



# MORAY CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN

## ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Children have the right to live

In communities where their voice is heard

And they are built up

To be all that they can be

Moray

Community Planning

Partnership

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FINAL DRAFT

## EXECUTIVE FORWARD

Welcome to the second Annual Report for Moray's Children's Services Plan 2020-2023.

This year has continued to challenge us all and in response, we have witnessed some outstanding joint work between our communities, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations and our statutory services.

Although COVID 19 restrictions have eased, we are acutely aware that children, young people and their families continue to be affected in all aspects of their lives. We know that many families have suffered setbacks, hardship and loss, which will have a lasting impact and potentially widen the equality gap.

Our focus over the past year has been on beginning the recovery process with flexible approaches to service provision and a renewed commitment to working collaboratively, the voice of children and families being firmly at the centre of everything we do.

This annual report summarises the progress we have made against each of our four priorities, whilst recognising the continued impact of COVID 19 on service delivery.

Priority 1 The wellbeing of children, young people and families is improved

Priority 2 Children and young people are safe and free from harm

Priority 3 The impact of poverty on children, young people and families is mitigated

Priority 4 Improved outcomes for looked after and care experienced young people

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has and continues to make a very substantial commitment to delivering and improving services for all children, young people and families across Moray.

SIGNATURES





**Jack Granitza MSYP for Moray**

Member of SYP Education and Lifelong Learning Committee

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Hello, my name is Jack Granitza, and I am Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP) for Moray. It is my role to ensure that the concerns and issues of young people in Moray are heard and acted upon by decision-makers in Scotland at a local and national level. So, on behalf of Moray's young people, welcome to the second Annual Report for Moray's Children's Services Plan 2020-2023.

This year saw the removal of all remaining COVID-19 restrictions and rules still in place which has allowed young people and their families to, once again, meet up with their friends and loved ones and return to the things they love most. While this has been positive for many children and young people across Moray, we are acutely aware of the impact this has had on their mental health and how this has affected them in the return to 'normal' life.

SQA exams returned this year for the first time since the start of the pandemic, which we know has brought new anxiety and stress that the senior phase secondary pupils of 2021-2022 had not experienced before. However, they managed to overcome the hurdle and given that these young people have not experienced exams in this form before, their success is even more impressive.

This year has been a year of great success, achievement and perseverance by the children and young people of Moray. We are incredibly grateful to everyone for making this success possible.

Signed,



**Jack Granitza MSYP**

**Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament for Moray**



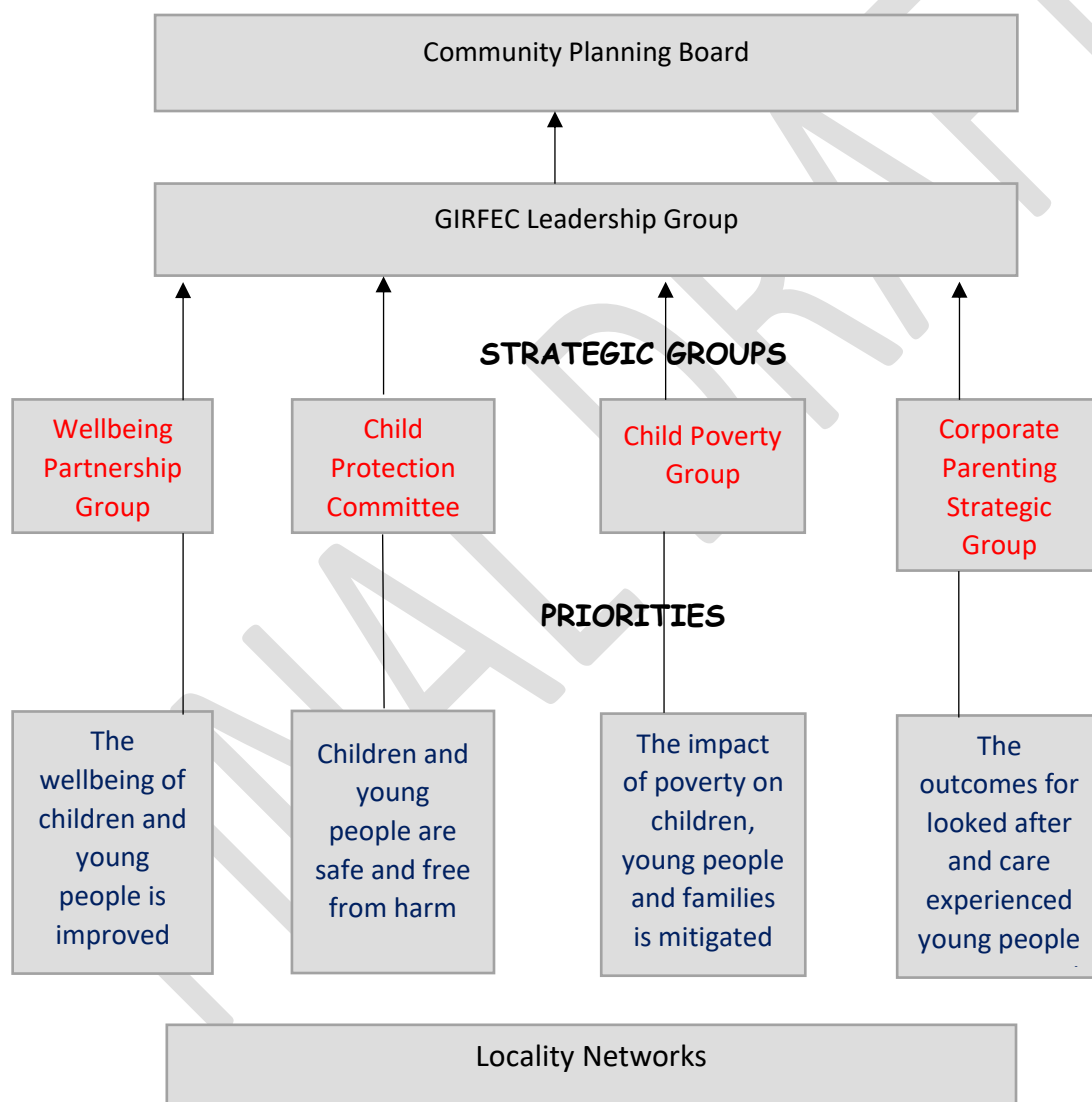
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## CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN PRIORITIES AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

On behalf of the Community Planning Partnership, the GIRFEC Leadership Group is responsible for co-producing, implementing and reporting on the progress of the Children's Services Plan.

Their membership is made up of senior managers from across the Children's Services Partnership including; Social Work, Education, Police Scotland, Health and the 3rd sector.

Oversight and strategic leadership responsibility for each of the 4 priorities within the Children's Services Plan sits with key partnership groups.



The Locality Networks are made up of front line practitioners and community organisations operating in the communities that make up Moray. They both support the delivery of the plan and identify and address emerging issues on a locality basis, linking with strategic partnership groups, as required. This approach ensures our plan remains agile and responsive to the needs of children and families in Moray.

## IMPACT OF COVID 19

Whilst COVID restrictions have lessened over the past year and people are experiencing greater freedom within communities, it is clear that the impact of the pandemic on the lives of children and young people has not reduced.

### **Mental Wellbeing**

The situation in Moray reflects the national picture.

"The main harms that have happened to children have not been directly from COVID but been indirect. Having multiple repeated isolations of ten days to two weeks is particularly harmful for many different reasons. There is disruption to education and even the anticipatory anxiety of knowing that you'll be isolated soon has been quite harmful for kids. As paediatricians, we've seen a rise in mental health conditions, and it's affected those with disability, SEN (special educational needs) and deprived communities a lot more than the well-off middle classes..... "

### **'How COVID affects Children' Dr Michael Absoud May 2022**

Both the prevalence and complexity of mental wellbeing concerns across Moray has rapidly increased over the past year, impacting on children and young people's ability to fully engage in school and community life.

This report highlights how the partnership has responded by re-designing and investing more in services and supports which children and young people tell us make a difference to them.

### **Early Years**

The impact of health visiting services being on a reduced pathway and the significant staffing shortages experienced over the past year has meant that the availability of routine support for parents around weaning, child healthy weight and general parenting skills has significantly reduced. Child protection and addressing the needs of families known to be struggling the most has been prioritised. The impact of this targeted approach is now being felt in that there are observable gaps in child development.

In response, a team of Community Nursery Nurses are now being recruited to support the Health Visiting Teams deliver a broader range of preventative support.

### **Anti-social behaviour and crime**

Since the easing of restrictions, there has been a significant rise in antisocial behaviour within both schools and communities. The extent of 'hidden harm' is becoming more apparent as is the escalation and nature of online crime. In response Police Scotland have adopted a new approach to 'Cyber Enabled Crimes' and in the North East of Scotland have created a



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specialist team dedicated to tackling the very complex and lengthy investigations into online crime.

### **Workforce**

All partners have experienced recruitment difficulties over the past year, which continues to put strain on the system. The situation has been exacerbated by the increased number of staff choosing to retire early, or work part time, in order to achieve a better work life balance.

A range of wellbeing supports have been made available to staff and continued effort is being placed on addressing the underlying causes of workplace stress, including staff shortages.

FINAL DRAFT



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## PRIORITY 1: THE WELLBEING OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES IS IMPROVED

### Locality Planning

The Children and Families Locality Planning model was developed in 2020 as a means of delivering early intervention and preventative support to individual children, young people and families. All components of the model became operational in 2021.



The 2 Wellbeing Coordinators provide guidance and support to the Team Around The Child, helping them to assess need and access the right community supports at the right time. This year they have supported 148 children and families in need of support.

Where a family's needs are more complex, families are encouraged to attend the Multi Agency Support Hub (M.A.S.H.). This year MASH has welcomed and worked with 34 families.

The locality networks are comprised of front line practitioners and community organisations operating in each of the communities that make up Moray. They share what children, young people and families are telling them needs to improve or change and pool their expertise and resources to work with families to deliver improvements. The activities and achievements of the locality networks are highlighted throughout this report.

### Mental Wellbeing

Over this reporting period, there has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people experiencing poor mental wellbeing.





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- 200% increase in the number of children and young people presenting in crisis out of hours with a variety of issues in relation to significant self-harm, overdose and perceived suicide risk
- 12% increase in referrals received by CAMHS
- Over 70% of referrals to our newly commissioned mental wellbeing services are for anxiety and low mood
- Growing prevalence of eating disorders
- Increasing incidents of OCD type behaviours relating to COVID worries being seen in our early intervention services
- Increase in the complexity of referrals impacting service capacity across all mental wellbeing services

### Actions taken

Our focus has been on developing early intervention supports and services for children and young people, which straddle the gap between universally available supports and more specialist mental health services.

We have invested £540,000 of Scottish Government funding into creating two new early intervention services.

Prior to commissioning the new services, £71,000 was awarded to 4 community based child and family wellbeing providers to increase their capacity to meet demand whilst the commissioning process was underway and to trial new ways of delivering support. The learning from these pilots shaped the new service specification, which has both prevention and early intervention elements and a clear focus on the delivery of whole family support.

An additional £96k has been injected into existing wellbeing services across Moray to reduce waiting times and ensure families get the help they need as early as possible.

### New Services



**SONAS**, a community based mental wellbeing service for 5-25 year olds and their families was established in August 2021. They offer 1:1 and group support delivered both face to face and via a range of digital options.

Their resilience building Bouncing Back programme is used with primary school aged children. Secondary school aged young people with low mood concerns are supported through the Blues programmes. Over the past year, 225 young people have participated of which 76% reported improved wellbeing and 80% reported they felt more comfortable talking about their mental

wellbeing. In addition, 158 young people aged 5-18 years and their families have been referred for individual support.

SONAS have employed a young person to capture the views of those using the service. These views are informing the ongoing development of the service.



**Therapeutic Counselling Services** (branded as The Exchange), a new provider to Moray is delivering 1:1 counselling for 10-18 year olds in schools. In their first year, they have worked with 753 young people. 85% of secondary aged young people and 81% of primary aged children reported an improvement in their mental wellbeing. 90% of parents reported that they felt their child's mental wellbeing had improved and 100% report they would recommend the service to others.

Both services work closely with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to ensure a 'no wrong door' approach is adopted, resulting in families getting support from the right service at the right time.

**Children 1<sup>st</sup>** ran one of the initial family wellbeing pilots and have continued to build on their success to date with support from the William Grant Foundation. Since April 2021, they have supported 47 families, with a particular focus on perinatal and early years. In addition to providing specialist 1:1 support for parents, the 2 project workers have developed and delivered a range of activities and peer support opportunities, including a neurodiversity parents drop in. 5 volunteer buddies have recently been recruited and have linked with the families. Additional funding was secured from MFR Cash For Kids and Moray Council to provide holiday activities and help with costs over the festive period. 73% of parents say they have improved mental health as a result of using the service. 74% said they had improved family relationships and had formed more supportive connections within their local communities.

### National Mental Wellbeing Improvement Programme

In 2020, the Children's Services Partnership successfully bid to be part of the National Mental Wellbeing Improvement Programme. The aim of this programme is to transform the way we support the mental wellbeing of children, young people and families. The National Children and Young People's Collaborative Team and Health Improvement Scotland are providing specialist support.

Over the past year we have focused on:

- gathering the views of children and young people regarding their mental wellbeing needs

- understanding the young person's journey and the systems and processes they experience
- developing the wider national context to understand the mental wellbeing needs of Moray's children & young people

Our next steps will be to :

- identify the priority areas for improvement that could impact young peoples' experiences
- develop and pilot solutions together
- identify successful pilots to embed into long term practice

### **Social Wellbeing**

Children, young people and families have told us how important it is to be able to socialise together and reconnect with their communities. Two large-scale summer programmes were developed based on what children and families told us they wanted.

Re:connect was a universal programme of activities delivered throughout Moray by a newly formed Youth Work Network and funded through the Youth Work Education Recovery Fund.





960 young people and families participated in community-based events and support was provided to encourage whole family activity during lockdown restrictions.



### Bespoke summer holiday provision

The Scottish Government provided £256k to design and develop summer provision to meet the needs of children and young people who were most likely to be experiencing disadvantage already and have therefore been particularly adversely affected by the pandemic.

The Locality Network members who know these families best asked them how this funding should be spent. Key priorities were identified:

- Enhance access to existing universal provision by overcoming barriers such as cost of transport and equipment
- Create new options/activities that reflect the needs and wishes of specific groups of young people e.g. young carers, children with additional support needs, children suffering from poor mental wellbeing. A wide range of offers were made available by Grampian Autistic Society, Who Cares? Scotland, Moray Women's Aid, Quarriers Young Carers Service, Action for Children, Children 1<sup>st</sup>, No Worries for Moray, Aberlour Youth Point, M-powerment and Social Work





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- Provide direct funding to young people and families so they have control over how they use it in order to feel better connected with each other, their peers and their local community.

Feedback gathered to evaluate the programme showed children felt valued and listened to. They said that options available helped re-establish friendships and build new ones. Parents valued the respite during the holiday period and the trust placed in them to spend the funding on opportunities that they felt best met their needs. Young people and parents explained that the offer had helped to reduce the tensions caused by lockdown.

## **Physical Wellbeing**

### Active

The Active Schools & Community Sport Team have focused their efforts on delivering extra-curricular programmes and re-introducing events and festivals after COVID restrictions were lifted.

Of the 3218 young people who have participated, 56% have access to free school meals, 35% have an additional support need, 4% were from an ethnic minority family and 3% were assessed as disabled.

In recognition of the need to support physical activity all year round, an additional 427 hours of activities were offered free of charge throughout Moray.

A key priority of this team is to embed the 'Changing Lives Initiative', which encourages sport and physical activity to be used as a tool to create positive social change for targeted groups. The team have focused on tackling inequality locally, using sport and physical activity as the catalyst. Team members have trained as 'Changing Lives Champions' and have led a number of projects which have had a positive impact on the lives of children and young people. Examples include:

- A nurture group project in Buckie, engaged pupils identified by schools with low confidence to try a new sport focusing on teamwork, confidence building and perseverance which led to improved social connections, attitude to school and increased uptake up of extra-curricular activity.
- An embodied dance project in Forres delivered with external partners, supported P6 age pupils with additional support needs to express their emotions on the subject of COVID through dance.

*" Engagement and confidence has increased for all pupils. One particular success was for one of our ASN pupils with Autism being free to express themselves. Seeing the joy on his face was quite magical" Headteacher*

- 20 members of staff received training on disability inclusion.

### Healthy diet

Healthy eating in the early years has been improved with 39 nurseries and 30 childminders signing up to the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme. Through this scheme, they receive funding to provide daily milk and a portion of fruit or vegetables to pre-school children who are in any registered day care service for 2 hours or more. Children in funded early years settings receive a free lunch or light tea, which has increased the range of foods this age group are eating.

### Healthier relationship with substances

Through the locality networks, a number of organisations raised concerns regarding both anti-social behaviour and substance use in the Buckie area. A team of network members went out in the evenings to engage with the young people and better understand their needs and concerns. Based on the feedback received a range of community based opportunities were developed with and for those young people e.g. Street Dance.

It was also clear that a number of young people had more significant substance use issues. As there is no specialist substance use service for young people in Moray, Aberlour Youth Point led a successful partnership funding bid to the Corra Foundation to establish a Moray-wide young person's substance use service. This bid was match funded by Social Work, Education, Moray Drug and Alcohol Partnership and Health and Social Care Moray. £500k of funding has been secured over a 3-year period.

## PRIORITY 2 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SAFE AND FREE FROM HARM

### Safe in the community

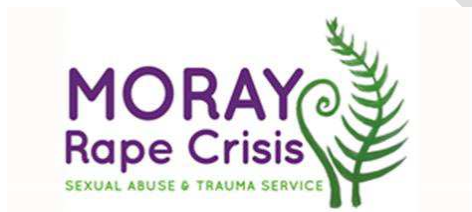
#### Preventing Sexual Violence

In November 2020 Moray Rape Crisis launched a sexual violence prevention project. Its aim is to reduce the incidence of peer to peer harm.

Over the past year **2039** young people in high schools across Moray, and some youth services, took part in workshops to increase their awareness of consent, sexual violence and healthy relationships. The aim of the workshops is to reduce the incidence of peer-to-peer harm.

144 workshops were delivered in Moray. These took place within 7 local authority secondary schools (Buckie High School, Elgin Academy, Elgin High, Forres Academy, Lossiemouth High, Milne's High and Speyside High) Moray Special Educational and Behavioural Needs Pinefield Campus, and a number of year groups at Gordonstoun School.

#### Support for Survivors of Rape and Sexual Violence



In 2021-22, Moray Rape Crisis supported **147** women and children. Including 18 children aged 0-15years and 53 young women aged 16-25years.

Moray Rape Crisis provides a tailored service, the **Rise Up project**, for young people aged 11-18 who have experienced any form of sexual violence. Support offered includes both individual therapeutic support and advocacy to help report to the police and navigate the justice process. 40 young survivors were supported through the Rise Up project in 2021-22.

Following attending the project:

- 78% children reported feeling safer or were assessed as being at less risk of harm
- 78% children reported or were assessed as having improved levels of wellbeing

- 75% young women reported feeling safer or were assessed as being at less risk of harm
- 75% young women reported or were assessed as having improved levels of wellbeing

### Increasing Public Awareness around child safety

In June 2021, Moray participated in the Child Protection Committee Scotland 'For Kids' Sake' campaign. Designed specifically to coincide with the school holidays, the 7 week campaign asked family members, friends and members of the local community to look and listen carefully for signs that all is not well for a child, to pay full attention if a child or young person's behaviour had changed, and not to stay silent if they were worried about a child.

'For Kids' Sake' key messages aimed to:

- increase understanding that individuals and communities themselves can play an active and proactive role to help keep children safe
- communicate consistently about how it's EVERYONE'S responsibility to protect children



### Workforce Development

12 practitioners in Moray took part in Scottish Drug Forum training that supported them to:

- Identify common risk behaviours displayed by young people.
- Define multiple risk.

### **Children and young people live in safe and supportive families**

#### Protecting children from harm - Neglect

By the end of March 2022, 37 children were open to child protection plans, meaning their names had been placed on the Child Protection Register. Of these children, 14 had neglect recorded as a category of concern (37.8%).

In January 2022 Moray Child Protection Committee's Independent Chair Samara Shah fronted Child Protection Committee Scotland's 'Under Pressure: Understanding Neglect' campaign. Key messages recognised the significant pressures being faced by families and urged parents who





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were struggling not to wait for things to get worse but to ask for help and support if they were finding it hard to care for their kids.



### Workforce Development

48 practitioners attended Moray Child Protection Committee's 'Understanding Neglect' workshops. This online interactive session covered different types of neglect and the impact on children.

#### **% participants that felt confident in their ability to recognise the signs and symptoms of neglect**

- Pre course: 56%
- Post course: 94%

*"Going in to this I had a good idea of what neglect was and what to look out for, at the beginning I felt like the session maybe wasn't for me, however, I am very glad I took part. I never before made the connection to the long term affects neglect can have. I have learned so much more to what I thought I knew! It's clear early intervention is key" -Childminder*

Training for staff in the use of the Graded Care Profile2 will be rolled out in the next reporting period. This tool will help parents and practitioners measure the quality of care that a child is receiving, by helping parents identify their own support needs and chart the progress of positive changes and supports put in place.

### Early intervention to minimise the impact of parental substance use

By the end of March 2022, 37 children had child protection plans with their names placed on the Child Protection Register. Of these children, 16 had parental substance use recorded as a category of concern (43.2%).

Arrows Children and Family Recovery Team work with the Quarriers Carer Support Service (Moray) in providing support to young carers, family members, children and significant others in relation to the impact of substance use. Arrows has developed a family inclusive approach to recovery and focuses on support for parents in recovery to understand and recognise the needs of young people within the household. Over the past year, 144 families have received a wide range of support including; emotional support; general advice; parenting discussions in relation to boundaries, consistent approaches and reassurance.

They have also received support to engage with other services including; Advocacy, Rape Crisis, Women's Aid, Income Maximisation, Moray Foodbank and Morays Flexible Food Fund.

During the October school holidays, 23 families were able to enjoy positive experiences together through a programme of organised outings to Innoflate in Aberdeen, Highland Wildlife Park at Kingcraig and the cinema and bowling in Elgin. Parents/carers voiced that they often couldn't have trips out with their children due to financial, transport and mental health constraints. The feedback from children was that they made new friends and enjoyed that it was not just their own families and that they went to places they had not been to before.

Through Moray Firth Radio Cash for Kids Christmas appeal, a total of 63 children from 34 families received presents delivered to their homes. A further £3,400 cash for kids funding secured in 2022 supported 27 families to access TESCO vouchers of up to £100 per child.



### Workforce Development

Training was delivered by the Scottish Drugs Forum called "Everyone has a Story" to enable practitioners to respond more effectively to children who are affected by parental substance use.

*"I listen more and allow myself the time to process what I have heard. I also reflect more on what I have listened to and take more time to consider when to ask questions"*  
Course Participant

*"I think more on the effect of the child - even though the outcome of the parent is positive this may not be the case for the child."* Course Participant

### **Understanding adolescent trauma, attachment and substance use**

Calum Hendrie, a Specialist Counselling Psychologist delivered a webinar on behalf of the Child Protection Partnership, for practitioners supporting adolescents experiencing problematic substance use.

179 professionals from across the North East of Scotland were supported to understand the impact of parental substance use and to consider their service's approach for working with adolescents.



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*"It was excellent. I have been inspired to reflect upon my own practice and that of my team"*

Children 1st were successful in securing Corra funding to improve support for birth parents who no longer have care of their children on a permanent basis as a result of child protection processes. Moray Alcohol and Drug Partnership and Moray Council Children & Families Social Work funding is also committed towards this one-year action research project, listening to those parents who have had direct experience of children going into care, to better understand what they might have needed and when. This learning will help inform design and delivery of family support in Moray.

#### Protecting children from harm - Domestic abuse

By the end of March 2022, 37 children had child protection plans and their names placed on the Child Protection Register. Of these children, 25 had domestic abuse recorded as a category of concern (67.5%).

Referrals received by Moray Women's Aid during the reporting period were 27 Young women aged 16-25 years and 146 Children age 0-15 years.

Services offered are 1:1 emotional support, peer support group work, mindfulness groups, family social inclusion events, professional counselling services and practical support around housing, health and finances. Children and young people are offered 1:1 emotional support which includes safety planning, anger management and building social networks in an age appropriate manner. Other activities are the after school club, group activities during school holidays and evening social inclusion group with mum.

#### Workforce Development

Moray has adopted the Safe & Together Model, which provides tools to practitioners to better support domestic violence survivors and their children and to engage with perpetrators to encourage a meaningful change in behavior and adoption of positive parenting choices. In October 2021, the Moray Violence Against Women Partnership were awarded funding through the Scottish Government 'Delivering Equally Safe Fund'. This partnership project builds on the existing commitment to the Safe & Together model and allows for a wider roll out across health, education, police and third sector services.



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## PRIORITY 3 MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

### **Income Maximisation**

The Moray Benefits team has focused on streamlining their processes. A single application is now in place that provides simpler and quicker access to a wide range of benefits.

#### *Moray Benefits Team Case Study:*

*A young family living in a private rented flat in Moray with a 1 year old child had been struggling to manage their finances. This meant they could not afford nappies for their child or food for the family.*

*The mum had enrolled in college, however due to childcare arrangements, had missed the first 2 weeks which meant she had been withdrawn from the course.*

*At the initial appointment with Moray Benefits Team, mum struggled to engage with the worker as the situation had been difficult for her, however as relationships were built she appeared less anxious and was happy to discuss the worries she had.*

*The Benefits Team was able to identify the benefits the family were entitled to and ensured they received them. They also put the family in touch with Citizens Advice who were able to provide additional information about local food banks and other schemes to help save money.*

#### The Parent Employability project (Progress for Parents) :

Funded by the Scottish Government, Progress for Parents supports parents into employment via the Moray Employer Recruitment Incentive scheme (MERI) .

Firstly, parents are assigned a Keyworker who links with the Income Maximisation Team, to ensure parents are helped to claim all benefits they are entitled to and address any outstanding debt problems they may have. Connections are also made to other supports available such as Moray Food Plus, Moray Baby Bank and Moray School Bank

Assistance is provided to overcome the wide range of barriers to work which people throughout Moray experience. These include; transport issues, lack of childcare, cost of training and qualifications, the need to improve language skills, as well as confidence building and skills attainment.



The promotion of flexible working by the project with local employers is enabling work patterns that are family friendly.

In total, the team has worked with 65 families who are at risk of being in poverty. 8 of the families had identified someone with a disability within their family, 7 had a child under the age of 1 year, 7 of the families identified as an ethnic minority and 14 had more than 3 children.

Specific support with writing c.v.s, completing job applications and qualification transfer has been given to displaced families from Ukraine. This has enabled up to 60-70% to secure employment.

#### Example Case Studies :

A single parent of a primary school aged child had qualified as a joiner prior to the country going into lockdown. He was "paid off" which left him feeling concerned about work and finances. The Parent Employability Project enabled access to a MERI funded work placement of 25 hours per week for 12 months where he not only was able to use his joinery skills but also had the opportunity to learn other skills such as stone masonry, fencing and paving.

A single parent of 2 primary school aged children with no family support in the local area was supported by the team through the provision of a digital device and internet access for studying. With the benefit of some volunteering experience, she was offered a placement through the MERI programme. She is now working in a 2-3 group 16 hours per week for a 12-month period. Through this placement, she has gained additional qualifications, which will help her with future job applications.

#### **Workforce development**

Through the Locality Networks, front line practitioners said they were not confident to start conversations with children, young people and families about whether lack of money was impacting on their lives. The following actions were taken :

- MeoC, Making Every Opportunity Count training was delivered to 40 Network members. By adopting this approach, practitioners can find ways to initiate brief conversations with families they come into contact with, providing information about relevant services or support where appropriate.
- Supported by the National Improvement Advisor, network members created a toolkit to help practitioners to be able to signpost families to local services and support them to access them. This advice can be given at the time, avoiding delays in support being provided.
- NHS partners delivered training to 12 Network members on how to use the toolkit.

- Feedback has been sought which will be used to shape the next steps.

## Period Poverty

As a result of the Period Products (Free Provision) Act 2021, Moray Council has received funding to provide free sanitary products in accessible places throughout Moray. The settings include Council-owned buildings and all schools and community buildings. Moray Food Plus is assisting with distribution of products.

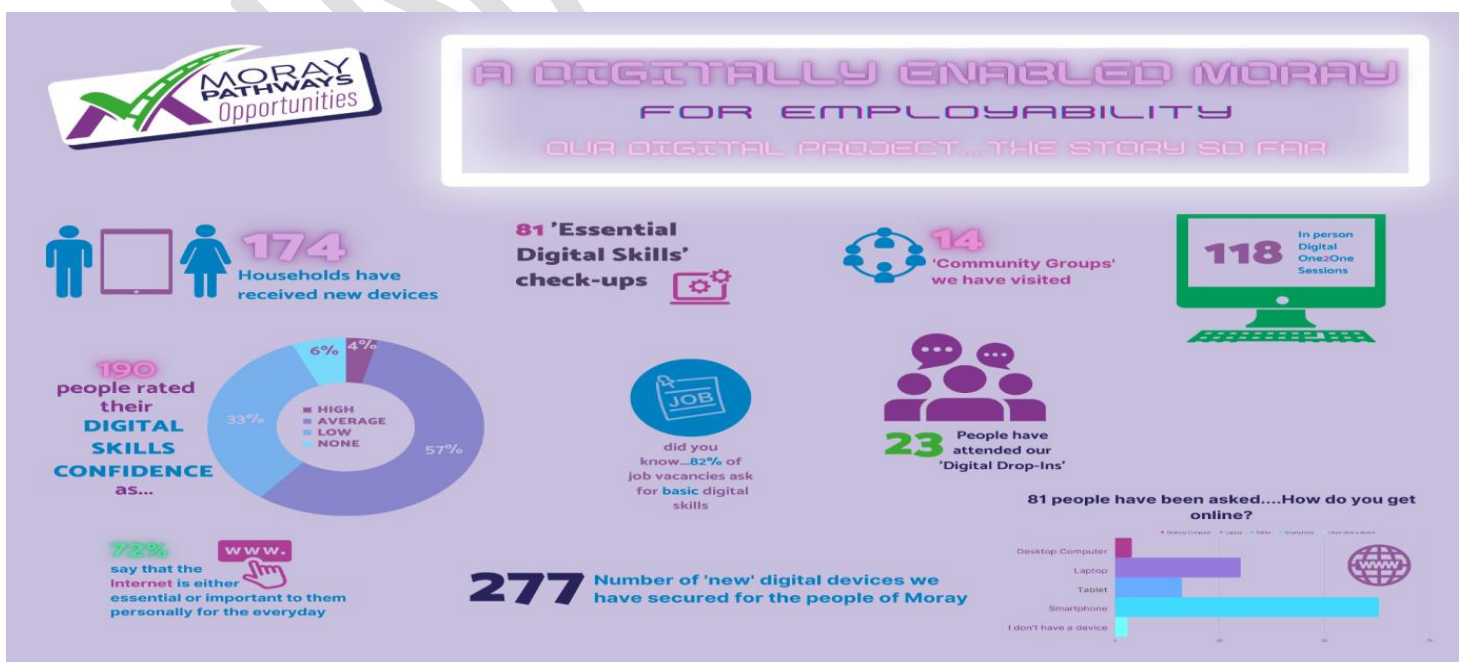
Ongoing consultation and engagement with women and girls will inform where and how products are accessed.

## Access to digital devices and connectivity

The Digitally Enabled Moray project secured funding from Scottish Government, Local Government and the Third Sector to reduce digital poverty and encourage inclusion. They provide digital devices and connections to enable access to services and help people to keep connected with friends, families and their local community. The project has provided devices to 175 households. 66 were known to be families with one or more children and 67 individuals were aged 16-24, and at the time of allocation were at risk of becoming not in employment, education or training.

So far, they have engaged with 15 different organisations.

*"I cannot thank you enough for your help and the provision of the Chrome Book and access to the internet. I have made a several applications this morning for work and fingers crossed I will be successful sooner rather than later".*



## Cost of the School Day



The *Cost of the School Day* project has been working with pupils, families and staff across Moray schools to understand the true cost of a school day.

Over the past year they have heard from **862** Moray pupils, **155** parents and **60** school staff from a selection of schools who have told them what they think about the cost of the school day and what helpful things schools in Moray are doing to make school more affordable for all.

Pupils had a very strong understanding of fairness, how it would feel if they could not afford to take part in school activities and how this linked in with children's rights.

*"We know about the right to clean water, to food, the right to play, to have free school and tell people what we think."* (P5 pupil)

Secondary school pupils talked about how it was easier to take part in subjects like Home Economics and Technichal Studies now that curriculum costs have been removed.

*"If you can't afford it maybe you would be asked to choose a different subject"* (S4 Pupil)

Families said schools which encourage non-branded uniform options, provide all the resources in class for pupils to learn, give plenty of notice about charity days and trips and provide useful financial information and signposting about financial help for families helps to reduce cost pressures for them.

*"Uniform is so much more manageable now. Black jumper etc. rather than a particular one with logo."* (Parent/carer)

*"The school have referred myself to the Moray Council for school clothing grant as I'm a single parent and have two children at school and on a low income and universal credit."* (Parent/carer)

Some schools have been reviewing how they tell families about costs and help available to them by updating websites, social media and newsletters, one good and helpful example from a Moray primary can be found here <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/my/eastend/cost-of-the-school-day/>

Teachers who heard about *Cost of the School Day* stated they have an increased awareness of the impact of poverty and money worries on children and families.



we will  
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*"I will be more mindful to ensure that children have the resources at home when planning and assigning home learning/homework tasks."*



Uniform store, Logie Primary School, all pupils and parents encouraged to use this.



## PRIORITY 4 IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER AND CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE

### **Uphold and Promote Children's Rights**

The Promise and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are clear on the importance of children and young people having their views listened to in all areas of their lives.

Funding from the Corra Fund to help support us to #KeepThePromise in Moray was successful. A group of care experienced young people led the recruitment of two part time workers. The Project Lead and Engagement Officer came into post at the end of 2021. Along with young people and key partners, they have prioritised the refresh of the Champions Board.

There is a strong commitment from the Champions Board Working Group and the young people to create a sustainable Champions Board that will actively listen to the voices of all care experienced young people and act on what they are telling us.

The group has planned a range of events over the summer to generate interest in the Champions Board amongst the care experienced community. Its function will be to have voices heard and influence policy, practice and decisions which affect care experienced children and young people's lives.

### **Better Meetings**

The Better Meetings project is an ambitious and powerful project to ensure young people have choice and feel fully involved in shaping their meetings.

Of the 21 young people involved, 17 have had experience of living with foster carers during their care journey. Supported by, Out of Darkness Theatre Company, Who Cares? Scotland, Moray Council Social Work Team and local Children's Hearing Panel members they have produced two very powerful films explaining how they feel about their meetings and what needs to change.

In April 2021, they presented Better Meetings to 63 volunteer panel members from Children's Hearings Scotland and 20 professionals from Moray and Highland. Subsequently, the Better Meetings Implementation Group was created to work alongside care experienced young people to redesign how their meetings are run.

The implementation group is currently working on creating a checklist package for Children's Panel Members, Reviewing Officers and Social Workers, which includes the actions they can take to help make meetings easier for children and young people.

Here is some feedback from professionals :

*"It was an excellent Forum and I am hugely grateful to all the young people and those who worked with them to enable us to hear their views."*

*"I thought the forum was excellent, thought provoking and for me quite emotional"*

*" I will certainly be putting myself in the child's place with a lot more thought about how they have felt before and after the hearing".*

Early indications are that there is better evidence of children and young people's views being sought, listened to and acted upon within reports and plans.

## Voice

Little Fix is a group of younger care experienced people in Moray who meet on a regular basis. They have told us what would make their experience of care better.



They said they wanted

- To have more choice
- To meet carers before-hand
- The opportunity to speak to people on my own if I want to
- Not to have several placement moves
- To stay in their home town
- More groups for care experienced children and young people to meet
- No more than 5-6 people at their meetings

Little Fix will be supported to create a short video to influence how the care system engages with younger people and their families and how they can work differently to support what young people want.

**Looked after children and care leavers are enabled to maintain positive relationships with their family, friends and other trusted adults.**

Care leavers from a Children's house in Moray said that they wanted to maintain relationships with the adults who had cared for them when they had moved on to live independently.

*"I feel like once you have left you have been forgotten about "comment from a young person about leaving care*

Four young people who have left care, the management team and the staff of the care home are working together to create a new policy about Maintaining Relationships. This project which is being led by the young people focuses on Children's Rights article 12 and the vision of

The Promise that young people should be actively involved in all aspects of their care.

Some of the young peoples' asks

To come round at meal times and special occasions

To enjoy regular activities out in the community with the adults who they want to maintain a relationship with

To call and speak with adults, if they wanted to

This expectation is that on completion there will be a new policy in place that meets the 'asks' of the young people and that they will feel better supported to maintain the relationships that are important to them.



**Education and employment**

Participatory Budgeting

The Participatory Budgeting process using Scottish Attainment Challenge funding started in late summer 2020.

The 'asks' of the young people were met. 12 young people received tutoring for school subjects, 22 young people received funding for activities such as horse riding and music lessons, sports equipment and coaching in, for example, martial arts. 26 young people received items such as laptops, phones and gaming equipment.

Young people have explained how the process itself and the funding received has positively impacted on their health and wellbeing and sense of achievement.

A young person who took part in Participatory Budgeting said that she benefitted hugely from receiving an iPad. She was able to video-call the family and friends she was missing. It has

also helped her with schoolwork. She attained several Nat 5s and she is taking more Nat 5s as well as Higher Geography this year.

### Mentoring Young Talent

The Mentoring Young Talent programme is aimed at care experienced young people in S1-S6 and young people who have left school and require additional support, up until age 26. Each young person gains support and co-ordination from their Keyworker and they meet their volunteer mentor 1 hour a week for a minimum of 12 months.

- 40 care experienced young people are actively supported by a 1:1 Keyworker to build up a relationship before being matched with a suitable 1:1 Volunteer Mentor
- 22 young people are currently matched to a mentor and receiving 1 hour a week support from the Mentor
- In the last year, 3 young people have now completed 1 year of the mentoring relationship
- Of the 40 young people 3 have now left school and have been supported to gain a place at College



### What young people told us about their experiences of Mentoring Young Talent and the difference it has made to them

*"More open to trying new things"*

*"More secure of my own surroundings, being able to socialise with other people. Having a mentor has helped me with cadets, the youth club and also homework."*

*"I don't hide my struggles with work anymore; I am open if I don't understand. My mentor is supportive. It has also made me think of ways of being safer."*

*"Feels an improvement mentally. Having someone to talk to and a listening ear outside family life is great."*





we will

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*"I like being with my mentor, he helps me plan and talks about my anger. He is kind and likes to try new things."*

*"I never used to trust people. I feel a lot happier now".*

"Mentor Feedback - Short Film (permission given to share)"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiVnfxbn7oA>

FINAL DRAFT

# CHILDRENS SERVICES ACTION PLAN 2022-2023

**PRIORITY 1 : The wellbeing of children and young people is improved**

OUTCOMES	IMPROVEMENT AIMS	ACTIONS 2022-2023	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	AGENCY/PARTNERSHIP GROUP RESPONSIBLE
<i>What are we trying to accomplish?</i>	<i>What change can we make that will result in improvement?</i>		<i>How will we know that a change is an improvement?</i>	
<b>EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING</b>				
Children and young people feel mentally well	Increase provision of universal and early intervention mental wellbeing services and supports in Moray	Better understand the causes of mental distress and Identify priorities for improvement through the mental wellbeing Improvement Programme and complete isolated tests for change by March 2023.	Priorities to be identified by July 2022, Tests of change and recommendations to be complete by March 2023.  Development and monitoring of Wellbeing dataset.	Mental Wellbeing Improvement Governance Group.
		Ensure care experienced children and young people referred to mental wellbeing commissioned services are receiving an assessment of need from the commissioned services within 2 weeks of referral (Tier 2 Level)  Increase the understanding of care experienced children and young people's mental wellbeing needs including any barriers to support through data analysis and completing a dip sample of 10 young people's experiences within current provision by Dec 2022 (Commissioned services and CAMHS)	Monitor the time of assessment for care experienced young people referred to commissioned services.  Through data analysis will evidence if current needs are understood and being successfully met by Dec 2022	Wellbeing Partnership Group (WPG) & Corporate Parenting Group

	Increase the confidence and skills of young people/parents/carers to address early signs of poor mental wellbeing.	Develop a website raising awareness of available wellbeing support and provision accessible by children and families and professionals by Sept 2022.	Design and development of website completed by Jul 2022. Website launch by Aug 2022. Monthly data analytics established by Sept 2022.	Wellbeing Partnership Group
		Increase the provision of support available to parents of children with mental wellbeing concerns delivered by our commissioned services (with some additional funding already in place to address this aim )	Evidence of additional service delivery by commissioned services gathered at quarterly intervals from June 2022.	Wellbeing Partnership Group
		Develop a local service model of parenting support to address the evidenced gaps within the wider parenting support provision	A paper outlining proposed service model to be presented by Jun 2022.	
		Ensure there is targeted support for our most vulnerable population groups.	Implementation to begin prior to March 2023	
PHYSICAL WELLBEING				
Children and young people are physically fit	Improve the healthy eating habits and physical activity rates of children and young people of all ages.	Increase the physical activity rates of early years and P1 aged children through:  · A Physical Activity programme offered in ELC settings and ELC staff training.  The Active Schools team to develop and implement activities for P1 pupils across Moray.	Number of ELC settings engaged and delivering sessions.  % increase in P1 children accessing Active Schools programmes (compared to 2019/2020 statistics).  Body Mass Index figures at P1 collated by Health.	Sport & Leisure Strategic Group
	Children and young people have a healthier relationship with substances (smoking, alcohol and drug use)	Continuation of joint work to support the Aberlour Youth Point funding bid for a young people’s substance support service.  Continuation of ongoing work through locality networks addressing needs identified through focused work undertaken.	Capture learning from the funding process to enhance further joint working practice to achieve shared improvement aims.	Wellbeing Partnership Group & Moray Drug and Alcohol Partnership (MAPD)



SOCIAL WELLBEING				
Children and young people are engaging with peers and wider community	Increase the number of young people participating in activities within their community	<p>WPG Summer provision sub steering group are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a summer holiday provision that is inclusive to all</li> <li>• Develop a plan to provide sustainable additional all year round provision including holiday periods, evenings and weekends.</li> <li>• Design and implement provision to support children and young people to become more connected socially and within their community.</li> </ul> <p><b>(Within each action to address the inclusion of children with additional supports needs.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve awareness of current support and provisions including holiday based provision currently being planned by Aug 2022.</li> <li>• Link with website provision action.</li> </ul>	<p>Deliver an inclusive to all summer holiday provision in Jul/Aug 2022.</p> <p>Produce a plan for year round provision by October 2022.</p> <p>Increase % of children and young people reporting engaging with their communities.</p>	CLD Strategic Partnership
			<p>Evidenced increased access to the information through the website analytics by Sept 2022.</p>	Wellbeing Partnership Group
Children and young people feel safe in their community (outcome moved into this priority).	Reduce the incidence and impact of bullying	<p>Use the summer provision (Jul/Aug 2022) to engage with children and young people to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand factors impacting feeling safe within their community.</li> <li>• Identify a community to co-design and create safe places with community members for children and young people.</li> </ul>	<p>Increased % of children and young people who report they feel safe and empowered to make change within their communities as a result of pilot project intervention by March 2023.</p> <p>Current data updated by Health and Wellbeing Survey prior to pilot project commencing.</p>	<p>Wellbeing Improvement Group</p> <p>CLD Strategic Partnership</p>

## **PRIORITY: 2 Children and young people are safe and free from harm**

OUTCOMES	IMPROVEMENT AIMS	ACTIONS 2022-2023	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	AGENCY/PARTNERSHIP GROUP RESPONSIBLE
<i>What are we trying to accomplish?</i>	<i>What change can we make that will result in improvement?</i>		<i>How will we know that a change is an improvement?</i>	
<b>Children and young people live in safe and supportive families.</b>	Intervene at the earliest opportunity to minimise the impact of neglect on children and young people.	Deliver multiagency workshops that highlight the risk factors for, signs and impact of neglect, including teenage neglect	2022 CPC Training calendar  Workshops delivered Attendance Evaluation of impact	Moray Child Protection Committee (CPC)  Joint GIRFEC Leadership Group (GLG) /CPC Workforce Development Subgroup
		Implement and introduce to workforce the Graded Care Profile2 assessment tool (GCP2)	GCP2 Implementation Plan  Number of practitioners trained as trainers	Moray Child Protection Committee Graded Care Profile Steering Group
	Intervene at the earliest opportunity to minimise the impact of parental substance use on family wellbeing.	Support Quality Improvement project on family supports where there is parental substance use	Project implementation underway	Joint work progress reported to Moray Child Protection Committee and GLG, initially by QI Leaders Network.
	Intervene at the earliest opportunity to minimise the impact of domestic abuse on children, young people and parents.	Implement and promote the Safe and Together practice model across the partnership workforce	Safe & Together (S&T) Implementation Plan created  S&T overview sessions delivered  Practitioners CORE trained	Moray Violence Against Women Partnership  Delivering Equally Safe Moray steering board

<b>Children and young people at risk of harm are protected and their rights upheld.</b>	Raise awareness of child protection and promote key messages to the public.	Develop local child protection webpage and promote child protection campaigns across partnership social media channels.	Number of visitors to webpage.  Engagement on social media posts.	Moray Child Protection Committee  Public Protection Team
	Develop systems that supporting inter-agency child protection practice to identify evolving need and risk.	Implement an agreed system for multi-agency chronologies	Agreed format for multi-agency chronologies  Introduction to multi-agency chronology format Plan for training/workshops	Moray Child Protection Committee  Child Planning Thematic Group (TBC)
		Introduce the new Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) as part of a roll-out across the North East	Regional SCIM workforce agreed  Moray staff recruited and trained Local implementation underway	Moray Child Protection Committee  NE SCIM Operational Group
		Establish an inter-agency case discussion framework that provides support to the professional team around the child and family	Framework agreed and published  Number of sessions facilitated  Practitioner feedback/evaluation	Moray Child Protection Committee  Case Review Subgroup(TBC)
	Improve the systems enabling the safeguarding of adolescents (ages 10-18).	Workshop with multi agency staff to highlight possible age bias in decision making.	Session held in single agencies to look at case studies highlighting this issue.  Feedback provided to CPC on learning Include this learning in other training	Moray Child Protection Committee  Joint GLG/CPC Workforce Development Subgroup
		Develop, agree, implement and monitor Care and Risk	CARM implementation plan	Moray Child Protection Committee

		Management (CARM) Procedures in Moray	Local procedures created Train the trainer trained Staff identified to undertake training Quality assurance and performance framework agreed	Implementation Group
	Identify processes and develop practices which uphold children and young people's rights and allow them to effectively participate in decision making.	Create a baseline for children (up to aged 10) and young people (aged 10-18) who tell us that they feel they participated in decision making and that their rights were upheld; stories shared with us provide examples.	Advocacy services tell us that children report feeling involved in decision making and provide case studies.	Moray Child Protection Committee



### **PRIORITY 3: The impact of poverty on children, young people and families is mitigated**

OUTCOMES	IMPROVEMENT AIMS	ACTIONS 2022-2023	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	AGENCY/PARTNERSHIP GROUP RESPONSIBLE
<i>What are we trying to accomplish?</i>	<i>What change can we make that will result in improvement?</i>		<i>How will we know that a change is an improvement?</i>	
The voices of children, young people and families experiencing poverty are heard and acted upon.	A partnership model which facilitates ongoing engagement with children, young people and families experiencing poverty is operational.	To clarify and formalise the mechanism by which we continuously hear the voice of children and families through linking with the locality networks and the poverty action group to collate and share knowledge, identify gaps and direct activity to address these gaps.	Number of shared learning opportunities centred around lived experience.  Number of examples of voice influencing activity Number and range of children, young people and families willing to participate.	Child Poverty Strategic Group  Locality Networks  Children's Rights and Participation Group
		Deliver a joint East/West locality shared learning event with a focus on poverty	Evaluation of event	
A co-ordinated approach to mitigating the impact of child poverty is adopted across the children's services partnership.	Utilise the combined knowledge and resources to best effect.	Raise the profile of the Child Poverty Action Plan within and beyond the children's services partnership.	Annual self-evaluation of Child Poverty Action Plan  Annual feedback from The Scottish Government	Child Poverty Strategic Group

The disposable income of families experiencing poverty is maximised	Prevention and early intervention pathway of financial supports to mitigate the effects of poverty is widely available and accessible to families, communities and professionals.	Utilise learning from the research undertaken to understand the acceptability of the early years Financial Inclusion Pathway for families and for practitioners, in order to identify opportunities for improvement.	Levels of staff confidence and competence reported in staff survey.  Families confident to disclose to a range of professionals	Child Poverty Strategic Group  Locality Networks
	Partners proactively identify, engage and support families to address money worries.	Via the locality networks deliver 4 bespoke MEOC sessions over the next 12 months.	Workforce evaluation of MEOC training. Dip sample of families experiencing a MEOC conversation. Number of families accessing money advice at an early stage.	
	Local solutions to mitigate the impact of poverty are co-designed by communities.	Test the toolkit that has been developed with and for parents to inform about access to financial support and promote trusted community assets. Testing to begin June 2022. To begin the development of a young person's toolkit with and for children and young people.	Practitioner evaluation	
		Two training sessions linking the toolkit to the use of MEOC, completed by the end of May.	Evaluation of training	
	Opportunities to access additional funding are maximised.	Building on participatory budgeting work already undertaken, continue to develop solutions which meet locality specific needs.	Participatory budgeting opportunities available  Uptake of opportunities	
				Child Poverty Strategic Group

No child or young person feels disadvantaged by poverty	Children and young people have equal access of opportunity irrespective of their family income.	Children and young people will be directly involved in the development of policies to mitigate the impacts of poverty.	Number of policies co-designed by children and young people	Children's Rights Group
	Children and young people experiencing poverty achieve expected levels of progress	Deliver a campaign promoting opportunities for all children to participate in learning, leisure and play.	Positive destinations are in line with those not experiencing poverty.	Child Poverty Strategic Group
			Attendance for education is in line with those not experiencing poverty.	
			Attainment is in line with those not experiencing poverty.	

# **PRIORITY: 4 Improved outcomes for looked after and cared experienced young people \*.**

(\* Deliver on the Independent Care Review Promise which is reflected in outcomes below)

OUTCOMES	IMPROVEMENT AIMS	ACTIONS 2022-2023	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	AGENCY/PARTNERSHIP GROUP RESPONSIBLE
<i>What are we trying to accomplish?</i>	<i>What change can we make that will result in improvement?</i>		<i>How will we know that a change is an improvement?</i>	
Children and care leavers have safe, secure, stable and nurturing homes	Increase the proportion of children and young people looked after in kinship or foster care (as opposed to residential care).	Achieve a fostering assessment of 5 new carers over the course of the year.	Increased number and range of foster carers recruited.	Corporate Parenting Strategic Group – Lead Social Work
	Reduce the time taken and number of placements experienced before achieving permanence.	Reinstate the National Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE) programme and reduce drift within the child/young person's care journey.	Reduction in drift and delay as measured by PACE data. Reduction in number of placement moves.	Corporate Parenting Strategic Group – Lead Social Work
	Care leavers successfully transition into appropriate accommodation.	Achieve an initial assessment for 3 new supported lodgings carers.	Number and range of supported accommodation options	Corporate Parenting Strategic Group
		Develop a strategy to reduce the number of care leavers experiencing homelessness (clarify current situation).	Strategy produced along with an implementation plan	
Looked after children and care leavers secure positive educational outcomes.	Close the attainment gap for looked after and care experienced children.	Establish the current position in relation to raising attainment of looked after young people (LAC) in Moray.	Percentage of young people with care experience attaining qualifications in comparison to general population	Corporate Parenting Strategic Group



		Scope out and develop a strategy to support closing the attainment gap.	Strategy produced and an implementation plan to ensure strategy is delivered	
		Map out current activity to support young people leaving school and the effectiveness of this.	Percentage of young people with care experience gaining alternative awards (e.g. non- SQA qualifications) and compare to general population.  Percentage of young people sustaining positive destinations	
		Establish the current position of young people who are gaining alternative awards.	Baseline data established	
		Revisit of the community of schools project - baseline data on effectiveness of project to be considered.	Plan around outcome of baseline activity is created	
		Better understand actions being taken as alternative to exclusion, in particular use of part time timetables.	Create baseline data of how many young people with care experience are on a part time timetable and create an improvement plan around this.	
Children and care leavers enter education, training or employment after leaving school.	Increase the number of children and young people entering and sustaining positive post school destinations.	Measure the effectiveness of supports in place.	We will have data for young people with care experience entering and sustaining positive post school destinations.	
			We will know attainment of school leavers by national levels e.g. SVQ National level 4.	Corporate Parenting Strategic Group

Wellbeing concerns are identified early and addressed quickly.	Understand and address barriers to engagement with care experienced young people referred to mental wellbeing support services.	<p>Ensure care experienced children and young people referred to mental wellbeing commissioned services are receiving an assessment of need from the commissioned services within 2 weeks of referral (Tier 2 Level).</p> <p>Increase the understanding of care experienced children and young people's mental wellbeing needs including any barriers to support through data analysis and completing a dip sample of 10 young people's experiences within current provision by Dec 2022 (Commissioned services and CAMHS).</p>	<p>Monitor the time period of assessment for care experienced young people referred to commissioned services.</p> <p>Analysis of data and findings of dip sample will evidence if current needs are understood and being successfully met by Dec 2022</p>	Wellbeing Partnership Group & Corporate Parenting Group
Uphold and promote children's rights.	Evaluate and improve effectiveness and accessibility of existing supports for looked after children to have their voices heard and influence policy, practice and the decisions which affect them.	Refresh Champions Board	Champions Board re-established with clear TORs and membership representative of care experienced community.	Corporate Parenting Strategic Group/Rights and Participation Strategic Group.
The number of looked after children and care leavers who enter the youth and criminal justice systems is reduced.	Improve the identification and monitoring of care leavers and care experienced young people in the youth and criminal justice systems.	Develop a process to reduce the number of care experienced young people in the justice services.	Process in place which is consistently adhered to.	

Looked after children and care leavers are enabled to maintain positive relationships with their family, friends and other trusted adults.	Children and young people feel secure and supported in their relationships.	Work with children and young people to understand how young people can be better enabled to maintain positive relationships.	Children and young people will feel involved and their voices heard as part of this process.	Corporate Parenting Strategic Group
		Act on any improvements and changes alongside children and young people.	They will also report that the improvements or changes support positive and secure relationships identified as significant to them.	

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