieve that.

Good Practice Examples

Aberdeenshire: Even though Aberdeenshire published a long Plan, it is well-structured, with clear sections and headings. It includes a glossary of terms and a table with aims, actions, performance measures, leads, timescales, SHANARRI wellbeing aspects and UNCRC articles, bringing everything together. The Plan is *specific* as it has specific priorities and aims; *measurable* as it set measurable indicators to monitor the progress for each aim/action; *achievable* with a clear governance structure and leads for each priority; *relevant* with a great narrative around the services offered; and *time-related* as it provided timescales for each priority.

East Renfrewshire: At the start of this Plan is a very useful and user-friendly one-page summary, including vision, values, approach, wellbeing outcomes, priorities and success measures.

Midlothian: Midlothian's Plan is well-structured, with short sections and clear headings. It includes tables with actions, timescales, performance indicators, and leads. The Plan is *specific* as it has specific priorities, actions and outcomes; *measurable* as it set measurable indicators to monitor the progress for each high level action; *achievable* with a clear governance structure and leads for each priority; *relevant* with a narrative around the services offered; and *time-related* as it provided timescales for each high level action.

Orkney: The Plan is easy to read with a user-friendly format. An action plan presents clearly how the priorities are linked to aims, actions, measurable indicators, leads and timescales. The Plan is *specific* as it has very specific outcomes and links between priorities and actions; *measurable* as it set measurable indicators to monitor the progress for each high level action; *achievable* with a clear governance structure and leads for each high level action; *relevant* with a great narrative around the services offered and the impact of COVID-19 on children and young people; and *time-related* as it provides timescales for each high level action.

12. Summary & Reflections

This report has discussed review findings from the analysis of Scotland's 30 Children's Services Plans published in 2020/21 and provided an overview of policy developments relevant to Children's Services Planning and key themes from strategic engagement.

The aim of the report was to set out the extent to which CSPPs have met Criteria set by Part 3 of the Statutory Guidance and to identify areas of strength in Children's Services Planning, as well as areas where further support is needed.

What is going well?

Seven Criteria were fully satisfied by 21 or more CSPPs (highlighted in green in Table 1 in the [Executive Summary](#)):

- Include a **clear and shared vision**
- Offer services with a **focus on prevention and early intervention**
- Incorporate the **GIRFEC** practice approach
- Incorporate **children's rights and UNCRC**
- Present **links to aligned national/local plans**
- Include **narrative on children's services** offered
- Set out a **comprehensive local strategy for whole family support** showing how and where services provide this.

Other areas of strength across CSPs included:

- Most CSPs presented **robust governance arrangements** and highlighted the importance of multi-agency collaboration, in line with the 2019 review of the 2017-2020 CSPs
- All CSPs identified **clear strategic priorities**. The vast majority of CSPs identified manageable priorities, with a clear governance structure to oversee delivery and progress described
- Most CSPs mentioned **COVID-19** and some Plans set out how services and supports were adapted or created to respond to the emerging needs of children and families as a result of impacts of the pandemic
- Most CSPs referred to local offers of **workforce training and development** opportunities.

What needs more support?

Five Criteria from Part 3 of the Guidance were not or only partially satisfied by 15 or more CSPPs (highlighted in red in Table 1 in the [Executive Summary](#)) and four Criteria were not or only partially satisfied by 10-14 Plans (highlighted in amber).

From the review of the 30 CSPs the following areas requiring further development emerged:

- Most Plans only partially satisfied the **SMART** Criterion. In particular, most Plans were not time-related, and slightly less than half were not measurable.
- 12 out of 30 Plans did not include **measurable priorities** and only half the Plans set out priorities which were clearly linked to data and evidence which explained the **rationale** behind their choice.
- Two thirds of CSPs did not provide information for children's services **budget** and how it is spent across services and partners shifting investment to prevention and early intervention.
- 12 out of 30 Plans did not include a **joint strategic needs assessment**. More than half the CSPs needed to strengthen their use of data and evidence by providing additional detail. 12 out of 30 CSPs did not contain clear progress indicators or performance measures. Overall, CSPPs used data and evidence when writing their Plans, but it was not always clear how these data were used when developing the Plans and services, and identifying priorities and areas that require further improvement.
- Even though all CSPPs fully or partially satisfied the Criterion on **Engagement and Ownership**, 16 Plans would have benefitted from adding further information, especially around engagement with local workforce and the wider community. 17 CSPPs needed to include more information to better evidence how Third Sector organisations have participated in development and delivery of services and supports, in line with the 2019 review.
- 14 of the 30 CSPs needed to make stronger and/ or more explicit links between their strategic priorities and outcomes and the **NPF** Outcomes.
- Although the majority of Plans made some reference to provision of **children's services**, most would benefit from a more detailed narrative on specific services planned over the period of the Plan to meet strategic priorities and from including examples of the different types of universal, generally available, and targeted/ intensive children's services available. A third of the Plans could have included more information on **related services**, in line with the 2019 review.
- A third of the Plans needed to discuss their **family support** strategy in further detail.

Final Thoughts

Children's Services Planning Partnerships have published interesting, ambitious and well-thought out Children's Services Plans overall, with examples of good practice highlighted throughout this report to share examples of where particular Criteria were met well. This demonstrates the dedication and commitment across Scotland in working collaboratively to strengthen the approach and delivery of

Children's Services Planning, with the ultimate aim of improving outcomes for every child, young person and family.

The findings of this review are intended to support CSPPs in developing their next Children's Services Plans. Together with the learning from policy developments and strategic engagement referred to throughout this report, findings will inform recommendations on priority improvement action related to Children's Services Planning and inform relevant transformational change programmes undertaken through the COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group, Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network, and other stakeholder forums.

Appendix A – External Links to Children’s Services Plans (2020-2023)

Table 1 – List of Children’s Services Plans for each Children’s Services Planning Partnership

Children’s Services Planning Partnership Children’s Services Plans	
CSPP Area	Link to Children’s Services Plan
Aberdeen City	Aberdeen City Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Aberdeenshire	Aberdeenshire Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Argyll and Bute	Argyll & Bute Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Clackmannanshire	Clackmannanshire Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2024
Dumfries & Galloway	Dumfries & Galloway Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
East Ayrshire	East Ayrshire Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
East Dunbartonshire	East Dunbartonshire Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
East Lothian	East Lothian Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
East Renfrewshire	East Renfrewshire Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Edinburgh City	Edinburgh City Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Falkirk	Falkirk Children’s Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Fife	Fife Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2023
Glasgow City	Glasgow City Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Highland	Highland Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Inverclyde	Inverclyde Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Midlothian	Mid Lothian Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Moray	Moray Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
North Ayrshire	North Ayrshire Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
North Lanarkshire	North Lanarkshire Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2023
Orkney	Orkney Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2023
Renfrewshire	Renfrewshire Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2024
Scottish Borders	Scottish Borders Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2023
Shetland	Shetland Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2024
South Ayrshire	South Ayrshire Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
South Lanarkshire	South Lanarkshire Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2023
Stirling	Stirling Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
Tayside (Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross)	Tayside Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2023
West Dunbartonshire	West Dunbartonshire Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2023
Western Isles/Outer Hebrides	Western Isles Children's Services Plan 2020 - 2023
West Lothian	West Lothian Children's Services Plan 2021 - 2023

Appendix B – Part 3 Statutory Guidance Review Criteria

Table 1 – Children’s Services Plans: Part 3 Statutory Guidance Review Criteria

Does the Children’s Services Plan....
1. Have a clear, ambitious compelling shared vision of what will be achieved by the end of the Plan?
2. Reflect relevant National Performance Framework Outcomes?
3. Incorporate a robust evidence-based joint strategic needs assessment of the current population of the children and young people in its area?
4. Include analysis of quantitative and qualitative evidence and data relating to both service performance and child wellbeing?
5. Identify a manageable number of measureable priorities clearly linked to the joint needs assessment to ensure that the rationale behind the priorities is explicit?
6. Cover local services which fall into the categories of both ‘children’s services’ and ‘related services’ in its scope?
7. Recognise and describe services which can fulfil both ‘primary prevention’ and ‘early intervention’ across all aspects of wellbeing?
8. Describe how the Children’s Services Planning Partnership is creating and maintaining effective Getting it right for every child practice for individual children, young people and their families?
9. Describe how the Children’s Services Planning Partnership is using children’s rights to inform the structural, procedural and outcome framework of the Plan?
10. Convey a shared sense of ongoing engagement and ownership with staff, children, young people, families and the wider community, evidencing that the Children’s Services Planning Partnership has made full use of stakeholder’s ideas and suggestions?
11. Set out a comprehensive strategy for supporting families through a broad range of preventative and early intervention approaches from universal services to targeted intensive support and describe the rationale for how and where the family support services are provided?
12. Describe what services are going to be developed in the future and specifying which areas will see disinvestment in order to facilitate the shift of resources towards preventative and early intervention options?
13. Set clear indicators for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of children’s services in terms of their success in responding to and addressing children’s wellbeing needs?
14. Present all the information in an easily accessible format which is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-related)?
15. Illustrate links (or incorporation) of other statutory plans and reports?

Appendix C – COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group (CLG) Action Plan

Table 1 – Summarised Extract of CLG Action Plan (2021)

Access to Services	<p>Action was taken to seek assurance on availability of local and national services and supports for families during the pandemic, with provision of information from the 30 Children’s Services Planning Partnerships (CSPPs) on effective partnership working, and available routes of access for children, young people and families to access support.</p> <p>Responses detailed an extensive range of supports being provided across CSPP partners. This included Named Persons as a key point of contact and universal services of health and education, as well as support from targeted/ specialist services, and Third Sector organisations. There were similarly extensive mechanisms being used to publicise and promote information to raise awareness of available services and support with children, families and the general public.</p> <p>Key messaging was provided for national helplines; with a snapshot regional directory of available services/ support developed and distributed to national helplines and Children’s Services Planning Partnerships. A summary of collated good practice examples of pandemic practice shared learning more widely.</p>
Workforce Resilience	<p>Action focussed on gaining insight to understand issues impacting on national and local workforce resilience, to inform any need for rapid mitigation responses and maintenance of sufficient staffing capacity for ongoing provision of support to children and families. This included monitoring and development of national recruitment initiatives including the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) national recruitment portal and temporary social work register, and working with CSPPs to identify and promote mutual aid arrangements in each local authority area.</p> <p>Actions also contributed to workforce resilience and wellbeing by ensuring national wellbeing resources such as The Promise Scotland website and workforce specialist services were being accessed, with effective dissemination of information through professional networks, information bulletins, and digital platforms. Other initiatives developed locally, included coaching and mentoring schemes, peer support, and mental health first aid.</p> <p>This work informed establishment of the CLG’s Workforce Planning and Resilience Sub-Group. This has an objective of progressing an integrated whole system approach to workforce planning and professional development with a focus on cross-sector messaging, multi-disciplinary workforce supply and demand, and revised competency and skills frameworks for the workforce based on UNCRC, GIRFEC, and the Promise. The Subgroup will also focus on workforce wellbeing to address pandemic impacts and support longer-term resilience and recovery, building on learning from national and local initiatives.</p>

Appendix D - Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads Network: Terms of Reference

Network Purpose

To improve wellbeing outcomes for *all* children, young people and families across Scotland¹⁸. The Network does this by promoting collaboration between and across Children's Services Planning Partnerships (CSPPs), Scottish Government and key stakeholders, with an aim of strengthening the development, delivery and accountability of Children's Services Planning arrangements.

The Network facilitates a supportive forum through which Network members:

- Connect to share knowledge, resources and reflect on learning
- Showcase and share good practice to support scale and spread
- Influence and inform national policy, legislation and priority action
- Identify need, and progress national/ local action to address policy priorities and respond to emergent needs of children, young people and families
- Embed approaches which support prevention and early intervention and in line with the statutory aims of Children's Services Planning
- Identify and contribute to improvement activity as this relates to Children's Services Planning, working collaboratively to find solutions
- Proactively contribute and provide constructive challenge to the development of national/ local strategic approaches to improve outcomes for children, young people and families
- Play a key role supporting post-pandemic recovery arrangements, highlighting relevant information which informs national/local action required to address the needs of children, young people and families in vulnerable situations.

Legislative/Policy Context

Children's Services Plans are key to the delivery of Getting it right for every child, at a strategic, operational, and practice level. Children's Services Planning is a joint statutory requirement of the local authority and health board, to work in partnership with public bodies, statutory and Third Sector organisations, children, young people, families and communities, to locally exercise the functions conferred by Part 3 (Children's Services Planning) of the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#). These functions cover both 'Children's Services' and 'Related Services' as set out in Part 3 [Statutory Guidance](#).

Network Membership

A list of current Network members is included at Table 1 below. This includes:

- Strategic Lead representation from each Children's Services Planning Partnership
- Representatives on behalf of key sectors and/ or bodies
- Scottish Government policy leads.

Meaningful participation of children and young people is supported via local partnership youth participation networks and through the network of children/young people's forums engaged with national policy and strategic development work. Additional engagement and/ or consultation will be proactively considered by the Network. Additional local and national stakeholders may be invited to

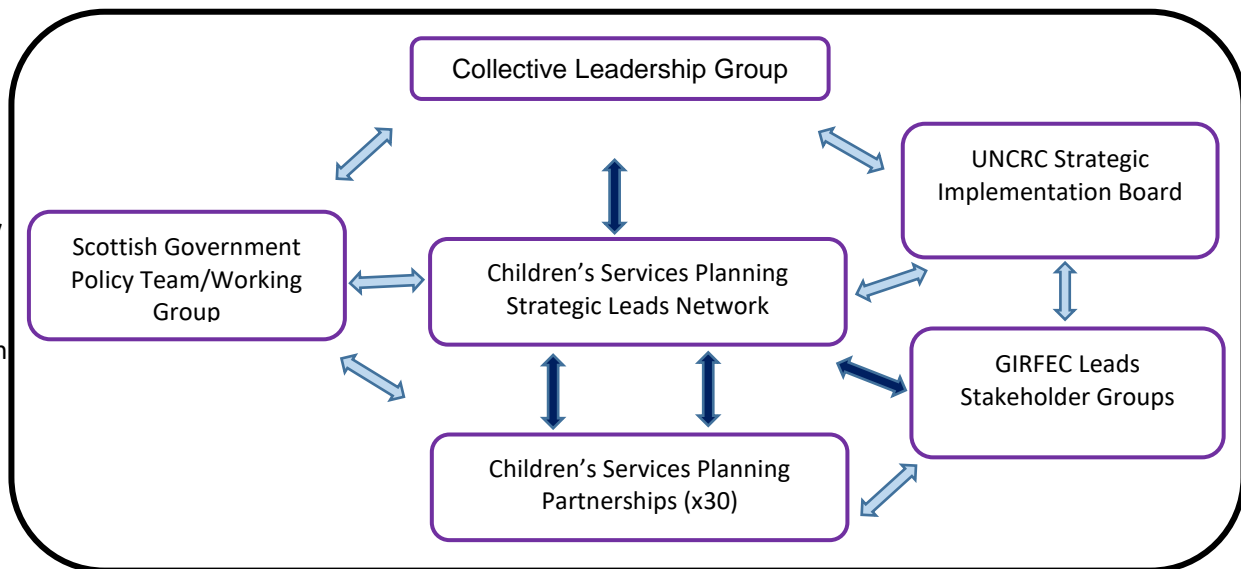
¹⁸ Use of the term Children, Young People and Families includes unborn babies and support to families throughout pregnancy.

additional specific Network meetings or events where this widens engagement on a particular area of interest/ development.

Diagram 1 – Governance

Relationship Key

- Accountability
- Communication /Engagement



Children's Services Planning legislation sets out statutory duties with direct accountability to **Scottish Government Ministers** mandated through a 3-year planning cycle and annual reporting. Updates from Network meetings will be shared, where appropriate, with the relevant Cabinet Secretary and Minister through portfolio meetings.

The Network may, where required, escalate issues for resolution or make recommendations to inform decision-making and consideration by the **Collective Leadership Group**. The Network is accountable for responding to requests from the Collective Leadership Group and Ministers in support of action required to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Network members have individual and collective responsibility to progress implementation of UNCRC, GIRFEC and The Promise as fundamental aspects of Children's Services Planning. The Network will support and contribute to this through co-development of approaches and collaboration with **relevant governance, delivery, and stakeholder groups**.

Ultimate accountability is to **Scotland's children, young people and families**.

Chair

The Network is co-chaired by **Michael Chalmers**, Director for Children and Families, Scottish Government and **Carrie Lindsay**, Executive Director for Education & Children's Services, Fife Council (Strategic Lead for Fife CSPP).

Secretariat

Secretariat is provided by the Scottish Government Strategy Team at:

C&F.StrategicEngagement@gov.scot and will:

- Prepare and provide the chair's brief
- Provide a point of contact and communication for Network members
- Organise/ facilitate Network meetings, and support engagement and connectivity
- Inform members of meeting arrangements and circulate agenda/ papers
- Capture Network minutes and issue these to members, highlighting follow-up action.

Role of Network Members

Network members should:

- Promote ongoing development of the Network through contributing to agendas, sharing good practice and learning and engagement with Network members
- Ensure regular attendance and proactive participation in the Network
- Have sufficient authority to deliver the aims and agreed Network tasks with local/ national partners and colleagues, to support implementation of required policy or resource commitments as these relate to Children's Services Planning
- Appoint an alternate attendee where unable to attend (alternate attendees for Strategic Leads will preferably be another agency/ Third Sector representative who is a member of the local strategic/ leadership group with responsibility for Children's Services Planning)
- Share Network minutes with relevant colleagues, and where a strategic lead, with membership of the local CSP strategic partnership
- Support agenda setting within their own partnership/ team/ organisation which ensures colleagues are cited on the strategic Network's activity and focus
- Coordinate responses and progress action on behalf of their partnership, organisation or policy area, as agreed by the Network, or requested by the Collective Leadership Group.

Meeting Frequency

- The Network will meet quarterly, with dates notified in advance.
- Meetings remain virtual at present, with a move to a blended approach of virtual and face-to face meetings when pandemic-related restrictions permit. Continued arrangements to accommodate virtual attendance will be made as far as possible when members are unable to attend in person.
- Additional topic-specific sessions will be and offered to support in-depth exploration of specific areas of policy and practice related to development/ delivery of aspects of Children's Services Plans as identified through Network engagement and national priorities.
- Virtual engagement platforms will further support Network interaction.

Table 1 – Summary of CSP Strategic Leads Network Membership

Children's Services Planning Partnerships	Other Organisations/ Professional Bodies	Scottish Government Policy Representation
Aberdeen City	COSLA	Children & Families Directorate
Aberdeenshire	The Promise Scotland	Strategy, GIRFEC & the Promise Division
Argyll and Bute	Care Inspectorate	Learning Directorate
Clackmannanshire	Public Health Scotland (PHS)	Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor (OCSWA)
Dumfries & Galloway	Third Sector Representation	Family Unit
East Ayrshire	CELCIS	Midwifery & Nursing
East Dunbartonshire	Children in Scotland	Promise Implementation
East Lothian	National TSI Network	Care, Protection & Justice
East Renfrewshire		Improving Health & Wellbeing
Edinburgh City		Mental Health & Social Care
Falkirk		Early Learning & Childcare
Fife		Employability
Glasgow City		Population Health
Highland		Poverty Division, Housing & Social Justice
Inverclyde		Children & Young People's Collaborative (CYPIC)
Midlothian		Children's Rights/ UNCRC Implementation
Moray		Adverse Childhood Experiences & Resilience
North Ayrshire		GIRFEC
North Lanarkshire		Public Service Reform
Orkney		Children & Families Analysis
Renfrewshire		Social Justice Delivery Unit
Scottish Borders		
Shetland		
South Ayrshire		
South Lanarkshire		
Stirling		
Tayside (Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross)		
West Dunbartonshire		
Western Isles/Outer Hebrides		
West Lothian		

Appendix E – Children, Young People and Families Outcomes Framework

Development of the Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) Outcomes Framework

Following a temporary pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic, work on the CYPF Outcomes Framework recommenced in early 2021, with further stakeholder engagement and a co-development approach adopted with establishment of a Steering Group and Working Group in June 2021.

Membership includes statutory services and Third Sector participants, policy leads for public service reform and the National Performance Framework, representation from The Promise Scotland, COSLA, Improvement Service Scotland, and the Care Inspectorate, with 4 Children's Services Planning Partnerships contributing to this work (Moray, Glasgow, Dumfries & Galloway, and Tayside).

The Steering Group are responsible for providing updates and making recommendations to the COVID-19 Children & Families Collective Leadership Group, with a focus on ensuring the framework's overall approach is developed in tandem with related work on outcomes, aligned frameworks and underpinning data/indicators. The Working Group had a remit of establishing a Core Wellbeing Indicator Set.

Wellbeing Outcomes and Shared Aims

Through GIRFEC, Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes for children and young people, a definition of wellbeing (SHANARRI) is well-embedded in policy, legislation and practice. Pre and post-COVID-19 stakeholder engagement established broad support for aligning the Wellbeing Outcomes with this definition, and drawing on the 'My World Triangle.' This understands babies, children, and young people's wellbeing is influenced by individual growth and development, networks of family and/or care, and the impact of local community and wider society.

Findings from a range of direct engagement with children, young people and families were analysed, with 'what matters' forming the basis for the CYPF Outcomes Framework. This sets out 8 overarching Wellbeing Outcomes (Diagram 1) underpinned by a set of Shared Aims (Diagram 2), which reflect in more detail what everyone in Scotland needs to work towards in order to achieve improved wellbeing for children, young people and families.

Engagement activity via the CSP Strategic Leads Network informed development of the Children Young People & Families Outcomes Framework, with some Children's Services Planning Partnerships facilitating direct engagement with local children, young people and families on the wellbeing outcomes and shared aims.

Core Wellbeing Indicator Set

The CYPF Outcomes Framework Working Group developed a **Core Wellbeing Indicator Set** (Diagram 3) through an in-depth collaborative process. The purpose of the Core Wellbeing Indicator Set is to provide a high level holistic overview of wellbeing of children, young people and families in Scotland, which highlights whether desired long term outcomes are being achieved, and helps to identify where improvements are required.

The Core Wellbeing Indicator Set consists of 21 indicators which cover key aspects of wellbeing, based on 'what matters' to children, young people and families (Diagram 4), and is holistic, reflecting all eight Wellbeing Outcomes and the three sides of the My World Triangle.

The Core Wellbeing Indicator Set is designed to be used at a local level within annual reporting on Children's Services Plans. This aims to facilitate more consistency in reporting across Scotland, but acknowledges that annual reports will continue to include additional locally-determined data which demonstrates progress of the Children's Services Plan, such as detailed indicators on specific aspects of wellbeing and other progress measures evidencing the impact of local service delivery and improvement activity.

At a national level the Core Wellbeing Indicator Set will be used as part of a developing approach to national reporting on wellbeing. Analysis will identify where there are significant differences in outcomes for particular groups of children and young people. As well as identifying trends, areas of success and concern related to the wellbeing of Scotland's children, young people and families population as a whole, reporting on the indicators will show us how well Scotland is closing any 'wellbeing gaps'. Alongside the views and experiences of children, young people and families, this will inform national and local priority setting and influence any adaptations to planning and delivery of support.

Next steps include:

- **Revision of Shared Aims/ Outcomes descriptors** based on stakeholder feedback
- **Co-design/ development of material** to illustrate practical application and support use of the CYPF Outcomes Framework in different contexts (policy, organisational, sector-specific, CSPs)
- Ongoing **engagement with stakeholders to understand readiness** for implementation, identifying barriers and providing support
- **Development of the detailed reporting approach**, collaborating with stakeholders
- **Data development** - mapping areas of current indicator development with identified data leads, and establish a wellbeing data network or working group to coordinate action to fill gaps, including additional demographic breakdowns of data
- **Mapping current datasets and indicators** and ensuring clear connections between the CYPF Outcomes Framework, underpinning policy/delivery frameworks, and deep dive data
- **Building further on identified cross-sector strategic connections:** Single Promise Implementation Plan, COVID-19 Recovery Strategy, Child Poverty Delivery Plan, Wellbeing budgeting/economy.

Diagram 1 - Wellbeing Outcomes for Children, Young People and Families

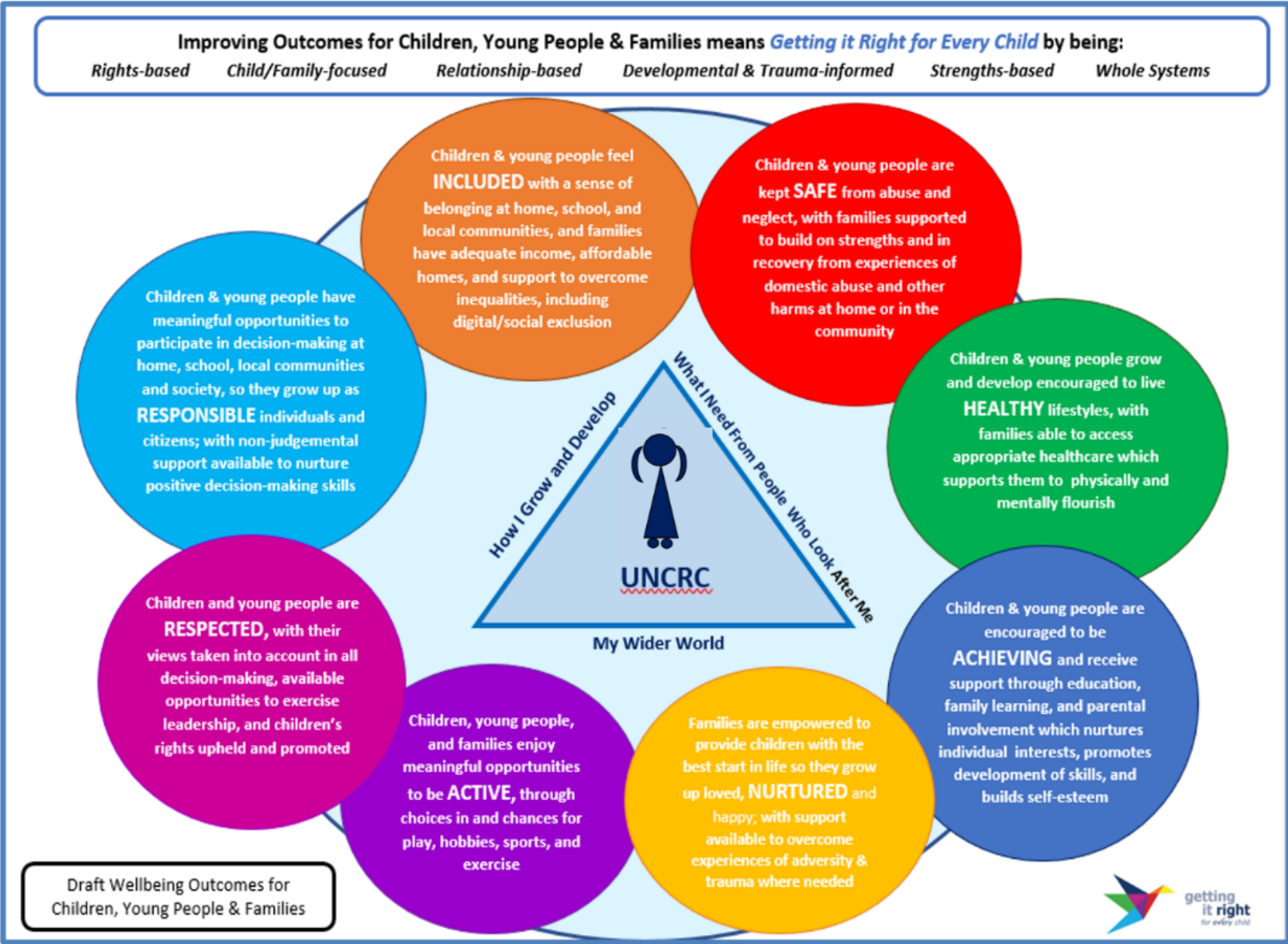


Diagram 2 – Outcomes Framework Shared Aims

How I Grow and Develop
We are encouraged/supported to express our beliefs and identity and all forms of bullying, discrimination and harassment are tackled.
We are resilient, with positive mental health and wellbeing and have access to early help.
We have the best possible physical health and live healthy and active lifestyles with no barriers to accessing care or support.
We have opportunities to develop leadership and are empowered to participate meaningfully in all decisions that affect us.
We recognise our responsibilities to others and positively contribute at home, in school and to our local, national and global communities.
We are encouraged to develop individual interests and have opportunities for indoors and outdoors play, exercise, sport, recreation and culture.
We are equipped to successfully navigate key times of transition, with co-ordinated support available to overcome any barriers including into young adulthood.
We have engaging and inclusive learning opportunities which build self-esteem, knowledge, and life-skills.
Our rights are upheld and the UNCRC is fully implemented.

What I Need From People Who Look After Me
We have trusting relationships with caring and non-judgemental adults who listen to, value and encourage us, and provide our families with the right help at the right time through GIRFEC.
We grow up in loving families and homes that nurture us and keep us safe.
We have access to early support to recover from experiences of trauma and neglect.
We have the best possible physical health and live healthy and active lifestyles with no barriers to accessing care or support.
Where living with our family is not possible we stay in a loving home for as long as we need and are supported to maintain safe, loving relationships.
Where we cannot live with our family we stay together with our brothers and sisters where safe to do so.
Universally available support helps families flourish so children grow and develop healthily from pre-birth throughout childhood.
We have access to information, and advocacy and child-centred legal advice and representation.
We receive early support to prevent and reduce conflict with the law, through a rights-based approach to youth justice.
Family support feels and is experienced as integrated by children, young people, families and the workforce, through joined up help that is non-judgemental and there when needed, for as long as it is needed.
We have positive relationships with the people we live with and opportunities to spend time with people we care about.
We participate fully in co-designing services which meet the needs of our families.

My Wider World
Our home, school, online and local communities are safe and welcoming spaces, where we can connect with friends, families and communities.
Our families have locally available, affordable, quality early learning and child care, and wraparound care.
Our families live in affordable, secure and stable high quality homes which meet our needs.
Our families live in thriving communities supported by local resources, digital access, social innovation and access to sustainable, reliable transport and green space.
We live in neighbourhoods which are free from crime and antisocial behaviour and other harms.
Our families have a good standard of income, and the root causes of inequality are tackled so we grow up free from experiences of poverty.
Our families have access to lifelong training and learning and employment opportunities with fair pay.
Our communities are sustainable, and we have opportunities to make our voices heard and take action on climate change, climate justice and caring for the environment.
We are supported through pathways into sustainable positive destinations, and employment opportunities for young people with fair pay.

Diagram 3 - Core Wellbeing Indicator Set

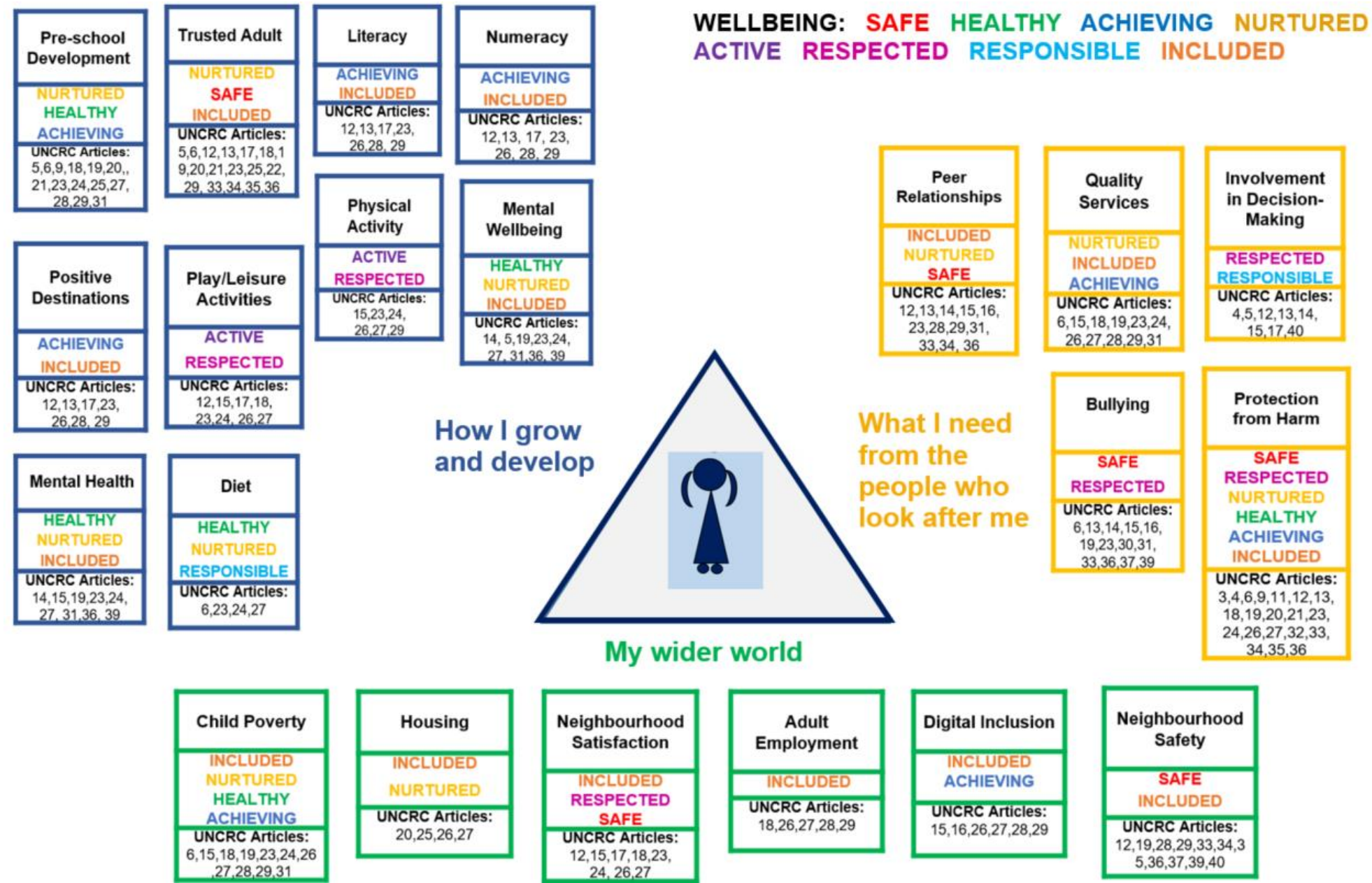


Diagram 4 - Prioritised Topics of Wellbeing

Topic of Wellbeing	Core Wellbeing Indicator	Topic of Wellbeing	Core Wellbeing Indicator	Topic of Wellbeing	Core Wellbeing Indicator
Positive destinations of school leavers	% school leavers in positive destinations at 9-month follow-up	Neighbourhood satisfaction	% P5-S6 children who agree their local area is a good place to live	Mental health/mental wellbeing	Mean score on Stirling wellbeing scale (P5-S1 children) & Warwick Edi Mental Wellbeing Score (S2-S6 children) (WEMWBS)
% Children in working households	Proportion of children under 16 living in households with at least one person age 16-64 where all individuals aged 16+ are in employment	Bullying	% P5-S3 children who say they were bullied in the last year	Being listened to and involved in decision-making	& P5-S6 children who agree adults are good at taking what they say into account
Digital inclusion	% P7-S6 children with access to the internet at home/on phone/another device	Protection from harm	Number of children subject to Interagency Referral Discussions	Diet	% P5-S6 children who eat both fruit and vegetables every day
Peer relationships	% P5-S4 children who agree that their friends treat them well	Housing security	Number of children in temp accommodation at 31 March	Pre-school development	% children with a concern at their 27-30 month review (as a % of children reviewed)
Neighbourhood safety	% P5-S6 children who say they feel safe when out in their local area <i>always</i> or <i>most of the time</i>	Literacy	% of P1, P4 & P7 children achieving expected CfE literacy levels (reading, writing, listening & talking)	Relationships	% P5-S5 children who say they <i>always</i> have an adult in their life they can trust and talk to about any problems
Play/participation in leisure activities	% S1-S3 children participating in positive leisure activities (at least one from list options)	Numeracy	% of P1, P4 & P7 children achieving expected CfE levels in numeracy	Child poverty	Relative child poverty rate (after housing costs)
Physical activity yesterday	% P5-S6 children that had at least 1 hour of exercise the day before the survey	Mental health/mental wellbeing	% S2-S6 children with <i>slightly raised, high or very high</i> Strength & Difficulties score	Easy access to good quality, responsive support	% settings providing funded ELC achieving Care Inspectorate grades of <i>good or better</i> across all 4 quality themes

Appendix F – Indicators and Data Sources

Table 1 – Most commonly used indicators¹⁹ in Children’s Services Plans

Most commonly used indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of eligible children identified as having 1 or more concerns at the 27-30 months review (ISD Child Health 27-30 Month Review Statistics Scotland) • Number of exclusively breastfed babies at 6-8 weeks (ISD Infant Feeding Statistics Scotland) • Rates of referrals to CAMHS (ISD Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Scotland) • Percentage of referrals to CAMHS started treatment within 18 months (ISD Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Scotland) • Number of looked after children age 0-17 (Children’s Social Work Statistics Scotland) • Number of looked after children by type of accommodation (Children’s Social Work Statistics Scotland) • Percentage of looked after children school leavers who enter a positive destination (Local Government Benchmarking Framework) • Attendance rate of primary/secondary school for looked after children (Local Government Benchmarking Framework) • Number of children referred to the Children’s Reporter for offences (SCRA Official Statistics) • Number of children in receipt of free school meals (School Healthy Living Survey statistics) • Percentage of children in households with an income below 60% of the median (Child poverty statistics) • Percentage of young people secured positive post-school destinations in employment, training, volunteering, or further/higher education (SDS) • Number of school exclusions (Local Government Benchmarking Framework) • Percentage of children with a healthy weight at P1 (ISD, Body Mass Index of P1 Children in Scotland) • Percentage of children aged 2-15 at risk of being obese (Scottish Health Survey) • Percentage of P1/P7 children with obvious decay in their permanent teeth (Scottish Health Survey)

¹⁹ This list is not comprehensive of all indicators included in CSPs.

Table 2 – List of Data Sources used in Children’s Services Plans

Data sources used in the CSPs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISD Scotland • Local Government Benchmarking Framework • NRS • SALSUS • Realigning Children’s Services – Local Wellbeing Survey • Children’s Social Work Statistics Scotland • Homelessness in Scotland • SCRA Official Statistics • School Healthy Living Statistics • Child Poverty Statistics • Fuel Poverty and Extreme Fuel Poverty Estimates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills Development Scotland (SDS) • Curriculum for Excellence – OECD review • School Level Summary Statistics • School Exclusion Statistics • Scottish Health Survey • Child and Adolescent Health and Wellbeing: Evidence Review • Pupil Census • Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations • ScotPHO • Domestic Abuse Statistics

Glossary of Commonly Used Terms

Term	Definition	Detail
ASN	Additional Support Needs	Children or young people that require additional support over and above that received by children of the same age to meet their educational outcomes.
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	A specialist service delivered by multi-disciplinary teams for children and young people.
CELCIS	Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland	Scottish Educational Institute based in University of Strathclyde that supports public organisations to drive service change to support children and young people.
CiS	Children in Scotland	Children in Scotland is an organisation which supports a network of people working with children, alongside children and young people themselves to offer a broad, balanced and independent voice.
CLD	Community Learning and Development	Community based learning and personal development opportunities available to all ages.
CLG	Collective Leadership Group	The COVID-19 Children and Families Collective Leadership Group (CLG) brings together national and local government and a broad range of other partners to identify and respond to immediate concerns for children, young people and families with vulnerabilities during the pandemic. The Group now also provides longer term support for the recovery phase, with a focus on strategic change.
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities	COSLA is a councillor led, cross party organisation that provides advocacy for and represents the interests of Scottish Local Authorities at a national level.
CPP	Community Planning Partnership	The name given to all the services that come together to take part in community planning. There are 32 across Scotland, one for each council area.
CSP	Children's Services Plan	Each CSPP is required to produce a 3 Year Children's Services Plan outlining the collective actions the CSPP will undertake to improve outcomes for children and young people.
CSPP	Children's Services Planning Partnership	The collective of services and organisations working in partnership to improve children, young people and families wellbeing through delivery of services and support set out in each area's CSP.
CYPF	Children, Young People and Families	An abbreviation of children, young people and families.
CYPIC	Children and Young Peoples Improvement Collaborative	A Scottish Government led Improvement collaborative with a focus on supporting the development of Improvement work across Scotland.
FSAG	Family Support Advisory Group	A multi-agency governance group with responsibility for overseeing development work relating to the Whole Family Support Approach.
GIRFEC	Getting it Right For Every Child	GIRFEC is Scotland's national approach to supporting children, young people and their families.
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	A strategic needs assessment is required as part of the development of a Children's Services Plan.
LOIP	Local Outcome Improvement Plan	A Statutory Plan aligned to the Community Engagement Act 2015 requiring all Community Planning Partnerships to produce a 10 year LOIP.
NCS	National Care Service	The National Care Service Bill was published on 20 June 2022.

Term	Definition	Detail
NHS	National Health Service	Publically Funded Health Services in the United Kingdom.
NPF	National Performance Framework	The National Performance Framework identifies National Outcomes for Scotland and a framework for monitoring progress.
NRS	National Records Scotland	Scottish Government Department responsible for record keeping and demographic analysis (such as the CENSUS).
OCSWA	Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor	Scottish Government Department responsible for governance of Social Work.
PHS	Public Health Scotland	The national public health body for Scotland.
QI	Quality Improvement	General term associated with Quality Improvement Methodology.
SCRA	Scottish Children's Reporter Association	SCRA is a national body that focusses on supporting children most at risk. It facilitates the work of Children's Reporter and providing support for children and young people through the Children's Hearing System.
STTP	Supporting the Third Sector Project	A project funded by Scottish Government and managed through Children in Scotland with the role of improving the involvement of the Third Sector in Children's Services Planning.
TSI	Third Sector Interface	TSIs provide a single point of access of support and advice for the Third Sector within local areas.
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	A list of 40 articles identified by the UN on the rights of the child.
WFWF	Whole Family Wellbeing Fund	In line with the Programme for Government 2021, a fund to enable a transformational shift in the way family support is delivered from crisis intervention to early intervention.



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