

Stirling's Children's Services Plan 2023-26

Draft Priorities



Plan Priorities

Children, young people, their families and those who work with them have already told us what areas are the most important for us to include within the plan. These are...

- Children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Supporting everyone in your family to have the best opportunities
- Tackling child poverty
- Working better together

They have also asked us to look at how we can improve life for:

- children and young people with care experience
- children and young people with disabilities





From Talk to Action

For each of these priorities we have spoken to a range of people and identified what research tells us makes the biggest difference.

From this we have developed goals we will work towards during the three years of the plan.

We need your help to think about whether these are the right goals and what we need to do to achieve them.

For each of the priority areas there are two slides. The first explains why it is a priority and the second what goals we are working towards.

These goals should be the end result of the changes that we will be making through delivering the plan.

Read the slides for those priorities that you are interested in and let us know what you think on the following questionnaire:

<https://forms.gle/P7vLFghMTxZ88rQ6A>

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

For a number of years children, young people and their families have told us that mental health is a significant area of concern for them. For this reason it has been a priority in the last two Children's Services Plans.

Over the past three years we have asked over 2000 children and young people, almost 250 parents/carers and over 100 professionals what is working well and what needs to change. As a result we have:

Implemented community-based supports for children and young people aged between 5 and 24 (26 if care experienced) years of age to support needs being met at an earlier stage of intervention

Implemented a school counselling service, with a school counsellor linked to each primary and secondary school

Implemented nurturing approaches across schools and nurseries to promote wellbeing and achievement

Developed e-modules/training for staff and young people, with young people on topics that are important to them

We know that more action needs to be taken to ensure that all children and young people have access to the right support at the right time and that their needs are met at an earlier stage. This continues to be a priority in the new plan.



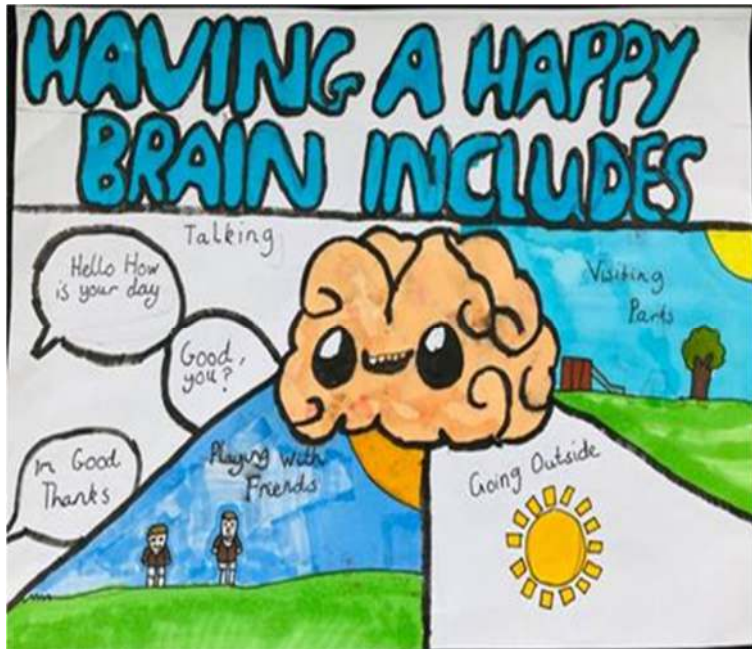
Felicity, Doune Primary School,



Eleanor S6, Dunblane High School



Zoe, Thornhill Primary School



Rhys, Allan's Primary School

Long term aim (what we are working towards but won't achieve within the timescale of the plan)

Improved mental health and Wellbeing for Stirling's Children and Young People

Goals within the life of the plan to get there:

- Children, young people and families are involved in designing what support is available
- The support that is available is based on what we know works well
- Everyone knows what support is available and how to access it
- Everyone feels confident to ask for help if they need it
- The person you ask for help from listens and understands
- Increased staff training
- Support is provided in the right place
- Support is available as soon as you need it
- Parents and carers are helped to support their child's mental health and emotional needs

Supporting everyone in your family to have the best opportunities

Children, young people and their families have told us that we need to think about supporting the whole family not just the child or young person.

Therefore, a group of services worked together with parents and carers to develop a new Parenting and Family Support strategy. They asked families “What does good family support look like”. This strategy describes how all services should be working with families in Stirling.

Work has also been undertaken to help families who are in crisis or who are only just coping.

Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the current cost of living crisis supporting the whole family has now become a priority within its own right within the new Children’s Services Plan.





Long term goals (what we are working towards but won't achieve within the timescale of the plan)

- Improved Wellbeing for all families
- Children and young people receive the right support to live safely at home with their families
- Reduction in families requiring crisis support
- More families are helped to access the supports in place for them

Goals within the life of the plan to get there:

- From before they are born, babies, children and young people experience the love and support they need to develop and meet their full potential
- A range of parenting and family support is available
- Support is provided when needed at the earliest opportunity
- Services are accessible to more families who need them
- Support is consistent and meets the standards of Stirling's Parenting and Family Support Strategy
- All services think about a child's whole family when providing support

Tackling Child Poverty

Like many other places, some of our families in Stirling are living in poverty. Poverty can be influenced many things and can only be tackled by all services working together. For this reason it was a priority in our last plan.

Over the past three years we have:

Helped a number of unemployed parents and carers to find employment

Reduced or removed the cost of activities provided by Active Stirling, Stirling Council's Youth Services and our schools

Delivered after school activities, holiday play schemes and 'Play in the Park' sessions to support families on low incomes to access good quality activities

Helped families to ensure they are receiving all the money and benefits they are entitled to

Since then children, young people and their families have told us they are worried that the current 'cost of living crisis' will make life more difficult for those living in poverty and will mean that more families will start to live in poverty. This continues to be a priority in the new plan.





Long term aim (what we are working towards but won't achieve within the timescale of the plan)

Every child and young person in Stirling is able to live without the limitations of poverty

Goals within the life of the plan to get there:

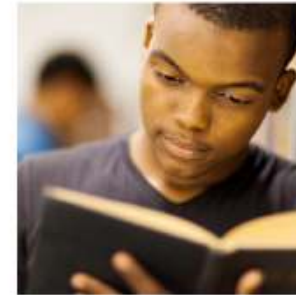
- Training and employment opportunities are in place to support parents and carers to be able to find work
- Information and support is provided to help families to receive the social security and benefits in kind that they are entitled to
- Children, young people and their families are able to live in good quality and affordable housing
- Children and young people in schools and nurseries who are experiencing poverty are supported to achieve their full potential
- Services are aware of the impact of the cost of living crisis and their role in easing it for employees and families living in Stirling
- The health and wellbeing of families living in poverty is improved

Improving Outcomes for children and young people with care experience

During the development of our last Children's Services Plan, children and young people with experience of care wrote to us to explain to us how they felt and what needed to be changed in their lives. They then worked to identify some i-statements that should be true for every child and young person with experience of care. These are our long term outcomes.

Over the past three years we have worked with care experienced children and young people to raise awareness of their needs and provided opportunities to help them learn, participate and flourish.

Whilst the lives of our care experienced young people are improving, we know that this continues to be an area where we need to do more work and therefore this continues to be a priority in the new plan.





Long term aims (what we are working towards but won't achieve within the timescale of the plan)

- I am asked what I think
- I am understood
- I am supported to learn and achieve
- I am protected from harm
- I am treated as a person and not a case
- I have opportunities like any other child or young person
- I am still supported when I become an adult
- Transitions in my life are minimised and when needed I am supported through them

Goals within the life of the plan to get there:

- Children's rights are understood and upheld by Corporate Parents and exercised by young people with care experienced
- Pupils with care experienced attain and achieve similar to all pupils
- Young people with care experience are confident and able to live independently similar to all young people
- Young people with care experience access the right mental health support at the right time
- Young people with care experience participate in sport, leisure and hobbies similar to all young people
- Young people with care experience build and maintain consistent loving supportive relationships
- Young people with care experience live in safe appropriate accommodation
- Young people with care experience lead safe, happy and healthy lives

Improving Outcomes for children and young people with disabilities



Parents, carers and professionals have told us that we need to work better together to support children and young people with disabilities and their families. Over the past three years services we have focused on how support can feel more joined-up for the families of children with the most complex needs. Some of the things we have done include:

Increasing health visitor's knowledge and skills to enable them to provide support early to pre-school children not meeting their milestones

Working better together when assessing needs and supporting transitions

Recycling equipment to enable children to have the equipment they need more swiftly

Using the views of parents and carers to develop plans to increase specialist secondary school places

Whilst some improvements have been made, we know that more needs to be done to ensure all children and young people with disabilities reach their full potential. This is a priority in the new plan.





Long term aims (what we are working towards but won't achieve within the timescale of the plan)

- Policy and support is well planned and inclusive
- Children with disabilities have the skills and support they need to move successfully into adulthood
- Children with disabilities are confident to develop and achieve their own dreams and goals
- Children with disabilities are included and play an active role in their community
- Families of disabled children feel supported and are more resilient

Goals within the life of the plan to get there:

- Children, young people and their families are listened to and involved in all decision-making
- Transitions are planned early and coordinated across all services
- Families feel empowered and able to find their own solutions to problems
- More children and young people with disabilities receive education and learning within Stirling
- A greater range of sport and leisure opportunities are available for children with disabilities
- Children and young people are able to access the right support at the right time
- Families are more resilient with increased knowledge and support

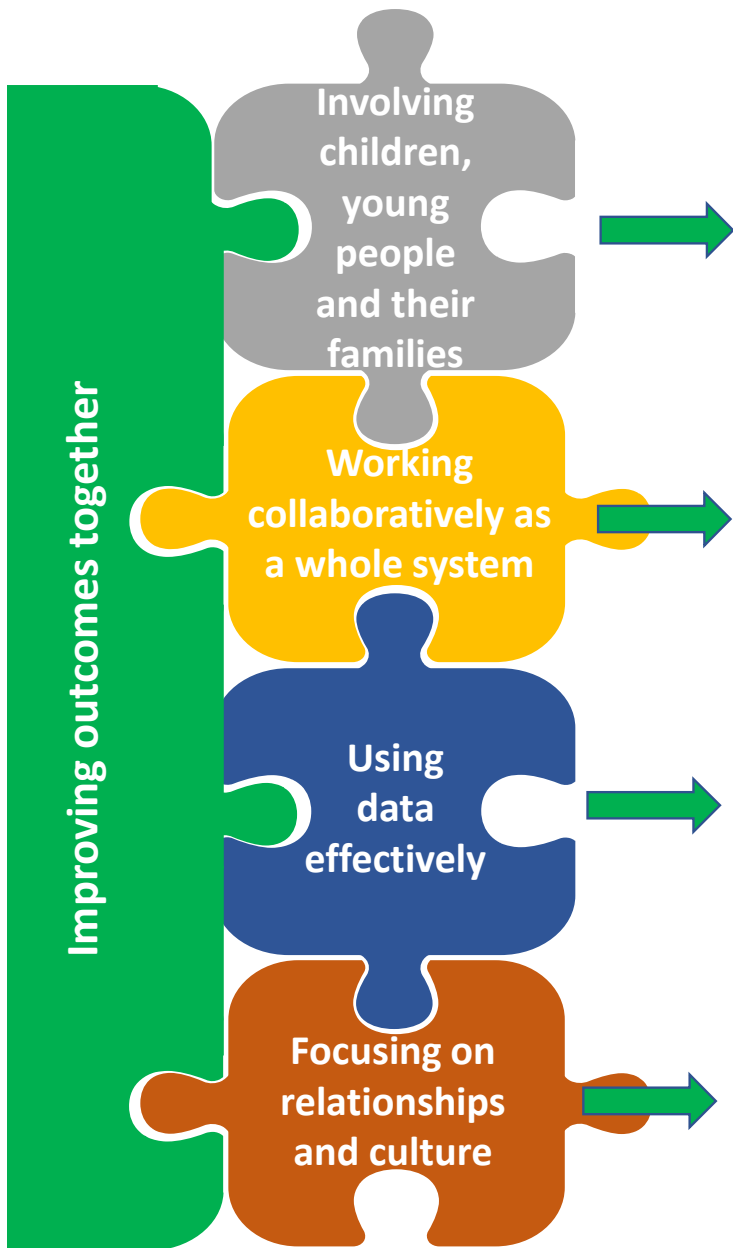
Working Together

In order for us to be able to work together well to achieve these goals for children and young people in Stirling we have identified four key things that we need to do.

These are shown over the page, along with what we think success would look like.

During the first year of the plan we aim to evaluate how good we are doing these things.





What success will look like:

- All Children and young people are empowered to be equal partners in their own planning
- Children, young people and their families are active partners, helping to shape improvements that matter

- The role of families and communities in supporting each other is valued equally as input from professionals
- We work together effectively to achieve shared outcomes in everything we do
- We work together to make best use of available resources
- We adapt and respond to changing needs together

- We have a shared understanding of how we are doing in Stirling
- We have the right information to help us understand what is going well and what we need to do better
- We use up-to-date and meaningful information in the right way to develop our plans
- We use data to track progress towards our plan's outcomes

- Communities and professionals in Stirling understand, respect and work compatibly with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- We work together to provide joined-up services that children, young people and families can access whenever and however they need them
- We communicate effectively, share our learning and look for solutions together to help us to continuously improve complex and difficult issues