



Working Together for a Better Orkney  
**Loved Safe and Respected**

# Orkney's Children's Services Plan Annual Review 2021-22



**'The right help, at the right time, in the right way'**

Annual review of Orkney's Children's Services Plan March 2022



## 1. 'The Promise'

Scotland's ambition for children and young people – has been adopted as our vision for the children's services plan:

**We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential.**

To achieve this ambition, our priorities for 2021-23, shaped and informed by young people in Orkney, are:

**Mental health and wellbeing**  
**Overcoming disadvantage**  
**Care and protection**  
**Equality and empowerment**  
**Options and opportunities**

Our target outcomes for this plan accorded with Getting it Right for Every Child, Scotland's model for children's services planning and improvement.

## 2. Underpinning Principles

Statutory guidance for the planning of children's services in Scotland specifies that Children's Services Plans must be prepared with a view to:

- safeguarding, supporting, and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people.
- ensuring any action to meet needs (including prevention) is taken at the earliest appropriate time.
- integrating services from the point of view of recipients.
- achieving the best use of available resources.

Overall responsibility for children's services planning rests with a local authority and the relevant health board. It is expected, however that they will work collaboratively with other members of the Community Planning Partnership, as well as with children, young people, and their families at various stages of the plan's development and review.

It is expected that all activity, actions, and initiatives are aligned with, and seek to deliver, the outcomes contained in the National Performance Framework.

## 3. Children's Rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ([UNCRC](#)) was ratified in 1991 and came into force on 15 January 1992 but has not been incorporated into UK law. Although it declares inalienable rights it does not provide for any mechanism of enforcing those rights in the domestic UK Courts. The UK Government is bound by the UNCRC. The Scottish Government has brought a Bill forward to incorporate the UNCRC direct into Scots Law.

This would give Scottish citizens the right to assert UNCRC rights in the Scottish Courts. It was passed as a Scottish Bill in March 2021 seeking to confer duties on

public authorities to be compatible with UNCRC requirements, which would be enforceable in the Scottish Courts.

The Bill (and the general tenor of the UNCRC insofar as duly incorporated by the Bill) expects that local authorities will have in place appropriate and effective policy, practice, and procedure, capable of delivering the rights secured by the Bill.

The UNCRC places the child at the centre which requires a paradigm shift in approach, viewing the child as an independent person and not an object of concern or protection. There is a fundamental need to accept the child's right to express their views.

Orkney Island Council sought opinion and consultation with a highly experienced Advocate, who provided a comprehensive and detailed opinion, running to 97 pages, on the implications of the legal and practice implications of IRD compatibility with UNCRC amongst other things.

## 4. Child Poverty

Growing up in poverty can undermine the health, wellbeing, and educational attainment of children. The impacts on children are described in the Scottish Government's first delivery plan for tackling child poverty 2018-22, Every Child, Every Chance:

*"If your parents are stressed about money and argue a lot, it'll impact you and you feel like you can't do anything about it."*

Member of the Children's Parliament, age 10

Families in poverty are more likely than others to come into contact with the care system. The care system is concerned with the protection and care of children, young people, and families in need of advice and support. Child abuse and neglect is caused by many interlocking factors: poverty alone is not a necessary or sufficient cause, but it may be a contributory factor. There are various plausible explanations for the relationship between family socio-economic circumstances and the prevalence of child abuse and neglect. There may be a direct effect through material hardship or lack of money to buy in support, or an indirect effect through parental stress and neighbourhood conditions.

No data is collected by UK governments on the socio-economic circumstances of families in which children are, or have been, at risk of significant harm. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation conducted an evidence review in 2016 into the relationship between poverty, child abuse and neglect and reached the following conclusions:

- There is a lack of joined-up thinking about the relationship between poverty and child abuse and neglect in the UK.
- Evidence of the contributory impact of poverty on child abuse and neglect is limited but nonetheless compelling.
- Policy and practice change should not wait for more detailed evidence to emerge.

- Reducing family poverty across the population is likely to reduce both the extent and severity of abuse and neglect in childhood and its later consequences on survivors in adult life, as well as its wider economic cost to society.

In addition, it was recognised that across all priorities, it is important to ensure that we make a difference to our most vulnerable children and young people, for example those who are Looked After, those in Kinship Care and those who are Care Experienced.

We have produced a Child Poverty Strategy for 2021-23, which is referenced in the Action Plan of our Children’s Services Plan for 2021–23.

***Each action has been coded Red, Amber, Green or Blue to indicate its current status (note ‘when will it be done for RAG indicator).***

## 5. Action Plan

The following Action Plan provides progress updates as of 31 March 2022:

Mental health and wellbeing	
01 Mental Health and wellbeing support	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Scope and map local service provision across Orkney, including the Third Sector.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	Mental Health Task and Finishing Group (NHSO led).
<i>When will it be done?</i>	Oct 2021.
<i>How will we know it’s done?</i>	Updated service directory, hosted on Voluntary Action Orkney’s website, with signposting to self-help apps and websites specific to children and young people.  <b>Update:</b> Task and Finishing Group has now disbanded. Service specifically for mental health and wellbeing support is commissioned through Action for Children (funded via Community CYP Mental Health & Wellbeing monies). Outcome reports evidencing effectiveness.
02 Enhance the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Increase the whole time equivalent CAMHS staffing to bring us in line with national workforce provision to ensure capacity can meet demand
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	Mental Health Task and Finishing Group (NHSO led).
<i>When will it be done?</i>	End Sep 2022

<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	Staffing establishment will demonstrate this.  <b>Update:</b> Recruitment in progress.
<b>03 Online resource about substance use</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Develop an online resource for all young people in Orkney to learn about issues relating to alcohol, smoking and drug use.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	Orkney Alcohol and Drugs Partnership together with secondary school staff.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	31 October 2021.
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	It will be live and accessible.  <b>Update:</b> Online resource to be hosted on the Growing Up in Orkney website. This has not yet been completed and work is ongoing.
<b>04 Wellness Project</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Establish an online space where young people can share experiences about what makes them feel happy, content, and relaxed and that can be done locally. The hope is that others will visit the page and be inspired to try something new.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	VAO Youth Development Workers and young volunteers.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	Nov 2022
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	Online space established and active.  <b>Update:</b> Facility within Growing Up in Orkney Website for online space. Scope for young people sharing how they are feeling and activities they could take part in that they may not know about. Review and take forward via youth workers forum.
<b>05 Service Directory for Children and Young People</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Update the Service Directory and ensure it is accessible.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	VAO in liaison with Orkney Health and Care and Orkney Youth Forum.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	Nov 2021.
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	Online publication of the updated Service Directory.  <b>Update:</b> Some delay on completion. Content for service directory is being edited to ensure accurate information, once completed it will be uploaded to VAO Service Directory
<b>06 School Counselling</b>	

<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Establish an in-house school counselling team in line with Scottish Government Guidelines.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	Education Service.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	Session 2021/2022.
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	Committee agreement; staff in post; tracking structure in place across all schools. Monitoring periods set and being reviewed by Education Service Management Team.  <b>Update:</b> In-house school counselling team established although positions have had to be readvertised due to retirement/staff leaving.
<b>Overcoming disadvantage</b>	
<b>07 Child Poverty Strategy 2021-23</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Develop a partnership strategy to address child poverty in Orkney and establish a sustainable framework for the future planning, monitoring, and reporting of partnership work relating to child poverty in Orkney.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	Orkney Child Poverty Task Force.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	By the end of November 2021.
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	Online publication of the new Child Poverty Strategy and its submission to the Scottish Government.  <b>Update:</b> The established Child Poverty Strategy 2022 – 2026 now aligns with next Children's Service Plan, which will cover the period 2023 - 2026. The Child Poverty Strategy is due to be signed by OIC and Orkney Partnership Board in June 2022 and by NHS Orkney in August 2022.
<b>08 Tracking and Monitoring of Attainment</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Establish a Tracking and Monitoring Structure for the Broad General Education for Care Experienced Young People.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	Education Service – Service Manager (Primary Education); Service Manager (Children and Families); Education Scotland Link Attainment Advisor.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	August 2021
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	Tracking Structure in place across all schools. Monitoring periods set and being reviewed by Education and Children and Families Services, supported by Education Scotland Link Attainment Advisor.  <b>Update:</b> Building on our progress, the Partnership and Education Scotland has developed a Broad General Education (BGE)

	<p>tracker and monitoring system for the attainment and progress of care experienced children and young people in schools with measures to monitor attainment of older young people. Underpinned by a robust database and supported by the local authority Attainment Advisor, this is critical in ensuring better outcomes for all care experienced children and young people.</p> <p>Care Experienced Children and Young People Co-ordinator post is currently out for recruitment. It is hoped the co-ordinator will work closely with teaching staff and partners to improve attainment and wider outcomes.</p>
<b>Care and protection</b>	
<b>09 Orkney Childcare and Young People's Partnership website</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Scoping and development of the Orkney Childcare and Young People's Partnership (OCYPP) website.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	OHAC Social Work team.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	Launch of new website by 30 September 2021.
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	<p>It will be launched, live and accessible.</p> <p><b>Update:</b> The website was formally launched on 7 March 2022.</p> <p><a href="#">Growing Up In Orkney - Growing Up In Orkney</a></p> <p>'Growing Up In Orkney' is a website developed by the Orkney Childcare and Young People's Partnership. Orkney Youth Forum was involved in the website design which has information targeted at different age groups for children and young people growing up in Orkney. This includes useful information, signposting to local and national activities and events, and awareness raising of matters of interest. Information is available for parents, carers, and professionals.</p>
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Launch and implement the use of a neglect toolkit across the Children's Services Workforce
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	OHAC
<i>When will it be done?</i>	A staged approach will allow coverage across all services. Core services (identified by partner organisations) will begin the training at the end of September 2021 with this first stage completed by end March 2022
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	<p>By end March 2022 core staff will have undertaken the training to allow them to use the Neglect Toolkit</p> <p><b>Update:</b></p>

	<p>Neglect toolkit training has been delivered to some cohorts of staff. Further training dates are to be established.</p> <p>Session with the trainers is scheduled to take place in the very near future to discuss the roll out and embedding of the neglect toolkit. Dates to be identified for neglect toolkit training to be delivered across the partnership.</p>
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Strengthen our approach to receiving, recording, and responding to the voice of the child and young person
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	All partner organisations will identify how this will be achieved in their services
<i>When will it be done?</i>	End October 2021
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	<p>All partner organisations will be able to provide examples of how this is being undertaken and record reading audits will evidence this in future.</p> <p><b>Update:</b></p> <p>The Who Cares? Scotland Advocacy Worker is invited to the child's reviews and has been present at a number of these at the request of the child or young person.</p> <p>The newly appointed Independent Reviewing Officer meets with children in advance of Reviews wherever this is appropriate to introduce himself to the child/young person and where possible ascertain their views.</p>
<b>Equality and empowerment</b>	
<b>10 UNCRC</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Embed in all our key policies and practices.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	All services and Third Sector.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	Within the life span of this plan.
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	<p>Feedback from children and young people, self-evaluation, and scrutiny of policies and practices.</p> <p><b>Update:</b></p> <p>Significant work has been undertaken on the need for alignment with the UNCRC 2021 Bill and the importance of the legal requirement on the views of the child. This has involved seeking independent legal opinion from an experienced Advocate and reflection on this significant change in law, requiring a paradigm shift in practice and in current thinking. This work has been presented to Chief Officers Group (COG) (Public Protection), the Scottish Government Children's Rights, Protection and Justice Division and Social Work Scotland Children and Families Standing Committee - Children and Families are working with Who Cares? Scotland for feedback from children and young people. Also feedback from families regarding what worked well and what didn't work well and are policies and procedures</p>

	being adhered to – Community Learning & Development has been involved in a number of training sessions and have piloted UNCRC training sessions with various youth groups and have included UNCRC training within youth services. General UNCRC session will be delivered to the wider youth sector.
<b>11 Youth Engagement Strategy</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Develop a strategy for youth engagement in Orkney.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	OIC Community Learning and Development Team in liaison with Orkney Youth Forum.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	March 2022.
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	Publication of Youth Engagement Strategy.  <b>Update:</b> Strategy for youth engagement is under development with further consultation, discussion and progression via the youth conference. Involvement across the sectors is required to develop the strategy.
<b>12 LGBT+ Support Programme</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Establish a formal support programme for LGBT+ young people.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	Education Service, Children and Families Service, Community Learning and Development Service and the Northern Alliance Equalities Group
<i>When will it be done?</i>	October 2022.
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	Award of LGBT Charter.  <b>Update:</b> A decision has been taken to engage with the LGBT Youth Scotland Charter across all of our secondary schools and departments. Schools will engage with this over 2022/23.
<b>Options and opportunities</b>	
<b>13 Youth Employment Support</b>	
<i>What are we going to do?</i>	Manage Orkney's Kickstart Gateway and support employers and potential employees who are interested in participating in the scheme.
<i>Who is going to do it?</i>	Orkney Construction Training Group and OIC Community Learning and Development and Learning Disability Employment Support teams.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	January 2022.
<i>How will we know it's done?</i>	By monitoring the number of Kickstart placements.  <b>Update:</b> Two Kickstart schemes are being run by CLD in partnership with Orkney Construction Training Group. Orkney Islands Council are

	<p>also Kickstart employers with 7 Kickstart placements ending and work is ongoing to ensure sustained progression for employees under the Kickstart scheme. Some kickstart placements have been extended. Kickstart criteria has been widened which has created new Kickstart placements over and above the initial 7 placements and carved roles have been established within the Local Authority. Young person guarantee work scheme, summer programme has completed for young people who are not going onto a positive destination.</p>
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