



Argyll & Bute CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2021-2024



#Keep
The
Promise

getting
it right
for every child



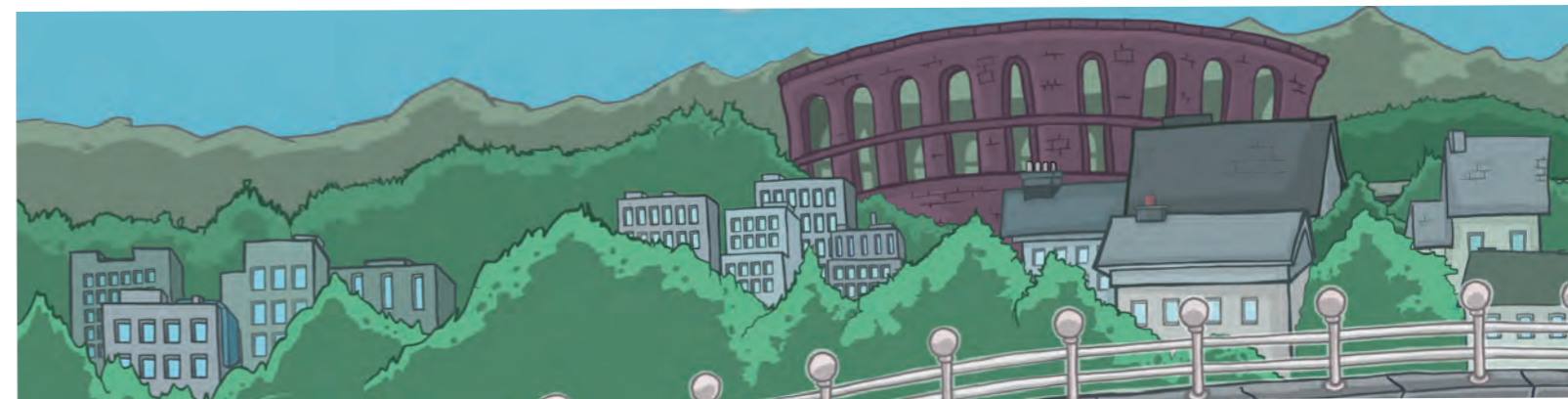
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Our ambition as Corporate Parents

As Corporate Parents in Argyll and Bute we all hold the highest level of commitment and ambition for all our care experienced children and young people. We want our children and young people to have the best possible start in life and for Argyll and Bute to be one of the best places in Scotland to grow up. As Corporate Parents we will provide the leadership to help ensure all our care experienced children have the opportunities to grow into confident, resilient and successful individuals, and we will ensure that we stand with them on their journey into more independent futures.

We know that across Scotland we need to improve Scotland's care system so that each and every child can thrive and all care experienced children and young people can experience good health and achieve in education and employment. We are lucky that many of our care experienced children in Argyll and Bute live successful and happy lives, and we need to ensure this is true for all. We are determined to continue to improve the outcomes and positive destinations for all and these commitments are the basis of our 2021-24 plan; acknowledging that we can and must to more and better to ensure our care system provides a strong foundation; with support that's ready and responsive for as long as it's needed for each and every care experienced person in Argyll and Bute.

The next three years will be among the most challenging for a generation. Many for our families and communities, our children and young people, along with our workforce, have experienced the unprecedented impacts of Coronavirus across almost every aspect of our lives, these impacts will not all be immediately apparent but will be wide ranging and with us all throughout the period of this plan and probably beyond.

In Argyll and Bute we welcome the challenges set by The Promise and the Care Leavers Covenant; we embrace its aims and aspirations and are committed to delivering a transformational change in our care system. We are determined to 'Keep the Promise to our children and young people and we look forward to maximising any opportunities' to work with and support delivery of The Promise.



Our ambition as Corporate Parents

The Promise has helped inform the development of this plan, in which we outline how we will begin to deliver its priorities along with the outcomes we want to achieve with and for our care experienced children and young people and their families over the coming 3 years. Inevitably not all of the ambitions of The Promise fall within the scope of the Corporate Parenting Plan, many sit across different areas of strategic responsibility, and the commitment to keep The Promise is owned across community planning partners and strategic partnership groups.

Our 2021-24 plan builds on the successes of our 2018-21 plan and has been developed as a live document that can grow and adapt to the emerging challenges and priorities of the next 3 years.

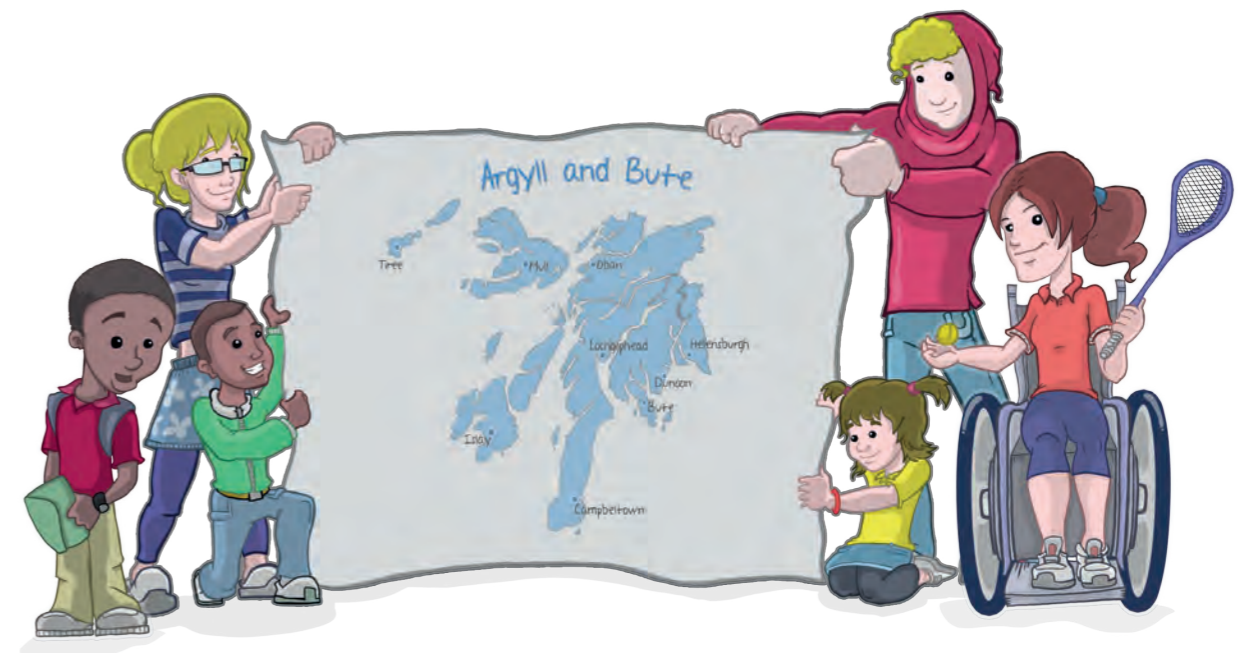


Our Vision in Argyll and Bute

Working together to achieve the best for our children, young people and their families

The Corporate Parenting Plan sits within the wider vision for Argyll and Bute and addresses our aspirations for our care experienced children, young people and young adults. In our vision we state what we want the future to look like for all children young people and their families, for all those who use our services as well as those who work in them. The Corporate Parenting Plan therefore needs to be considered and understood within the context of the Argyll and Bute Children and Young People's Services Plan and our commitments and priorities for all children across a range of service's strategic plans.

Underpinning this remains the shared language and approaches of GIRFEC to the promotion of wellbeing. GIRFEC has been adopted across partners and remains our core approach to working together as professionals and with our children young people and their families and communities to identify and meet the needs of all children and to ensure the delivery of real improvements in their lives, experiences and outcomes; ensuring every child is placed at the centre and has the best possible opportunities to grow up safe, loved, secure and respected so they can achieve their full potential.





Why do we have a Corporate Parenting Plan?

This plan meets our requirements as Corporate Parents, under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, to prepare and publish a plan of how we will fulfil our duties and it sits within the wider Argyll and Bute Children and Young People's Service Plan. These duties are that we;

Are Alert

- Have systems in place to ensure we stay informed of issues which could have a negative impact on care experienced children, young people and carers.

Assess

- We ensure services are relevant and accessible by assessing and responding to need.

Promote

- We perform actions which advantage or benefit care experienced children young people and adults.

Provide Opportunities

- We identify opportunities relevant to our care experienced children, young people and adults and seek to understand how they can be supported to participate in them.

Ensure Access

- We help our care experienced children, young people and adults to overcome barriers so that they can benefit from opportunities and services.

Strive to Improve

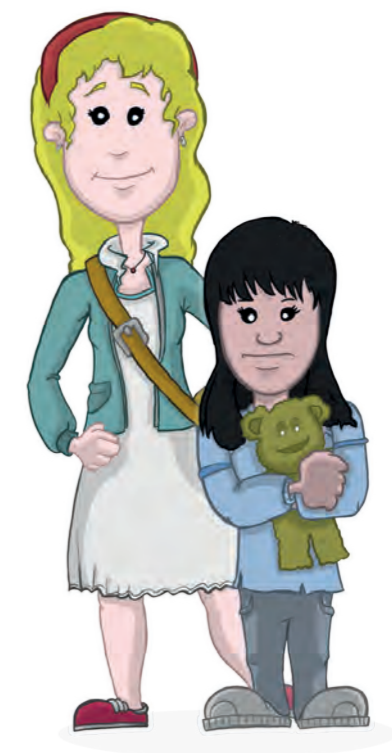
- We review our performance as Corporate Parents and take action to improve where opportunities are identified.

Care experienced profile

Key facts - How do we compare to the rest of Scotland,

In Argyll and Bute we have;

- Among the lowest proportion of our children who are care experienced.
- Above average rate of care experienced children living at home.
- Very low rate of care experienced children living away from home and who are looked after and accommodated.
- Slightly above average proportion of our care experienced children living in Kinship arrangements.
- Above average rate of care experienced children growing up in residential care.
- Below average rate of care experienced children growing up in foster care.
- Like most other areas of Scotland we have seen a gradual increase in the numbers of children needing to become Care Experienced and this has increased significantly through the period of the Coronavirus pandemic.





Currently Care Experienced

In Argyll and Bute the rate children and young people who are Looked After (per 1,000 pop 0-17yrs) is 10.3. This is less than the comparator authority average rate of 12.5, and significantly less than the Scotland average rate of 13.9.

Currently we have 160 Looked After Children; this is broken down as follows;

	Fostering	Kinship Care	At Home with Parents	LA Children's Houses	Other Residential
Number in Argyll and Bute	32	50	47	19	12
% in Argyll and Bute	20%	31%	29%	12%	7%
% in Scotland 2019	33%	29%	25%	5%	5%

Currently in Continuing Care

Fostering	Residential	Kinship	Total
4	3	2	9

Care experienced - After Care

We are currently supporting 99 care experienced adults on their journey into independence.



Priorities

We have identified 4 strategic improvement priorities for the next 3 years, through self evaluation and informed by The Promise and the Care Leavers Covenant. These are the key areas where we are determined to make significant changes and improvements specifically for and with care experienced children, young people and adults;

- 1. We respect and include our children and young people - helping ensure they shape and inform all we do, and that we promote approaches that build on their and their families' and carer's strengths and assets.
- 2. We ensure our children and young people grow up in safe, secure, nurturing and loving homes and we promote and maintain positive relationships.
- 3. We support our children and young people to achieve their potential through lifelong learning, growth and development and the enjoyment of positive mental and physical wellbeing.
- 4. We help ensure our young people move to a positive more independent life when they are ready and we support them on their journey to independence.





In delivering these priorities we will seek to fully respect and incorporate the 5 foundations of The Promise and to encourage and support their implementation across wider children’s services planning and with partner agencies;

Voice

Children must be listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care at both a personal and strategic level.

Family

We must improve how we support families to overcome the difficulties that get in the way, improving the quality and access to key services and reduce the number of children in Scotland requiring to be cared for away from their families.

Care

Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a stable loving home, staying there for as long as needed. The quality and experience of care needs to fundamentally improve.

People

The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to listen and be compassionate loving and caring in their decision-making; requiring transformation of our workforce.

Scaffolding

Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required, requiring transformation of our family support service – and including services to parents and carer.

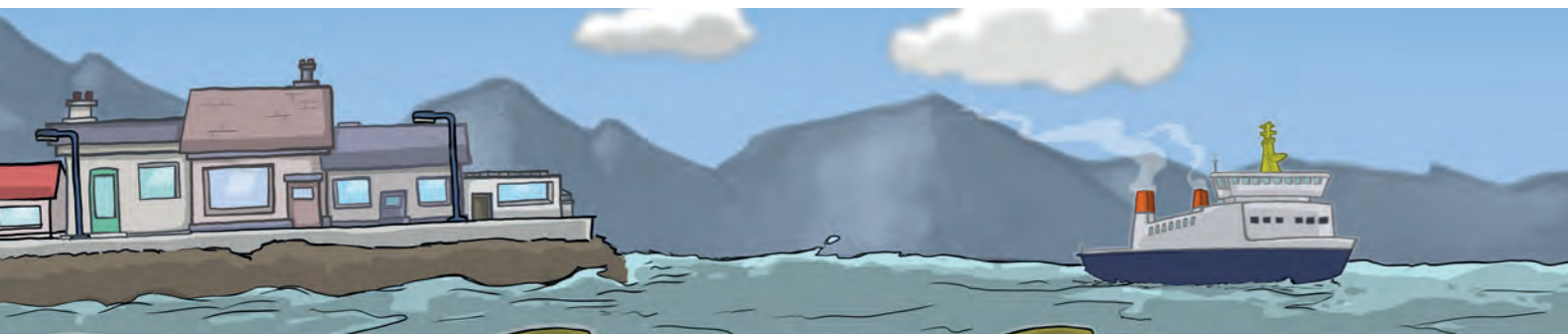


Areas for Action Priority 1

We respect and include our children and young people helping ensure they help shape and inform what we do and we promote approaches that build on strengths and assets.

Areas for Action

- Establish and maintain a Champs Board.
- Recruit a Care Experienced co – chair for our CPB.
- Stop using institutional and stigmatising language and become warmer, more loving, and respectful in how we write or talk about and with our care experienced children and young people.
- Embed a rights based approach to our care based on UNCRC.
- Corporate parents listen to the experiences of our children young people and their carers and contribute to wider engagement and participation with children and young people across Argyll and Bute.
- Ensure our children and young people can access advocacy for support in their day to day living and to inform decision makers of their views in relation to this.
- Uphold the legal right to inform and promote advocacy for children within the Children’s Hearing system.
- Undertake an annual CPB self evaluation involving our young people.
- Work with our young people to develop a more inclusive approach to their reviews.
- Improve the quality of our plans and planning.
- We ensure that we fully support our LGBTQI care experienced young people.



Performance Improvements

Short Term Outcomes Expected at 12 months

Establish an Argyll and Bute Champs Board.

Care Experienced Co Chair recruited and in place.

Work towards developing less stigmatising language by prioritising a move away from 15 key words and phrases associated with care experienced C&YP.

Partners work collectively to raise awareness and understanding of the UNCRC.

Advocacy services are easily accessible for care experienced children and young people.

Medium Term Outcome Expected at 24 months

Evidence our Champs Board is embedded and informing emerging corporate parenting priorities.

Corporate Parenting Board membership reviewed to incorporate increased proportion of care experienced members.

Evidence improvements in removing institutional language from how we write or talk about and with children and young people.

Ensure the UNCRC articles underpin our work with children and young people.

Care experienced young people are supported to use advocacy services.

Long Term Outcome Expected at 36 months

Care experienced children and young people are active partners in developing the next Corporate Parenting Plan.

Co chair can evidence improvements in approaches to delivering on corporate parenting responsibilities.

Evidence are more warm, nurturing and loving approach to how we write or talk about care experienced children and young people.

UNCRC is fully embedded and informs the development of the Corporate Parenting Plan 2024 – 27.

Care experienced young people routinely using and continue reporting positive impact from advocacy.

Short Term Outcomes Expected at 12 months

Use the Model for Improvement to develop tests of change to improve the quality of assessments and plans.

Ensure our LGBTQ+ young people have access to advice and support.

Medium Term Outcome Expected at 24 months

Through run chart data and feedback evidence improvements in plans and assessments are evident.

Our workforce is confident to support all LGBTQ+ care experienced young people.

Long Term Outcome Expected at 36 months

85% of care experienced children and young people feedback that they are confident their assessment and plans are easy to understand of a good quality.

LGBTQ+ care experienced young people feel supported.





Priority 2

We ensure our children and young people grow up in safe, secure, nurturing and loving homes and we promote and maintain positive relationships.

Areas for Action

- Increase the proportion of care experienced children growing up in a family and ensure more brothers and sisters can grow up together.
- Our registered services maintain good or better grades and we support and continue to develop our workforce so it has all the confidence and skills to provide the safe loving care our children need.
- Promote trauma informed relationship based practice within our workforce and care.
- Ensure no Care Experienced child or young person experiences homelessness.
- We continue to improve our planning and decision making to secure permanent secure, nurturing and loving homes for children.
- Reduce the number of unplanned moves for our children and young people and support the consistency of family, school and community relationships.
- Reduce the number of changes in social workers and ensure workers have more time to spend with their children and young people.
- We improve our support for children living with Kin and at home with their parents
- Promote positive enabling relationships between our children and young people and Police Youth Engagement Officers, Police Scotland Youth Volunteers and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Short Term Outcomes Expected at 12 months

Develop transformational change plan to increase the availability of family care and reduce moves.

75% of children's workforce has undertaken trauma awareness training.

Ensure all families, where care experienced children are growing up at home or in kinship, can access housing information and advice to maintain appropriate accommodation.

Embed PACE learning in revised policy and procedures.

Increase care experienced involvement on Scottish Fire and Rescue Service engagement and education programmes.

Recruitment drive with care experienced young people for joining Police Scotland Volunteer and promote active engagement with Youth Engagement Officers.

Medium Term Outcome Expected at 24 months

Increase the proportion of care experienced family groups growing up together and in a family.

Our services to care experienced children are more trauma informed.

HOME Argyll allocations policy and leaving care housing protocol is reviewed to ensure that it assists in meeting our statutory obligations to care experienced young people and # keeps The Promise.

Improve approach to achieving permanence with kinship carers.

Support increased care experienced involvement in Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Youth Volunteer Scheme and mentoring.

Extend take up of targeted fire home safety visits for care experienced young people.

Expand variety of Police Scotland activities and enrolment and participation by care experienced children and young people.

Long Term Outcome Expected at 36 months

The proportion of care experienced children growing up in families is improving and approaching the Scottish average.

Our care system is trauma informed.

Housing allocations are easily accessible for our care experienced young people.

Evidence of consistently delivering permanence for children in line with national best practice.

Evidence that care experienced young people are offered experience of fire fighter role.

Implement mentoring role for older / previous care experienced Police Service Volunteers.



Priority 3

We support our children and young people to achieve their potential through lifelong learning, growth and development and enjoyment of positive mental and physical wellbeing.

Areas for Action

- Improve attainment and achievement of all children and young people whilst closing the attainment gap.
- Reducing the number of moves of school.
- Develop and strengthen the impact of the support and mentoring offered to learners and families by the new Education Care Experienced Team.
- Promote and support access to sports, leisure and outdoor resources in our communities.
- Improve the quality and impact of Initial Health Assessments to improve health outcomes.
- Develop our mental health pathway to ensure timely access to school counselling, PMH and CAMHs services for any who need it.
- Continue to develop our Trauma informed workforce, carers and services.
- Improve transitions to adult health and mental health services.

Short Term Outcomes Expected at 12 months

We will use progress and achievement data within SEEMIS to track and monitor the attainment of our care experienced P1-S3 pupils and will offer additional interventions/ support where necessary. We will use 2021 figures as our baseline for future outcomes.

Medium Term Outcome Expected at 24 months

We will continue to review the quarterly progress and achievement data to ensure that pupils in the broad general education phase (P1-S3) are making steady progress. We will work with designated managers to identify where additional targeted support is required in order to help learners progress in line with our non-care experienced learners.

Long Term Outcome Expected at 36 months

Tracking of children at the Broad General Education Phase will be ongoing. Interventions and additional support will have been routinely been offered, where necessary, and this will be embedded in practice, ensuring a continued upward trend in attainment for care experienced C+YP from P1-S3.

We will use the national achievement of curriculum for excellence levels (ACEL) data to compare the progress of our care experienced pupils at P1,4,7 and S3 with the national picture. We will work with designated managers to plan appropriate, supportive interventions.

We will continue to use the national Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) data to compare the progress of our care experienced pupils at P1,4,7 and S3 with the national picture, working with designated managers to target support, where appropriate.



Short Term Outcomes Expected at 12 months

We will use baseline data from INSIGHT and we will examine trends in attainment in order to review the benchmark figures each 12 month period. Using tracking and monitoring data within SEEMIS we will offer additional interventions and additional support to achieve 55% successful presentations in levels 4 and 5 for literacy and 50% for numeracy for care experienced children and young people.

Using business intelligence and robust tracking of attendance, we will compare the attendance tracking data for care experienced children and young people with the whole pupil population attendance data to create a baseline data set. We will increase the attendance of our primary-aged care experienced pupils to 94.5% and 89.5% for secondary.

Medium Term Outcome Expected at 24 months

We will adjust the baseline data and the increase the new target based on the attainment achieved in 2022 in levels 4 and 5 for literacy and numeracy for care experienced children and young people. We will work with designated managers to identify where additional target support is needed to evidence an increase in successful presentations in levels 4 and 5 for literacy and numeracy.

Comparison with the whole pupil population attendance data for session 2021-21 will allow us to benchmark and adjust the target for our care experienced learners. Continued tracking of attendance, multi-agency partnerships and individualised interventions from the care experience team will allow continued evidence to be gathered of an increase in attendance of our care experienced children and young people.

Long Term Outcome Expected at 36 months

We will adjust the baseline data and increase the new target based on the attainment achieved in 2023 in levels 4 and 5 for literacy and numeracy for care experienced children and young people. The routine tracking and monitoring and adjustment of the target should evidence sustained improvement. We will have gathered the tracking and monitoring data for 3 years and compared this to the actual attainment. Interventions and additional support will have been routinely been offered, where necessary, and this will be embedded in practice, ensuring a continued upward trend in attainment for care experienced C+YP.

We will have gathered and monitored attendance data for 3 years for care experienced children and young people and compared this to the attendance of the whole pupil population. Interventions and additional support will have been routinely been offered, where necessary, and this will be embedded in practice, ensuring a continued upward trend in attendance for care experienced C+YP.

Short Term Outcomes Expected at 12 months

Care experienced young people accessing individualised education programmes will have their timetables audited and approved to ensure a balance between curricular, vocational and work experience activities.

Ensure Transitions plan in place where a care experienced children moves between schools within A&B.

Promote take up of leisure concession scheme with care experienced children and young people.

By adopting the Model for Improvement the quality and consistency of our Initial health assessments continues to improve.

By adopting the Model for Improvement and tests of change develop a Mental Health Pathway for care experienced C+YP.

Medium Term Outcome Expected at 24 months

Education managers and PT for care experienced children and young people will monitor the number of children on Flexible Learning Plans and the quality of those plans, ensuring that they fully meet the needs of the learner.

Through Model for Improvement and tests of change we can evidence that Transitions plans in place where any care experienced children moves school.

More care experienced young people are accessing programmes including active schools and sports development and designated support to engage in community sports clubs.

Through use of run chart data we can evidence improvements and identify further areas of work required on initial health assessments.

Through use of run chart data evidence that the Mental Health Pathway is embedded and there are reduced waiting times to access specialist services for those who need it.

Long Term Outcome Expected at 36 months

Through our use of quality assurance procedures, we will evidence improvements in the quality of our flexible learning planning. We will have evidence of good working relationships with local employers, who provide a range of nurturing work placements for our care experienced young people.

Through run chart data we can evidence our transitions planning is robust and successful.

We can evidence our care experienced children and young people, and their families and carers are engaging our community leisure and sports.

We embed improvements in our IHAs and evidence how they routinely improve health.

Mental Health Pathway is fully embedded in practice ensuring care experienced children and young people can routinely access mental health support.



Priority 4

Priority 4: We help ensure our young people move to a positive more independent life when they are ready.

Areas for Action

- Continue to promote continuing care as a positive choice.
- Improve the range and choice of flexible aftercare options for those who want it.
- Continue to support more young people to access higher and further education or training.
- Expand the availability for apprenticeships and work opportunities for Care Experienced young people.
- Improve the supports for Young people at risk of offending and custody.
- Continue to work with the CPC to ensure those at risk of significant harm are fully supported and can access the services they need.

Short Term Outcomes Expected at 12 months

All young people are aware of and encouraged to choose continuing care options.

Young people continue to be encouraged and supported to complete higher and further education.

85% of our care experienced young people will go on to positive destinations.

Corporate parents make available a wider range of work experience opportunities for care experienced young people.

Social work and police responses to care experienced young people who are reported missing is reviewed to avoid potential criminalisation.

Medium Term Outcome Expected at 24 months

We increase the range of flexible supported after care options for young people including supported lodgings.

Work with schools and further education colleges to develop learning pathway for care leavers.

88% of our care experienced young people will go on to positive destinations.

Corporate parents increase the number of care experienced young people in modern apprenticeships.

Corporate parents increase the number of care experienced young people in modern apprenticeships.

Long Term Outcome Expected at 36 months

Care leavers continue to chose continuing care and to move to appropriate community supports at a time of their choosing.

Embed a care leavers pathway for ongoing learning and development.

90% of our care experienced young people will go on to positive destinations.

Corporate parents increase the number of care experienced young people in jobs within our organisations.

Corporate parents increase the number of care experienced young people in jobs within our organisations.



Measuring progress, monitoring and reviewing the plan

The Corporate Parenting Board and Corporate Parenting Leadership Group comprise Corporate Parents from across partner agencies who are committed to working together to deliver the priorities and outcomes identified in this Plan.

The CPB sub group will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Plan and reporting progress to the Corporate Parenting Board and Corporate Parenting Management Group.

We anticipate that as our Champs Board becomes established and confident it will take on growing role in monitoring and challenging progress and in hold us to account.

Argyll and Bute Strategic Group will meet 8 weekly and consider progress in implementation of the Corporate Parenting Plan, along with other strategic plans, and reports to the Community Planning Partnership, Community Services Group and the Integration Joint Board.

In support of measuring progress, monitoring and reviewing the plan the Corporate Parenting Board will;

- Establish a performance score card of key performance and management information reporting quarterly.
- Engage with and take feedback from the Champs Board and other care experienced children and young people.
- Appoint a priority lead for key actions and outcomes.

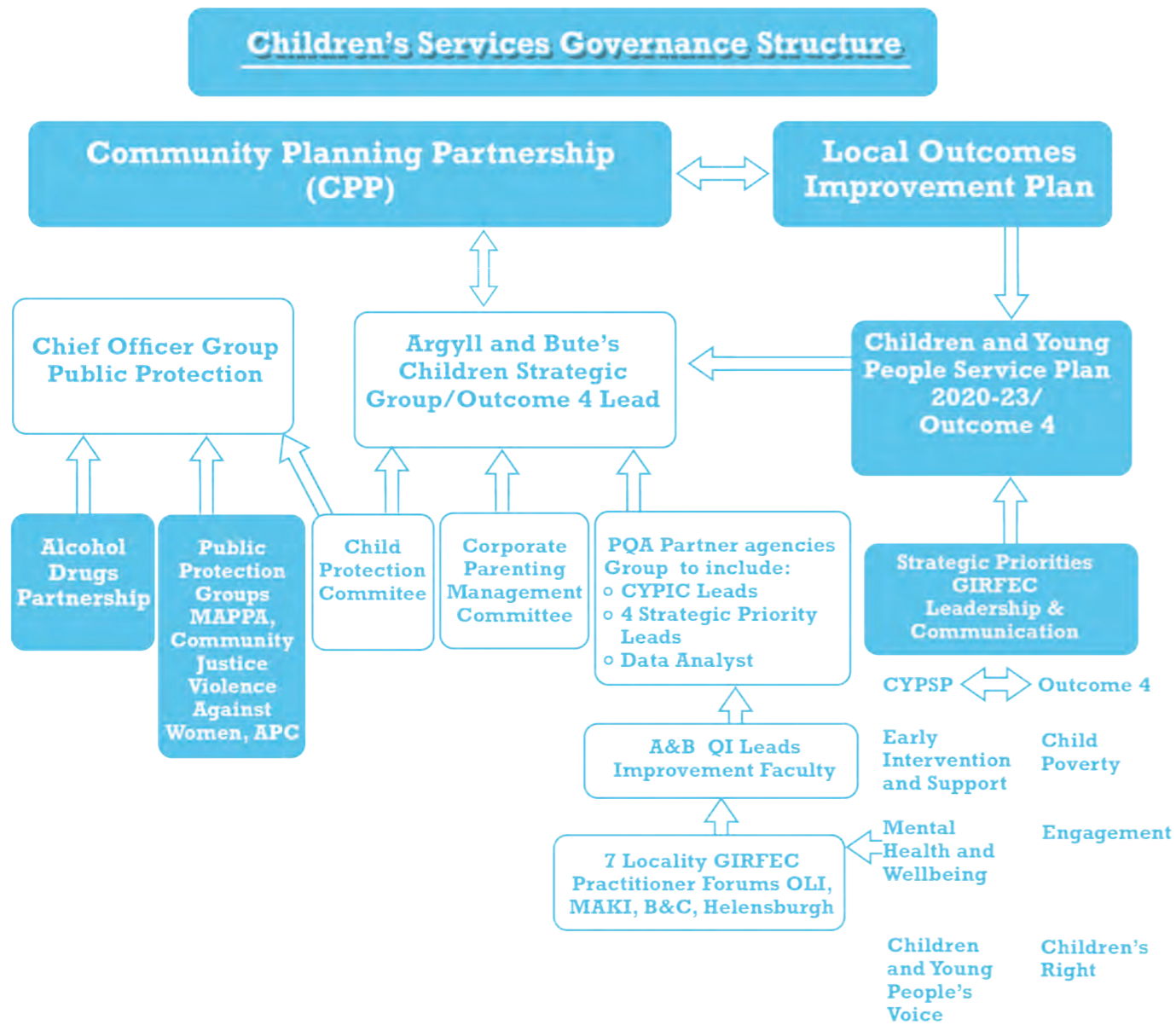
- Assess progress through quarterly action reporting from key agencies and leads in respect of the improvement priorities.
- Undertake an annual self-evaluation of progress against Priorities, with our care experienced children and young people, by asking - How good are we now? How do we know? And how good can we be?
- Developing refreshed priorities and actions on an annual basis.
- Challenging progress – especially where this is not on track.

Appendix 1 includes our current performance framework; we will further develop this in response to the anticipated recommendations from The Promise.





Performance reporting and governance



Integration with other plans

The Corporate Parenting plan specifically addresses our priorities as Corporate Parents and for children and young people, who are care experienced. All of our care experienced children and young people will continue to have the majority of their needs met through universal services and as these services continue to improve so they to impact positively on their lives, these plans include

- Education Annual Plan
- Children and Young Peoples Services Plan
- Child Poverty Action Plan
- Children's Rights Plan
- Child Protection Improvement Plan
- Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan
- Local Outcome Improvement Plan
- Community Learning and Development Plan
- Active Schools Plan
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Children's Commissioning Plan
- Local Housing Strategy



Appendix

Measure	Explanation	Responsible
Total number currently care experienced children	Monitor changes in numbers of children becoming looked after.	SW
% - Care experienced children – At Home	Understand changes in balance of care.	SW
% - Care experienced children - Fostering	Understand changes in balance of care.	SW
%- Care experienced children - Residential	Understand changes in balance of care.	SW
%- Care experienced children - Kinship	Understand changes in balance of care.	SW
Number Continuing Care	Monitor implementation of Continuing care.	SW
Number Secure Care	Number will be small and often zero but important CPB be aware.	SW
Number new admission to care in past Quarter	Helps monitor activity levels and trends.	SW
Number of care experienced children in education.	Helps monitor activity levels and trends.	Ed
Number of care experienced children in education, from outwith Argyll and Bute	Ensure CPB consideration given to education of care experienced children from other areas educated in A&B.	Ed
Attendance rates for care experienced children	Informs multi-agency discussion and targeted intervention to improve attendance.	Ed

Appendix

Measure	Explanation	Responsible
Number of care experienced learners on Flexible Learning Plans.	Enable CPB to monitor pupil's receiving alternative curriculum.	Ed
Number care experienced pupils excluded in past quarter.	Commitment to maintain low rates of exclusion of care experienced children.	SW
Successful presentations in level 4 and 5 for Numeracy and literacy for care experienced children.	Enables CPB to monitor education outcomes.	Ed
% Care experienced school leavers in positive destinations on leaving school	Informs multi-agency working to ensure positive outcome for care experienced young people leaving school.	Ed
Number care leavers supported by After Care service.	Helps ensure that care leavers are supported.	SW
Number care leavers in touch with an aftercare worker in past 2 weeks	COSLA/ SG Covid measure.	SW
% Eligible for after care with up-to-date pathway plan.	Helps ensure all eligible have a plan which meets requirements.	SW
Number of care experienced young people with 200 leaving care points on Housing waiting list.	Assists in understanding housing journey may enable sub group to analyse any trends of specific issues for young people.	Housing
Number care experienced children access Who Cares? advocacy service.	Helps ensure care experienced children and adults who need it can access independent advocacy.	Who Cares?
Number of care experienced children and young people expressing a positive outcome from involvement of advocacy services.	Helps monitor the effectiveness of advocacy in ensuring children's voices are heard and their concerns resolved.	Who Cares?
Number care experienced on CAMHs waiting list over 12 weeks?	Helps ensure those who need CAMHS support access it timiously.	Health
IHAs TBC		Health



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