

Orkney Children
and Young People's
Partnership



Working Together for a Better Orkney
Loved Safe and Respected

Orkney's Children's Services Plan Annual Review 2022 -23



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

Review of Orkney's Children's Services Plan March 2023



1. 'The Promise'

Scotland's ambition for children and young people – was 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, were:

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 UNCRC Bill was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament on 16 March 2021, but could not be made law because of a legal challenge brought by UK Government Law Officers. The Supreme Court ruled that certain parts of the Bill fall out with the competence of the Scottish Parliament. In response, the Scottish Government published non-statutory introductory guidance on implementing the UNCRC, while it considers the judgment.

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.

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 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 2023:

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>	<p>Updated service directory, hosted on Voluntary Action Orkney’s website, with signposting to self-help apps and websites specific to children and young people.</p> <p>Update: This action was completed and reported on in the 2021/22 annual report.</p> <p>Further work has been undertaken: Voluntary Action Orkney are currently in the process of developing a new website, however the current Community Directory is available and updating of this is ongoing.</p> <p>Action for Children delivered mental health and wellbeing training ‘Bouncing Back’ sessions to first year pupils in Stromness Academy, as part of the ongoing development of supporting young people through challenging transitions. They have shared with us that first year is a challenging and scary time. Fourth year pupils at Stromness academy have been screened to receive ‘The Blues’ programme and this will be</p>

	<p>delivered to a targeted group of young people over the coming months.</p> <p>Developments are underway with partner agencies such as the Pickaquoy leisure centre to deliver sustained and ongoing mental health support through 1:1 personal training sessions, boxing programmes and gym inductions. Funding from cashback for communities has allowed this service to complete one to one sessions and upskilling with young people such as cooking and art sessions.</p> <p>The service seeks to support up to 40 people annually ranging from 8 to 18 years of age, while the whole family approach seeks to ensure the service is 'Getting it Right' for the young person referred and their siblings. Referrals continue to come from Education Services, Social Work Services, School Nurses and vitally self-referrals from parents and young people.</p> <p>A Mental Health Strategy for schools was developed by the Educational Psychology team and was officially launched in February 2023.</p> <p>Community Learning & Development partners are members of the Strategic Community Learning Group and are developing a suite of suicide prevention training in Orkney across relevant knowledge and skill levels, utilising the multi-agency capacity to deliver training</p>
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. Update: There are 10 staff (increase of 8 staff members) now in post with recruitment continuing for the remaining posts.
03 Online resource about substance use	
<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.

	<p>Update:</p> <p>The Growing Up in Orkney website is live and has resources for young people – Growing Up In Orkney - Growing Up In Orkney</p> <p>Additional progress in this area: The joint Action for Children and Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership grant funding for the Partnership Drugs Initiative (PDI), provides funding for Family Practitioner work (1 FTE and 1 x 12 hours post), focused on vulnerable children, young people and families affected by alcohol or drug use. The service provides diversionary youth work in Stromness, on Fridays, for 20 plus young people in partnership with Community Learning and Development staff. This provision is being developed in partnership with the young people to identify what they feel they need to ensure this is a safe space that they can continue to attend this drop in. This has been partly funded by an Action for Children initiative, named Dragons’ Den, and allowed the young people to lead on what they would like to see this drop in deliver.</p> <p>This service is a whole family approach, incorporating Action for Children’s core values, ensuring the young person is at the centre of the delivery of this support. Working with young people and their families through one-to-one sessions in the family home and in the community. Referrals are received from social work, education, other third sector agencies and families themselves who have identified that they require support and are in a place to engage with service.</p>
<p>04 Wellness Project</p>	
<p><i>What are we going to do?</i></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><i>Who is going to do it?</i></p>	<p>VAO Youth Development Workers and young volunteers.</p>
<p><i>When will it be done?</i></p>	<p>Nov 2022</p>
<p><i>How will we know it’s done?</i></p>	<p>Online space established and active.</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>The Orkney Childcare and Young People’s Partnership developed ‘Growing up in Orkney’ website. The partnership was formed in July 2015 and provides a meeting point for all those working with and providing services to children and young people in Orkney. Find out more at www.orkney.gov.uk/OCYPP Members of the partnership: OIC NHS Orkney OHAC Police Scotland</p>

	Voluntary Action Orkney Orkney Youth Forum DYW Skills Development Scotland
05 Service Directory for Children and Young People	
<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. Update: VAO are currently in the process of developing a new website, however the current Community Directory is available and updating of this is ongoing.
06 School Counselling	
<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>	In-house counselling team in place. Update: The Education service has recruited to and implemented an 'in-house' counselling service for schools. There are currently two full time In-School Counsellors operating across Kirkwall Grammar School and Stromness Academy. Recruitment is underway for a third counsellor for the Junior High Schools. This is proving challenging and as such we can provide support to the junior high schools via the two In-School Counsellors already employed. We are also exploring options for 24 hour on line services, using the funding for the third counsellor.
Overcoming disadvantage	
07 Child Poverty Strategy 2021-23	
<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.

	<p>Update:</p> <p>The Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022 – 2026 incorporates elements of the Scottish Government’s national strategy for child poverty, adapted for our local circumstances. The national framework has three themes which drive the strategy: Pockets, Prospects, Places. To these, Orkney has added Prevention and Priorities. The Strategy can be accessed here Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-2026</p> <p>A key partnership project initiated during 2022-23 was Orkney Money Matters (OMM) that aims to reduce financial insecurity in Orkney. Led by VAO and funded in large by the Council, OMM is establishing a unified referral pathway to improve access to cash and money advice via co-ordinated support from Third Sector partner agencies.</p> <p>Young persons 50% discount given to Under 22 year olds and full time students with the introduction of the Under 22 Free Bus Scheme, Jan 2021.</p> <p>Actions in the Strategy are monitored actively by The Orkney Partnership’s Cost of Living Task Force, along with actions arising from strategies for Food Dignity and Fuel Poverty. Progress is reported to the Orkney Partnership Board. Cost of Living was adopted as a strategic priority in the new Orkney Community Plan 2023-30 (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan).</p>
08 Tracking and Monitoring of Attainment	
<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 Officer.
<i>When will it be done?</i>	August 2021
<i>How will we know it’s done?</i>	<p>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.</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>All primary schools now use a Broad General Education tracking toolkit which can filter out different cohorts of children such as care experienced. This enables senior leaders to effectively track and monitor the attainment progress of children who have experienced care as part of the regular tracking meetings held in school. The attainment of young people who have experienced care in the secondary schools is tracked and monitored using the school’s existing systems. The regular engagement with the Attainment Advisor and the newly appointed Quality Improvement Officer has a clear focus on the</p>

	<p>attainment and progress of children and young people who have experienced care.</p> <p>In addition, the care experienced children and young persons' coordinator carefully tracks the attainment and progress of young people across the authority twice annually. Initial signs are showing that attainment for care experienced learners is improving although there is still a significant gap between their attainment and that of their peers.</p>
Care and protection	
09 Orkney Childcare and Young People's Partnership website	
<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>Update:</p> <p>'Growing up in Orkney' website was formally launched on 7 March 2022.</p> <p>Growing Up In Orkney - Growing Up In Orkney</p> <p>It is a website dedicated to helping young people find out everything they need to know about Growing up in Orkney, and is a space for children, teenagers and young adults to find the help and information needed and who to contact. We also have areas for parents, carers, and professionals.</p> <p>The content of the website has been managed by Orkney Islands Council Communications team and a small Project Board. Year one statistical overview is available</p> <p> GUIO - Website stats since launch -</p> <p>The website supports a chat function, allowing users to seek immediate help and support. As awareness of the website and its potential grows, it is anticipated the chat function will become a very important function, requiring suitable staffing to provide the requisite, timely, support, as well as ensuring the website is up to date, reflecting the latest information and support available to children and young people. Adults too will have interest in the information available.</p> <p>Current activity is focused on identifying the best fit for a role to manage the content, wider community communication campaigns, improvements, and use of the website, alongside</p>

	identification of manning the chat function once it becomes live.
<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>Update:</p> <p>Action for Children delivered the Caring for Me Assessment Toolkit (Neglect Toolkit) training for trainers on the 1st March 2022 which was attended by nine colleagues from Education, Children's Services, NHS and third party agencies. This training was to allow partners to roll this training out to their staff and ensure the Caring for Me Assessment Toolkit is embedded in the Children's Service Improvement Plan as one of five priority action areas.</p> <p>Changes in leadership roles has delayed further roll out of the neglect toolkit. Plans for sustainability need to be reviewed and refreshed.</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>Update:</p> <p>Incorporation of the Rights Respecting Schools award means children and young people have a voice in planning and decision making set out in school policy. Various surveys on Health and Wellbeing take place through the year, including a recent example on the cost-of-living crisis, as highlighted earlier. Parents and young people contributed to the Self Evaluation Week prior to the creation of the Education Service Improvement Plan.</p>

	<p>Conferences, such as Tending the Light in the North, are providing useful platforms for obtaining the views of our children and young people in the Throughcare / Aftercare Service. The feedback is captured and shared with managers, for them to respond to and address. As a follow on from the last conference, held in Inverness, young people identified that they wanted to establish a committee to address issues and concerns. This is being progressed shortly with the young people and staff having a 'pizza night' where all the ideas and issues raised so far will be discussed and plans will be agreed for next steps.</p> <p>Our Third sector partners regularly ask families for feedback, and this is done in a variety of ways. Home Start Orkney, for example, host group discussions and use social media, informal chats, and regular reviews. Reviews are always recorded and signed by the families, making sure they are listened to, included and suggestions acted upon. Evidence collected through this is detailed via annual reports. The Home-Start Quality Assurance framework that is in place means that feedback is regularly reviewed to ensure that young people and their families are listened to and supported.</p> <p>The Suicide Prevention Task Force has engaged with a number of young people in this agenda. Three of them attended a meeting early in 2023 and have agreed to be involved in the Communications strategy, and to participate in the group set up to develop a local app on suicide prevention.</p> <p>The Orkney Youth Conference was held in March 2023 and brought together young people from across Orkney to take part in workshops and to hear from keynote speakers on a range of issues. This annual conference made a welcome return after being paused since 2019, due to the pandemic. The conference was hosted by a local young person and was formally opened by the Council Convener. Keynote speakers included Bruce Adamson, Scotland's Children and Young People's Commissioner and Tim Frew, the Chief Executive of Youth Link Scotland. Workshops for the day included the Cost of Living, Mental Health Awareness and Content & creation. The workshops were supplemented by a 'Marketplace' hosting national and local organisations that could provide young people the opportunity to find out more about the services that can support them now and in the future. Feedback from young people was very positive.</p> <p>The Orkney Youth Forum continues to meet regularly and is supported by the Community Learning and Development Service. The Forum provides a platform to share the voices of Orkney's young people and is attended and supported by two Councillors from Orkney Islands Council, who attend the meetings. The Forum Members have attended meetings with the NHS Orkney Board, elected Members, council officials and</p>
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	<p>representatives from Orkney Health and Care. The Forum members have entered into chamber debates, participated in outdoor education activities and assisted in the development of the Growing Up in Orkney website. They produce a newsletter and have a presence on social media.</p> <p>There are options for young people who are unable or unwilling to engage with more formal services with increased youth services in areas of transition, employability, mental health and homelessness.</p>
Equality and empowerment	
10 UNCRC	
<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>Update:</p> <p>All schools in Orkney have signed up to the Rights Respecting Schools award and are working towards a gold standard. This programme fully embeds the principles of the UNCRC.</p> <p>As of February 2023, all Secondary and Junior High Schools have signed up to the LGBT Charter through LGBT Youth Scotland.</p> <p>Community Learning Development & Employability arranged 2-day UNCRC practitioner training with for wider Community Learning & Development partners, delivered by Education Scotland.</p> <p>Plans are in place to review our Children's Services strategic structures, which will incorporate the UNCRC.</p>
11 Youth Engagement Strategy	
<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>	<p>Publication of Youth Engagement Strategy.</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>This action has not yet been progressed but activity outcomes are noted below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of meetings with Orkney Youth Forum • Orkney Youth Conference, March 2023

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Islanders Network • Scottish Youth Parliament
12 LGBT+ Support Programme	
<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>	<p>Award of LGBT Charter.</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>All secondary and junior high schools have signed up to the LGBT Youth Scotland Charter and are working towards the foundation award.</p> <p>The Youth Café is involved in activity supporting LGBT young people, with a regular group established.</p>
Options and opportunities	
13 Youth Employment Support	
<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>	<p>By monitoring the number of Kickstart placements.</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>Through the Aspire Gateway there were 47 Kickstart vacancies provided across a number of local businesses and organisations. There were 14 successful starts secured through the Gateway, of which 11 completed the full 6-month placement.</p> <p>In addition to acting as a gateway organisation for the local community, Orkney Island Council applied to deliver 12 Kickstart placements within the local authority across a range of teams.</p> <p>At the time there were 10 young people that met the eligibility criteria and all 10 were invited to interview for their chosen Kickstart position.</p> <p>7 young people started their Kickstart position and 6 completed their 6-month placement. 4 young people progressed to</p>

	sustained employment after their initial 6-month Kickstart, 3 within the LA.
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