

West Lothian Children's Services Plan 2023-2026



Getting it Right for West
Lothian's Children and Families

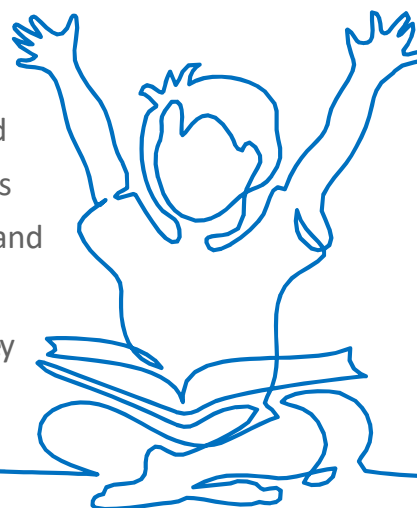


West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Children's Services Plan 2023-2026

Foreword	3
Our Plan at a Glance	4
West Lothian Profile	5
Working in Partnership	7
National and Local Context	8
Developing the Plan	12
Participation and Engagement	13
Early Intervention and Prevention Approaches	14
Our Priorities	15
How we Work Together	33
Workforce Development	34
Performance Management	35
National Performance Indicators	36
Budget Resources	38
Appendix 1	39

In West Lothian we recognise that investment in our children and young people is one of the most valuable long-term investments we can make. By investing our shared resources in the delivery and development of services that focus on prevention and early intervention we can ensure that children's needs are met and they are supported to achieve their full potential



Planning Services for Children, Young People and Families

As in previous years and in accordance with the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014, local and national partners who deliver services for West Lothian's children and families have come together to design and publish our Children's Services Plan for 2023 - 2026. The West Lothian Children's Services Plan ('the Plan') does not exist in isolation, and this Plan aligns with relevant existing plans and strategies across West Lothian and nationally.

We are committed to providing services that are holistic, and developed with families themselves and partner agencies; that tackle inequalities, and focus on improved outcomes for children and deliver the **Right Help** at the **Right Time**.

To ensure that children and young people have a head start in life, we are focused on the importance of early intervention and preventative work with families to improve opportunities and outcomes, help families cope with the pressures of parenting, as well as providing statutory early intervention and child protection services when this is needed.

This joint Children's Services Plan outlines the work of the West Lothian Children and Families Strategic Planning Group and follows a Whole Systems Approach to planning as led by the West Lothian Community Planning Partnership (CPP). West Lothian's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) sets out how the CPP will deliver improved outcomes for its communities.

The plan is a continuation of the Children's Services Plan 2020-2023. Consultation and feedback from stakeholders, partners, staff and children and families and findings from strategic needs assessments, suggests that current priorities are still relevant for this iteration of the plan.

The Plan highlights partners' commitment to delivering outcomes for children and young people in West Lothian through active participation in joint planning and delivery structures. We listen to the voices of children and their families and carers and ensure their views are valued and respected and include them in the planning process.

The plan will be underpinned by a detailed action plan which reflects the priorities we have agreed and how we will achieve the best outcomes for children and young people in West Lothian. National and local Key Performance Indicators and a robust performance management system will ensure we monitor our progress and achievements and help identify where we can improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Siobhan McGarty

Chair of the Children & Families Strategic Planning Group



Plan at a Glance

The West Lothian Children's Services Plan 2023-2026:

- Defines the approaches and mechanisms which partners use in West Lothian to plan and deliver those joint services, initiatives and activities geared towards the delivery of outcomes for children, young people and their families
- Defines the key priorities which have been agreed by partners as multi- agency actions
- Explains the way in which activity relating to each of these priorities will be linked to key outcomes, will be monitored through the use of meaningful performance indicators and will be driven by challenging targets

Our Vision underpins the national programmes of Curriculum for Excellence, Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Promise with desired outcomes that all children become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens through being safe, nurtured, healthy, active, included, achieving, respected and responsible.

VISION	
We believe that every child should have the best start in life to enable them to: have high aspirations, build the foundations for living well in the future, and realise their potential	
PRINCIPLES that we will ensure the priorities adheres to:	
✓ Re-distributing resources towards targeted activities with individuals, groups and communities	
✓ Improving outcomes for the individual child and their family	
✓ Improved Integrated working	
✓ Focusing on early intervention by shifting resources from managing crisis to prevention and building resilience	
PRIORITIES	
✓ Protecting Children	✓ Raising Achievement and Attainment
✓ Strengthening Corporate Parenting	✓ Promoting Children's Rights and participation
✓ Promoting Health and Wellbeing	✓ Reducing Harm from Substance Use
✓ Reducing Harm for Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law	
Themes running through all the priorities	
Early Intervention and Prevention Approaches GIRFEC / UNCRC / the Promise Partnership working and associated strategies and plans	

West Lothian's Children – Profile

In planning for the development and delivery of services for children, young people and their families, the profile of West Lothian children and families has been considered. West Lothian has a population of approximately 185, 580 (mid 2021) and is one of the fastest growing and youngest in the country. Between 2001 and 2021, the population of West Lothian has increased by 16.7%. This is the fifth highest percentage increase out of the 32 local authority areas in Scotland. Over the same period, Scotland's population rose by 8.2%.

Between 2018 and 2028, the population of West Lothian is projected to increase to 192,812. Based on 2021 mid-year population estimates, the West Lothian population of children and young people aged 0-15 years was 35,133 which is 18.9% of the total population. This is a 0.5% increase since 2001 compared with an 6.1% decrease of the 0-15-year-old population across Scotland for the same time period.



14,632 people in West Lothian (8.1% of the county's population) live within the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland.

The most recent child poverty statistics (2021) show that 21.1% of West Lothian children were living in poverty. This is a decrease of 3.51% from 2020 (24.6%)



Youth unemployment in West Lothian stands at 4.6%, which is slightly greater than the Scotland rate of 4.5%



Babies exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks – this is 29.5% in West Lothian and 41.4% for NHS Lothian

In West Lothian 92.5% of eligible children receive a 13-15 month review compared with 92.2% across Lothian

92% of 27-30 month old children receive a developmental and wellbeing review compared with 91.5% across Lothian

0.9% of the total 0-17 years population in West Lothian were looked after. The Scottish average for the same period was 1.3%

Primary aged children registered for free school meals was 11,703 and 2,009 within Secondary education

West Lothian Homeless Applications by 16-25 years olds was 396 which is 33.3% of all Homeless Applications

West Lothian Profile

In 2021, there were 1,727 births in West Lothian. This is an increase of 4% from 2020. Whilst West Lothian, in keeping with other areas in Scotland, is experiencing an increasingly aging population, the area has seen a birth rate higher than the national average (9.8 per 1,000 population compared to 8.7 across Scotland). However, the increase in birth rate is not expected to continue and it is anticipated that the numbers of children aged 0 – 15 will decrease by 1% by 2028.

Population projections by age

Age	Population size (2021)	Current % of Population	% Change by 2028
0-15	35,133	18.9%	-1%
16 to 24	18,486	7.8%	6%
25 to 44	48,148	25.9%	4.7%
45 to 64	52,260	28.1%	-2%
65 to 74	18,067	9.7%	14.8%
75 and over	13,486	7.3%	28.2%

The table below of Births by age of mother, indicates an increase in the age in which mothers are giving birth in West Lothian, with the greatest increases in mothers aged 35 years and over. Whilst the trend in West Lothian is reflected across Scotland, birth rates amongst older mothers is a third higher in West Lothian, compared to the Scottish average (31.9% higher).

Age group of mothers	Number of births	% change since 2001	Scotland % change
All ages	1,727	-12.8%	-9.0
0 to 19	36	-78.8%	-76.5
20 to 24	197	-43.4%	-38.6
25 to 29	462	-23.0%	-6.8
30 to 34	608	5.4%	2.2
35 to 39	358	45.5%	25.6
40 and over	66	69.2%	63.4

In 2021, the number of households in West Lothian was 80,932. This is a 1.3% increase from 2020. In the previous 20 years, the number of households in West Lothian has increased by 24.4%. This is the 4th highest percentage change out of the 32 local authority areas in Scotland and a more rapid increase than at Scotland level (+15.2%).

Sources for statistics – National Records Scotland www.nrscotland.gov.uk, West Lothian Council Housing, [Children's social work statistics - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://Children's social work statistics - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)), Scottish Government - School Meals Survey, www.publichealthscotland.scot/publications/infant-feeding-statistics, [Health and care - Themes - Scottish Health and Social Care Open Data \(nhs.scot\)](http://Health and care - Themes - Scottish Health and Social Care Open Data (nhs.scot))

Working in Partnership

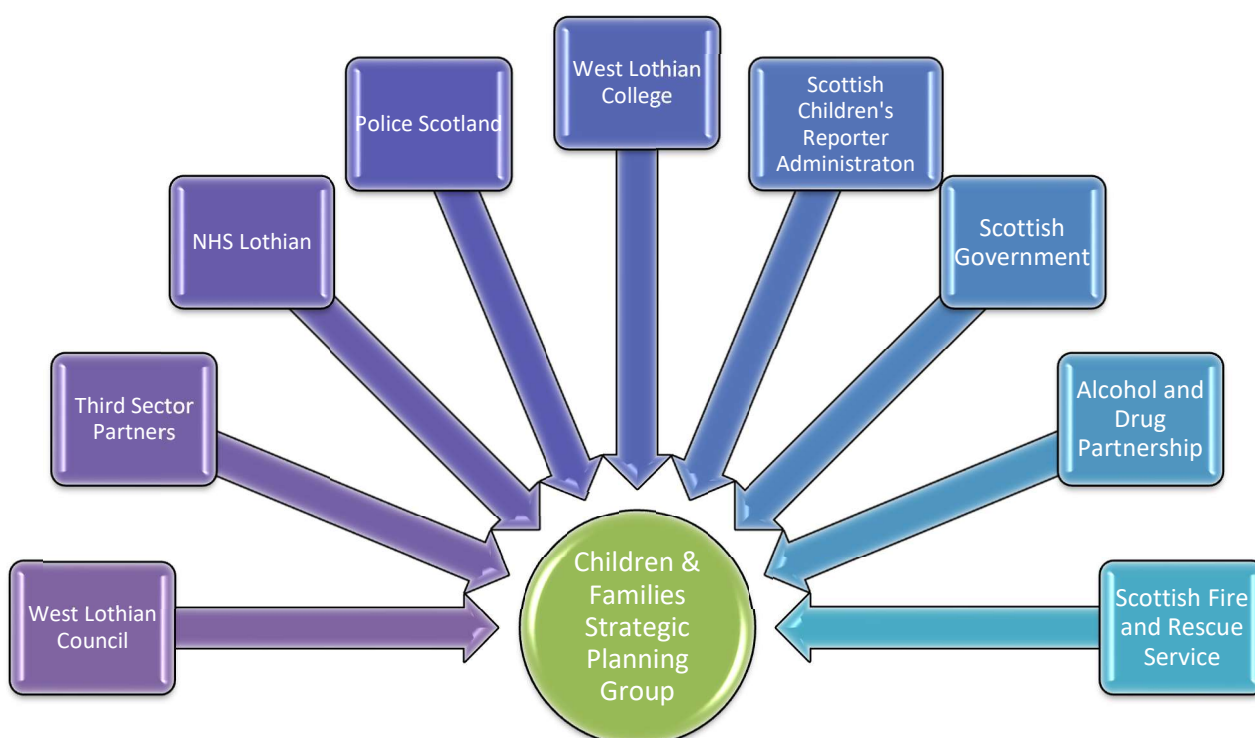
As in previous years and in accordance with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Part 3), local and national partners who deliver services for West Lothian children and families have come together to publish our Children's Services Plan for the period 2023-2026. Based on a wide-ranging assessment of local needs, partners have agreed a plan which, at its heart, aims to improve the wellbeing of local children, young people, and their families. Children's planning has a very high profile in West Lothian and all partners have again demonstrated enthusiasm to engage with young people, parents and the communities they reside within to inform this plan.

The Children and Families Strategic Planning Group (C&FSPG) is responsible for integrated children's service planning in West Lothian and reports to the West Lothian Community Planning Partnership.

Members are senior officers from key community planning partners with collective responsibility for:

- Monitoring the plans developed by sub-groups to take forward the vision of the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group
- Overseeing the progress of the Corporate Parenting Plan and the Promise
- Developing strategic commissioning for children and families
- Ensuring that progress towards achieving key outcomes is monitored and reported through the community planning process
- Acting as a conduit between community planning partnership and operational activity
- Identifying cross cutting issues across sub-groups and develop integrated multi-agency solutions
- Acting as a key consultative group for major policy development
- Developing processes which maintain a regular and effective means of communication between partnerships
- Supporting and developing shared information and intelligence systems;
- Promoting joint staff training and development

Membership of the C&FSPG includes senior officers from:



National and Local Context

Within partnership working arrangements there are many national and local associated strategies, plans, frameworks and legislation that directly informs and aligns to the Children's Services Plan. In partnership we collectively work to achieve the best outcomes for all children, young people and their families.

The West Lothian Children's Services Plan aligns with National legislation including Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010 and aligns to the newly published West Lothian Community Planning Partnership Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2023-2033.

NATIONAL:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- The Promise
- Scotland's National Performance Framework (NPF)
- National Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) Outcomes Framework
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Strategic Plans
- Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland
- Working with Children in conflict with the law 2021: standards
- National Strategy for Community Justice
- Scotland's Public Health Priorities

LOCAL:

- Community Planning Partnerships Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2023-2033
- Lothian Strategic Development Framework 2023-2028
- Corporate Parenting Plan 2023-2026
- Anti-Poverty Strategy 2023-2028
- Carers Strategy 2023-2026
- Alcohol and Drug Development Plan
- Child Protection Committee annual reports and Improvement Plan 2022-2024
- West Lothian Promise: Call to Action Plan
- Raising Attainment Strategy 2023-2028
- Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028
- Gender Based Violence Strategy 2021-2024
- Autism Strategy 2022 – 2025
- Community Justice Strategic Plan 2019-2024

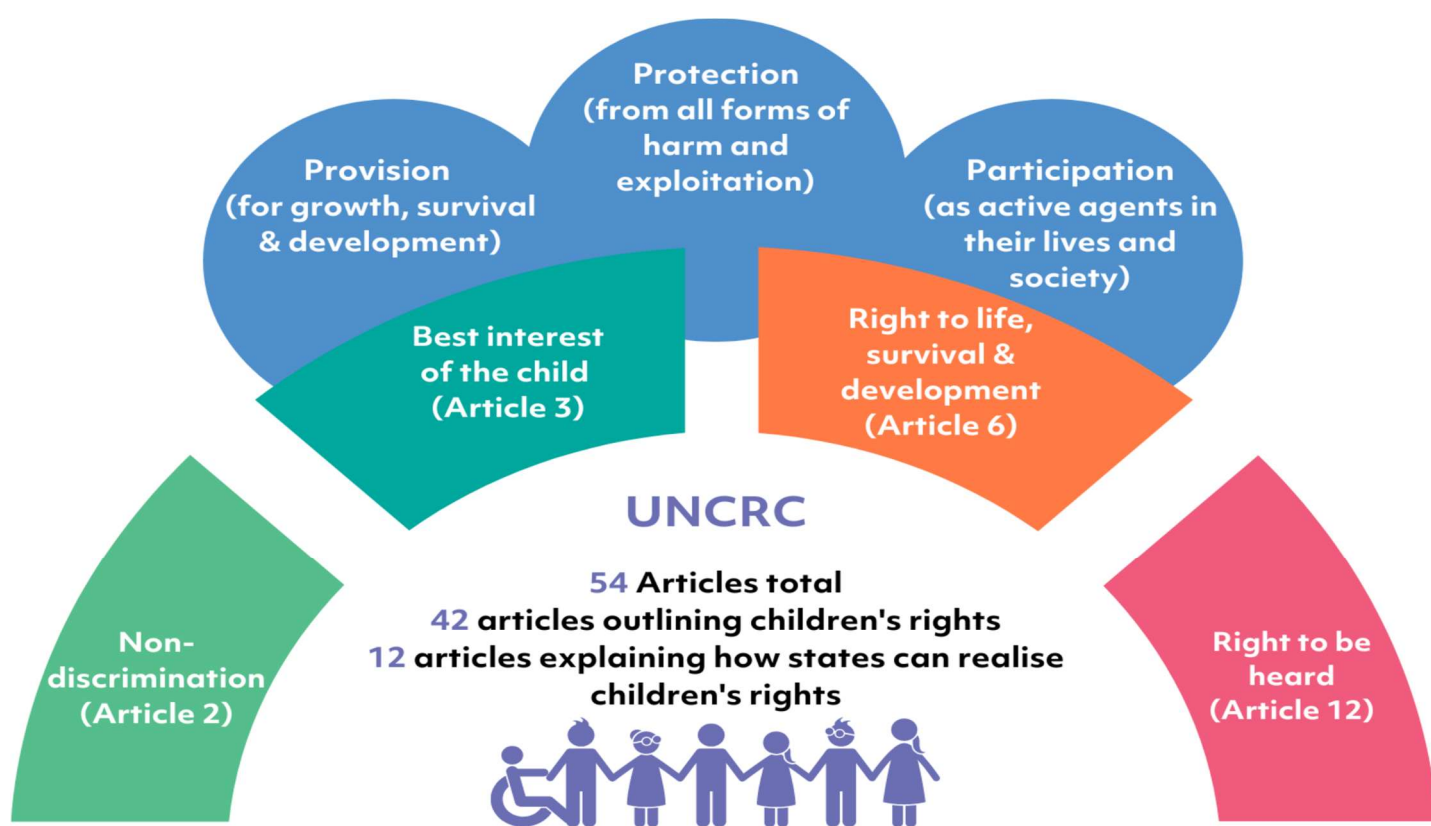


National and local Context

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The Scottish Government is committed to the incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law to the maximum extent possible.

In West Lothian, a main priority is Promoting Children's Rights and this includes imbedding all of the articles of the UNCRC into all service delivery to ensure children are aware of and understand their rights and know what to do if they feel their rights are not being met.



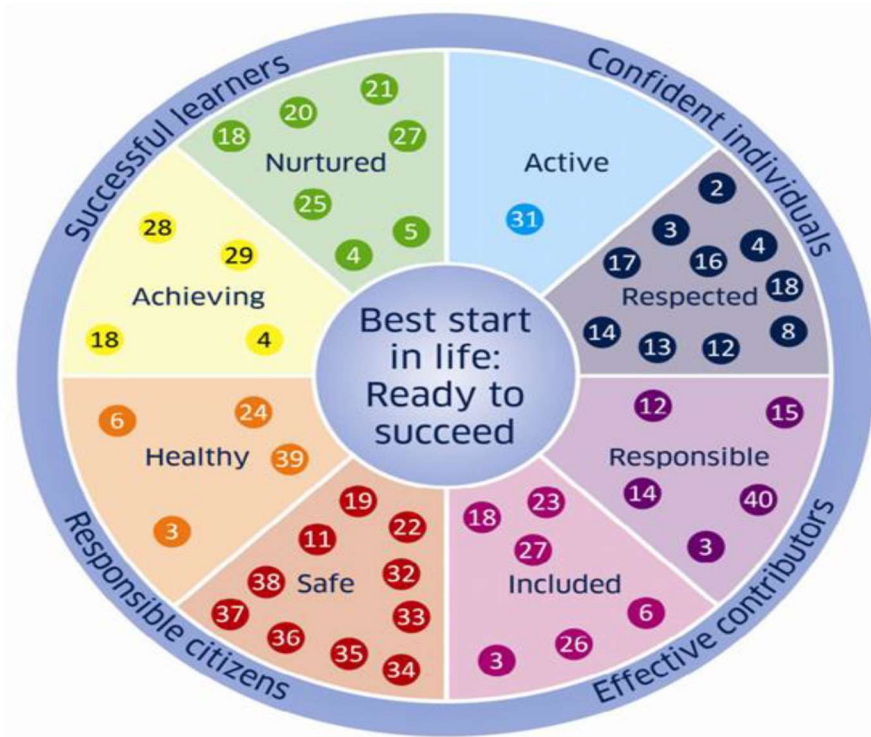
Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

GIRFEC provides Scotland with a consistent framework and shared language for promoting, supporting, and safeguarding the wellbeing of children and young people. It is locally embedded and positively embraced by organisations, services and practitioners across Children's Services Planning Partnerships, with a focus on changing culture, systems and practice.

In response to learning from Learning Review processes in West Lothian, a multiagency GIRFEC group was established in 2022 to refresh and develop revised guidance for Child's Planning Meetings, to assist practitioners in understanding the role and function of planning meetings and to ensure timely and effective use of meetings. The guidance defines the named person and lead professional and outlines timescales. The voice of the child is highlighted and prioritised within the preparation, delivery and recording of Child Planning Meetings in line with The Promise.

National and local Context

The 42 articles of the UNCRC outlining children’s rights align directly to the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators SHANARRI:



The Promise

Scotland launched Plan 21-24, on 31st March 2021 which sets out the Five Priority Areas and Five Fundamentals which will be essential to achieving the transformational change required to improve outcomes for care experienced children and young people. Strong connections have been developed nationally with The Promise Scotland to support the progress of the West Lothian’s Call to Action Plan which will ensure all partners understand the actions required to realise the change programme.

In West Lothian, significant work has been undertaken to support language, practice and cultural changes and work continues on the changes required by all partners to ensure young people grow up loved, safe and respected. A number of new developments have been established which strengthen community based, whole family services which work in partnership across West Lothian, providing a variety of services to support families at the right time for them.



“Transformation of the scale required needs collective, collaborative and persistent work to make the promise a reality...”



LOCAL CONTEXT

The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) **Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2023-2033** will build on West Lothian's strong history of partnership working and will shape how we design and deliver our services, ensuring we focus on tackling inequalities, prevention and empowering our communities. It sets out the long-term strategic vision for West Lothian and outlines how the partnership will work together to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives, works, learns and does business in West Lothian. The LOIP references this Children's Services Plan and although there is no explicit outcome around children and families within the LOIP, delivering on the LOIP outcomes will complement and impact positively on Children's Services Plans, and vice versa.

Impact of Child Poverty

Children who grow up experiencing poverty are more likely to face health inequalities, bullying and lower educational attainment, leading to fewer job opportunities and higher risk of financial insecurity in adulthood.

The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Anti-Poverty Strategy for 2023 – 2028 sets out how partners work together to tackle poverty in West Lothian. These priorities are closely linked with the drivers of poverty identified in the Scottish Government's Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan. The strategy recognises that poverty can have a profound impact on the life chances of those affected. The West Lothian Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR) describes actions taken to address child poverty and sets out the drivers of child poverty as set out by the Scottish Government.

Youth Homelessness

The Children's Services Plan has key links to housing and related services. The Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028 and the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan gives specific consideration to children and families in terms of preventing homelessness and addressing and responding to housing needs through a range of suitable housing options with support to sustain a successful outcome. There is ongoing engagement with the Children and Families Team to support the development of the new Local Housing Strategy and the update of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.

West Lothian has one of the highest rates of youth homelessness in Scotland and partners are aiming to address this through preventing homelessness or providing suitable housing options so that young people can receive the help and support they need to access suitable accommodation and to be able to sustain their tenancy. Through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2023-2028, the council and Registered Social Landlords partners identify suitable housing sites for new homes to increase the supply of affordable family housing.

Young Carers

One of the outcomes of the Carers (Scotland) 2016 Act is that young carers are supported and protected from inappropriate caring and negative impacts on their education, social lives and future development.

West Lothian has established a Carers Strategy Implementation Group and Young Carers are one of the main priorities in the strategy. This Children's Services plan aligns to the young carers priority areas to support young carers wellbeing to help them to continue in their caring roles and to be children first and receive the same opportunities as their peers to succeed in life.

Young Carers are also a key targeted group of young people in the Promoting Children's Rights Group to ensure they understand and know their rights in their caring role and can access the support they need.

Children and Young People impacted by Gender Based Violence

In West Lothian the Gender Based Violence Partnership is committed to challenging and eliminating, all forms of gender-based violence, to create a society for West Lothian's Children and Young People where they can feel safe, supported, and respected and have their rights to live life free from abuse and violence protected. The West Lothian Gender Based Violence Strategy 2021-2024 has strong links to the work of the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group.

The West Lothian Domestic and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT) support children and young people aged between 5-16 who have experienced domestic abuse and children from the age of 13 who have suffered sexual violence. Support is delivered in a range of ways to meet their individual needs. This can include individual support and group work programmes, tailored to suit their age, ability, awareness and individual needs and circumstances.

The partnership works closely with Education in supporting the mentors in violence prevention (MPV) programme to raise awareness and engage in early intervention work around behaviours and attitudes.

Developing the Plan

Development of this plan has involved both targeted and open consultation with service users, carers, families, service providers from the third and independent sectors and staff from across the partnership. Engagement with local communities provides a key mechanism for ensuring that services are planned and led in a local way.

This Plan is a continuation of the West Lothian Children's Services Plan 2020 to 2023. The priorities have been reviewed taking account of national drivers and feedback over the past three years of the current plan, the experiences and lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic, feedback received from various engagement events and forums and two Strategic Needs Assessments (SNAs) undertaken to understand any potential changing local needs, gaps or duplications in service provision.

The review of the priorities and needs in West Lothian confirmed that our 7 priorities agreed for the Children's Services Plan 2020-2023 are still relevant and meet the aims of our Plan 2023-2026 to tackle inequalities and give children and young people in West Lothian the best possible start in life.

Children's Services Plan 2023-2026 Development Methods

what we have considered when preparing this plan



Participation and Engagement

Participation and engagement with children, young people and their families is necessary to ensure we are hearing the voices of our young people and their views are taken into account. We seek children's views on a wide range of issues using appropriate and inclusive tools. Some examples include:

We routinely consult with children when new policies are being developed and reviewed. An example of this was the engagement of young people and staff with West Lothian's Children's Residential Services to support the production of the 'Intervening Safely Policy'. A one-page user friendly version of the policy was produced to ensure children and young people understood the meaning of the policy and for them to express their views about it.

Who Cares? Scotland is commissioned to provide independent advocacy to children and young people who are or have been cared for away from home up to the age of 26. The service is also accessible for children and young people who are looked after at home and where there are child protection processes.

Having Your Say is a well established forum in West Lothian for care experienced children and young people that promotes participation, provides peers support, opportunities to discuss important themes and informs on children's rights. Having Your Say have been involved in our recent Customer Service Excellence assessment showcasing their achievements, highlighting the various forums they are involved in and explaining how they are supported to share their views. We regularly discuss the strategic direction and priorities for West Lothian with this group of young people and recent engagement focused on the corporate parenting plan.

In November 2022, Community Education arranged and hosted a consultation event which was led by young people at Howden Park Centre in Livingston. This was a peer led experience involving numerous youth groups from around West Lothian. Our care experienced young people from Having Your Say who were P7 and secondary age attended. Seven questions covering three categories: Poverty, Climate change and Mental Health were discussed and were then fed back to the larger group. Two councillors from West Lothian were present and hosted a panel at the end for any emerging questions. Overall feedback reflected that the young people had more knowledge of climate change than poverty and they agreed that having someone they saw regularly where they lived or importantly within school would be very helpful to them. All experienced poor mental health at one time or another.

Parents, carers and family members are by far the most important influences in their children's lives. When parents are involved in their child's education, children do better on a wide range of measures including attainment, attendance, behaviour, confidence and attitudes towards learning. This is why it is so important that schools work in partnership with parents throughout the child's learning journey. West Lothian are developing plans in line with Education Scotland's Strategic Framework for Parental Involvement, Parental Engagement, Family Learning and Learning at Home, to allow children's needs to be properly communicated to ensure they are addressed to meet the needs of the individual young person.

All school pupils from Primary 5 to Secondary 3rd year are given the opportunity to complete an annual 'Pupil Ethos Survey' which covers national and local topics and this feedback is collated and used to inform actions to address any emerging themes that arise.

Questions to address the 21 national wellbeing indicators agreed in the national Children, Young People and Families Outcomes Framework (CYPF) will be included in this survey to ensure we can report locally on the national outcomes.

Listen & Link is a mental wellbeing self-referral support phone line for young people, parents and carers within West Lothian. It provides early support for young people who are struggling with their mental health and the parents/carers who are caring for them. West Lothian recently involved children and young people who use this service in designing a logo and a slogan and the whole approach of this service ensures that the voice of the children, young people and families is prioritised. Children, young people and their families will be involved in raising awareness of the services available.

Early Intervention and Prevention Approaches

In West Lothian early intervention and prevention is the strategic approach that runs through all the priorities in the Children's Services Plan and is supported through robust multi-agency partnership working. The benefits of preventing crisis and creating conditions to allow children and young people to thrive is recognised as the best outcome for the individual, the wider family and the community.

We adopt holistic whole family models of support to engage with families who have complex needs and with the most entrenched social issues using asset based, co- production ways of working. This has the benefit of working with families on their own terms, addressing issues that are live and important for the family by building strong and persistent relationships between professionals and families, supporting them to navigate and negotiate services and realise the strengths already present within the family to best improve outcomes.

We have invested in a wide range of early intervention and prevention approaches, that have focused on:

- Ensuring access to an effective portfolio of early years services from pre-birth to school age
- Improving child/parent attachment
- Ensuring that children are supported to meet their developmental milestones
- Improving family learning
- Ensuring that children and parents access and are supported to play
- Ensuring access to intensive parenting programmes and family supports for vulnerable parents
- Ensuring appropriate access for mental health and wellbeing supports in the community
- Addressing the poverty gap
- Addressing access to healthy eating options for children, young people and their families

The Lothian Strategic Development Framework sets out what will happen across NHS Lothian's Health and Care system over the next five years. It sets out action across several areas, including on the health of children, young people and families. Four priority areas have been identified, which focus on prevention and early intervention across the life course:

- Improving maternal health and tackling poverty
- Infant and child health and wellbeing
- Adolescent health and wellbeing
- The Promise: supporting care experienced children, young people, and families

The Scottish Government's 2021-22 Programme for Government committed to investing £500 million of Whole Family Wellbeing Funding (WFWF) over the lifetime of the Parliament to support the development of holistic whole family support services. It forms part of the Scottish Government's Keeping the Promise implementation plan, responding to the report from the Independent Care Review that called for a radical overhaul of Scotland's care system.

West Lothian have received an allocation of £1.140M and we await confirmation on the level of funding we will receive over the lifetime of the Parliament. A Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Planning Group has been established with the remit to plan and co-ordinate the investment of the WFWF. To achieve its aims, the group will take cognizance of various stakeholders including the views of individuals who use services.

A local Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) was commissioned to inform the targeting of the WFWF in West Lothian to ensure that it addresses local need and deliver the desired outcomes.

Examples of early intervention and prevention services and initiatives are highlighted in the priority sections.

Our Priorities

In developing this plan, the priorities and needs in the Children's Services Plan 2020 – 2023 were reviewed and the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group members confirmed that the Seven priorities agreed for the Children's Services Plan 2020-2023 are still relevant and meet the aims of the Plan 2023-2026 to tackle inequalities and give children and young people in West Lothian the best possible start in life.

Seven high level priorities:

- ✚ Protecting Children
- ✚ Promoting Health and Wellbeing
- ✚ Raising Achievement and Attainment
- ✚ Strengthening Corporate Parenting
- ✚ Promoting Children's Rights and Participation
- ✚ Reducing Harm from Substance Use
- ✚ Reducing Harm for Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law



Protecting Children

To ensure that every child in West Lothian has the best start in life they must be safe.

West Lothian Child Protection Committee (CPC) is the key local body for developing, implementing and improving child protection strategy across and between agencies and the local community. The CPC performs a number of crucial functions in order to jointly identify and manage risk to children and young people, monitor and improve performance and promote the ethos that *"It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright"*.

The CPC has 3 subcommittees to support its work: Quality Assurance & Self Evaluation (QASE), Practice and Training (P&T) and a Learning Review (LR) subcommittee. The CPC has strong links with the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group with its overall oversight and leadership of Getting It Right for Every Child in West Lothian.

Through its quality assurance, case review work and its analysis of management information the CPC identifies areas of good practice and areas for improvement. For the next 2 years the CPC improvement plan is focused on ensuring that staff in all agencies are fully supported and equipped to work with children and families where there is a risk of significant harm to the child.

The CPC is committed to:

- Developing a learning culture where staff have a range of opportunities to learn and improve practice. Formal multi-agency training, practice reflection sessions and 7-minute briefings to encourage discussion and debate are provided regularly;
- Ensuring front line managers are committed to reinforcing improvements;
- Ensuring staff are supported by providing core group supervision for those involved in child protection work;
- Improving the quality of assessment and planning;
- Ensuring staff receive feedback from quality assurance work and case reviews in order to understand the need for practice change;
- Ensuring that policies and procedures that support child protection work are up to date and relevant;
- Involving children and young people in a meaningful way in planning and developing services and practice;
- Ensuring that the needs and views of children and young people are prioritised in all assessments and plans;
- Ensuring staff have the necessary tools to do their jobs;
- Ensuring staff understand the work of the CPC and West Lothian's vision for children by providing updates on the work of the CPC after every committee meeting and meeting with staff twice a year;
- Listening to the views and needs of staff in relation to fulfilling their roles and responsibilities.

Wellbeing Outcome: Safe		UNCRC articles: 11,19,22,32,33,34,35,36,37,38
We will work together to:	How we will measure this	
Keep children and young people safe	<p>National CYPF Wellbeing Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection from Harm: Number of children subject to interagency Referral Discussions <p>Local:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of child protection re-registrations within 18 months • Continuous audit / self -evaluation and quality assurance activity • Monitor progress of the Child Protection Improvement Plan • Analysis of local and national child protection data aligned to the child protection minimum data set 	

Protecting Children

To support this priority, West Lothian partners work collaboratively to safeguard children and young people.

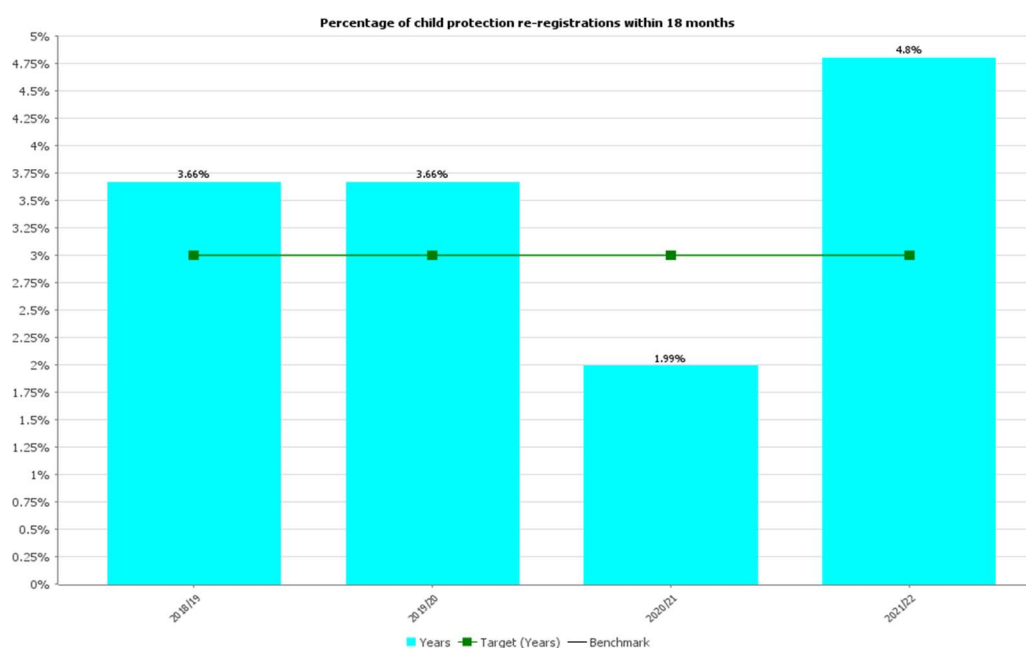
Activity includes:

- The Child Protection Committee oversees progress of the Child Protection Improvement Plan. In addition, there are a range of partnership activities underway including;
- Embedding the Scottish Child Interview Model into practice and developing outcomes data in collaboration with partners across the Lothians
- Supporting practice by introducing a model of multi-agency supervision for child protection core groups practitioners and evaluating the model in due course
- The missing young person's group is a multi-agency forum working together to reduce the number of missing incidents and focusing on those who are assessed as being the most vulnerable or at the most risk. The group monitors performance and intervention related to missing children and young people within West Lothian and enables strategic discussion between partners. West Lothian has worked closely with the national missing persons coordinator service as part of the missing persons implementation project in reviewing our documents, processes and training. The missing young person's group will be overseeing the recommendations from this project.
- There are a number of specialist gender based violence services which work in partnership and are overseen by the gender based violence committee. They offer a variety of supports to families who have been harmed by gender based violence, including group work to children and young people through the CEDAR programme, 1:1 support, therapeutic counselling for those that have experienced sexual and domestic violence, children's rights advocacy, court advocacy and safe accommodation.
- Within West Lothian a perpetrator pattern-based approach to the assessment, intervention and safety planning for children, young people and their families impacted by domestic and family violence is used called Safe and Together. This ensures the workforce is domestic violence informed and focuses on the safety and welfare of adult and child victims.

Key Performance Indicator for this priority:

This performance indicator forms part of the national looked after children benchmarking data. It measures the number of children who are re-registered on the Child Protection Register within 18 months of having been removed from it. This data is held and supplied by the Scottish Government.

The measure helps the service to understand the effectiveness of the interventions and child protection measures that are in place. It also helps the service to understand where there are opportunities to improve performance.



Promoting Health and Wellbeing

Good health and wellbeing is key to ensuring children and young people in West Lothian have the best start in life. Work to improve children's health and wellbeing starts prior to conception and includes maternal health, growth and development, physical and mental health, feelings of happiness, satisfaction and social functioning. It influences the way children and young people interact in their environments. A strong sense of wellbeing provides children with confidence and optimism which maximises their learning potential and life chances.

Improving health and wellbeing is at the core of what we do and is where we focus the majority of our preventative work intervening and providing support, early enough to prevent deterioration or escalation. We recognise however that for some children and young people specialist help will be required to address more complex needs that impact health and wellbeing. Across the partnership we have a range of services in place to support these young people and ensure that they get the right support at the right time.

Wellbeing Outcomes: Healthy, Active		UNCRC articles: 3,6,23, 24,31,39,
We will work together to:	How we will measure this	
Support children to have the best start in life and to meet their developmental milestones.	<p>National CYPF Wellbeing Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of children under 16 living in households with at least one person age 16-64 where all individuals aged 16+ are in employment • % of P5-S3 children who agree that their friends treat them well • % S1-S3 children participating in positive leisure activities • Number of children in temp accommodation at 31 March • % P5-S6 children that had at least 1 hour of exercise the day before the survey • Mental Health and Wellbeing Mean score on Stirling wellbeing scale (P5-S1 children) & Warwick Edi Mental Wellbeing Score (S2-S6 children) (WEMWBS) • % P5-S6 children who eat both fruit and vegetables every day • % children with a concern at their 27-30 month review (as a % of children reviewed) • % of P5-S6 children who say they <i>always</i> have an adult in their life they can trust and talk to about any problems <p>Local:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of early developmental outcomes • Breastfeeding attrition rates • HENRY programme outcomes • Monitor and report progress of the Trauma Informed Practice action plan 	
Improve children's nutritional outcomes.		
Support positive mental and emotional wellbeing of children and young people by establishing a Single Point of Access to ensure help is provided at the right time and by the most appropriate service.		
Ensure children and young people's services are trauma informed		
Ensure West Lothian's children and young people receive the appropriate needs-based support whilst they are assessed for neurodevelopmental concerns		

Promoting Health and Wellbeing

To support this priority, West Lothian partners work collaboratively on numerous projects to ensure every child has the support to reach their full potential through early intervention and prevention programmes and services. These include:

- **Early Learning and Childcare - eligible 2-year-old Early Learning and Childcare places:** A joint working group works to increase uptake of Eligible 2 placements through the simplification of application processes and increasing eligibility criteria. This has resulted in a significant increase in families accessing early learning and childcare support. West Lothian has also established a process to deliver discretionary places for two-year olds who do not meet the eligibility criteria, but are still deemed in need of support.
- **Early Years:** In accordance with the Universal Pathway, Health Visitors provide universal healthcare for all families with children under 5 years of age. Health visitors work with families to support early childhood development, including, social, emotional and physical development. Health visitors work in partnership with other professionals and agencies, particularly where families may need additional support. In addition, the Family Nurse Partnership Service works intensively with young parents to get life off to a good start.
- **HENRY (Healthy Eating and Nutrition to the Really Young):** Child Healthy weight work in West Lothian in 21/22 from the NHS Lothian's Maternal and Infant nutrition service was undertaken using funding from Scottish Government Early intervention and prevention of childhood obesity fund. The funding was used to pilot the delivery of a training package, HENRY (Healthy Eating and Nutrition to the Really Young) to community-based family support workers, nursery nurses and teachers to improve their knowledge confidence and skills around discussing food with families.
- **Infant feeding work:** Within West Lothian, we are using Quality Improvement methodology to pilot a project, Delivering Early Breastfeeding Support (DEBS) a midwife led model of care which proactively supports families to reduce breastfeeding drop off at 6-8 weeks and beyond.
- **Children and Young People Mental and Emotional Wellbeing:** For the most part, children and young people will experience good mental health along with the normal challenges and stresses of growing up. There will of course be a proportion of children and young people who will need extra help at some point, some of whom may even require additional or specialist services intervention.

In West Lothian there is a dedicated Mental Health Lead Officer who is driving forward the transformation of mental health services. This work is supported by the values and principles of the Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework and associated funding. Work is undertaken to ensure a connection to all national developments, including changes in legislation, policies, regulations and guidance; research evidence and best practice examples is maintained.

- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS):** are actively developing Single Points of Access (SPA) in each Local Authority area to streamline access to mental health care for children and young people. The SPA serves as a centralised hub for referrals, ensuring timely and efficient signposting to suitable early intervention and community-based support systems. By addressing mental health concerns at earlier stages, the SPA aims to reduce the demand for higher-intensity Tier 3 CAMHS appointments, ultimately fostering a more proactive, collaborative, and accessible mental health care system for the younger population.

Additionally, a new multi-agency neurodevelopmental pathway will be tested. This will utilise the SPA to ensure a neurodevelopmental diagnosis is not a prerequisite to support being offered, rather support will be offered through the SPA at the point of referral based off need. This pathway will also ensure all neurodevelopmental conditions are assessed for simultaneously, as opposed to having separate condition specific pathways.

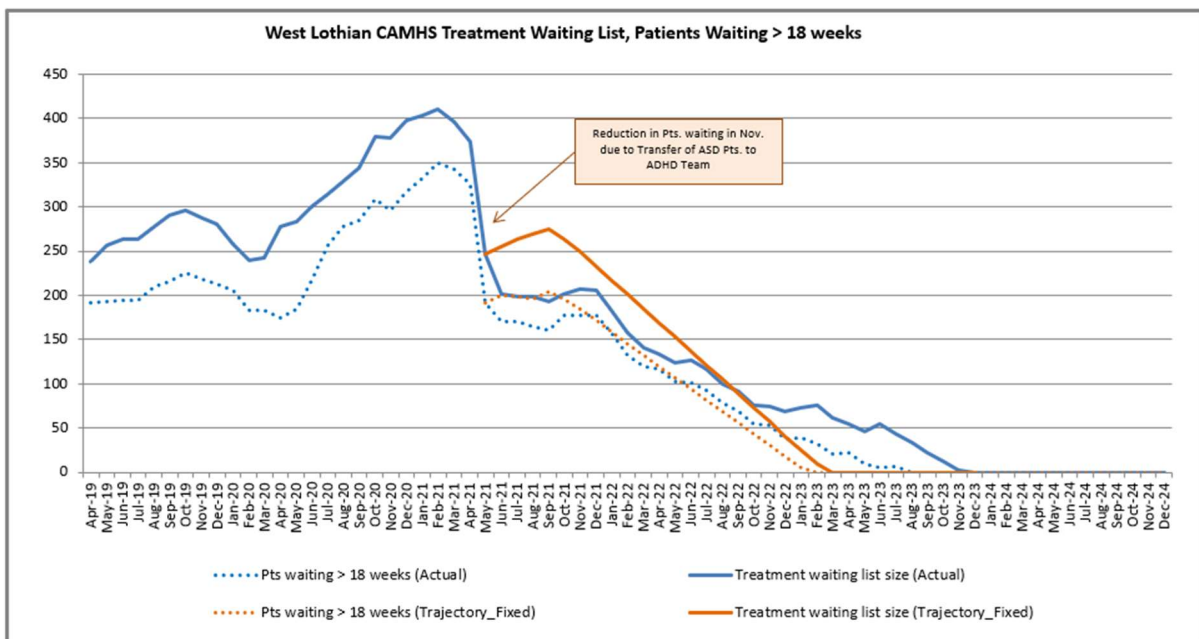
- **Roots:** This is a Public Social Partnership (PSP) which piloted a new approach to service provision. It involves a partnership of third sector organisations in collaboration with West Lothian Council and provides direct mental health supports to children, young people and their families aged 5- 26 years. The model takes into account the strengths that exist within the family networks and the new approach ensures that families have choice and control over where they would benefit from additional supports.
- **The Inclusion and Support Early Intervention and Prevention Service:** The Service provides support to children, young people and their families with additional support needs. The service provides educational support and a range of other interventions including outreach parenting support and family work, parenting group work and counselling. The service has a holistic approach and has developed interventions informed by assessed need and engagement with families.
- **Listen and Link:** To compliment the work of the Roots PSP and our Inclusion and Support Early Intervention and Prevention Services, West Lothian have developed a self-referral service which empowers families to manage their own wellbeing by providing a listening ear, signposting to appropriate services that meet their needs and providing further support where required. This service ensures a streamlined process to enabling families to get the right support at the right time without having to experience multiple referrals.

Key Performance Indicator for this priority:

In 2021, NHS Lothian commenced a long-term improvement programme within CAMHS. The programme comprehensively details the planned improvements required to achieve the CAMHS Local Delivery Plan (LDP) Access Standard by March 2023 in West Lothian. The aim is to meet the LDP standard that at least 90% of children and young people (CYP) to start CAMHS treatment for their mental health (MH) within 18 weeks of referral.

Significant improvements have been made for MH treatment waiting times for CYP in West Lothian as highlighted below;

- As of the end of June 2023 there is a total of 54 CYP waiting for treatment of their MH within CAMHS West Lothian Outpatient Team, of the 54 CYP waiting, 5 have been waiting over 18 weeks.
- As of the end of June 2023 there is a total of 130 CYP waiting for initial assessment (choice) within CAMHS West Lothian Outpatient Team, of the 130 CYP waiting, 0 (zero) have been waiting over 18 weeks.



Raising Achievement and Attainment

West Lothian aims to help young people make the most of their opportunities and to go on to achieve positive outcomes in their lives and achieve their potential. We believe that the quality of learning and teaching that our young people receive in schools, pre-schools and nurseries is a critical factor in their ability to succeed.

The Raising Attainment Strategy 2018-2023 set out the activities that will take place to ensure that all learners are enabled to achieve positive outcomes through education.

In support of the council's Corporate Plan 2018/23 and the eight priorities, the Raising Attainment Strategy is the mechanism by which attainment and achievement of all learners will be supported. It will directly influence and impact on the delivery of the Council's number one priority of improving attainment and positive destinations.

It aims to ensure that children and young people are well placed to move into adult life and employment or further/ higher education. There is an expectation that effective learning and teaching throughout each young person's school experience enables them to maximise their potential.

West Lothian is committed to improving attainment for all children and young people in line with the National Improvement Framework and through the effective delivery of Curriculum for Excellence. Schools in West Lothian have consistently demonstrated their capacity to improve attainment. Within the strategy, the overarching themes are to raise the attainment of all in achieving excellence, and to ensure equity through closing the gap in education outcomes between children from the most and least deprived backgrounds.

Wellbeing Outcome: Achievement		UNCRC articles: 4,18,28,29
We will work together to:	How we will measure this	
Raise attainment for All	<p>National CYPF Wellbeing Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % school leavers in positive destinations at 9-month follow up • % P7-S6 children with access to the internet at home / on phone / another device • % of P1, P4 & P7 children achieving expected CfE literacy levels (reading, writing, listening & talking) • % of P1, P4 & P7 children achieving expected CfE numeracy levels • % settings provided ELC achieving Care Inspectorate grades of <i>good or better</i> across all 4 quality themes <p>Local:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of school leavers that achieved five or more level 6 awards or above • Raising Attainment Strategy – performance indicators • Positive destination data • School attendance figures • Primary school data on curriculum design 	
Ensure the curriculum is co-designed with learners and partners to ensure it meets the needs of all children and young people, providing them with skills for learning, life and work.		
Close the Poverty Related Attainment Gap		
Work with children, young people and their families to identify and remove barriers to attendance.		

Raising Achievement and Attainment

To support this priority, West Lothian partners work collaboratively on numerous projects to ensure every child has the support to reach their full potential through early intervention and prevention approaches. These include:

- **Equity Team/Pedagogical Practice:** Provides universal support to schools and ELCs focused around evidence-based approaches to tackling the poverty-related attainment gap and making effective use of Pupil Equity Funding.
- **Secondary Attendance:** A focus on attendance levels in secondary schools across the authority to identify young people at risk of or currently affected by poor attendance which is impacting on their attainment potential
- **Additional Support Needs (ASN) Interrupted Learner Service:** This is aimed at children and young people who have not been able to attend school due to emotional, behavioural and anxiety issues. The Service is taking a whole family approach to supporting these pupils, most of whom have a neurodevelopment disorder, particularly autism. The project is developing a network of partners who can all help to support our most vulnerable pupils.
- **Level Up Project (CECYP targeted):** This project employs an intensive, multi-agency approach to re-engage our care experienced learners with minimal engagement in their education and who are at risk of care placement break down.
- **Level Up Plus (CECYP mainstream):** To support care experienced learners to fully access and engage in their learning, identify practical supports and useful strategies to keep care experienced learners engaged in their education
- **Senior Phase Equity Pathways:** This project is designed to add value to the work currently being undertaken within schools themselves, work being done by the Developing Young Workforce (DYW) team and college as well as building on the development of future learning opportunities afforded by the further enhancement of the West Lothian Digital Strategy
- **Cost of the School Day:** A project focusing on school related costs and the impact that this may have on children, young people (CYP) and their families, particularly those in Q1.
- **Youth Homeless Prevention:** To provide both intervention and ultimately prevention of youth homelessness within West Lothian.

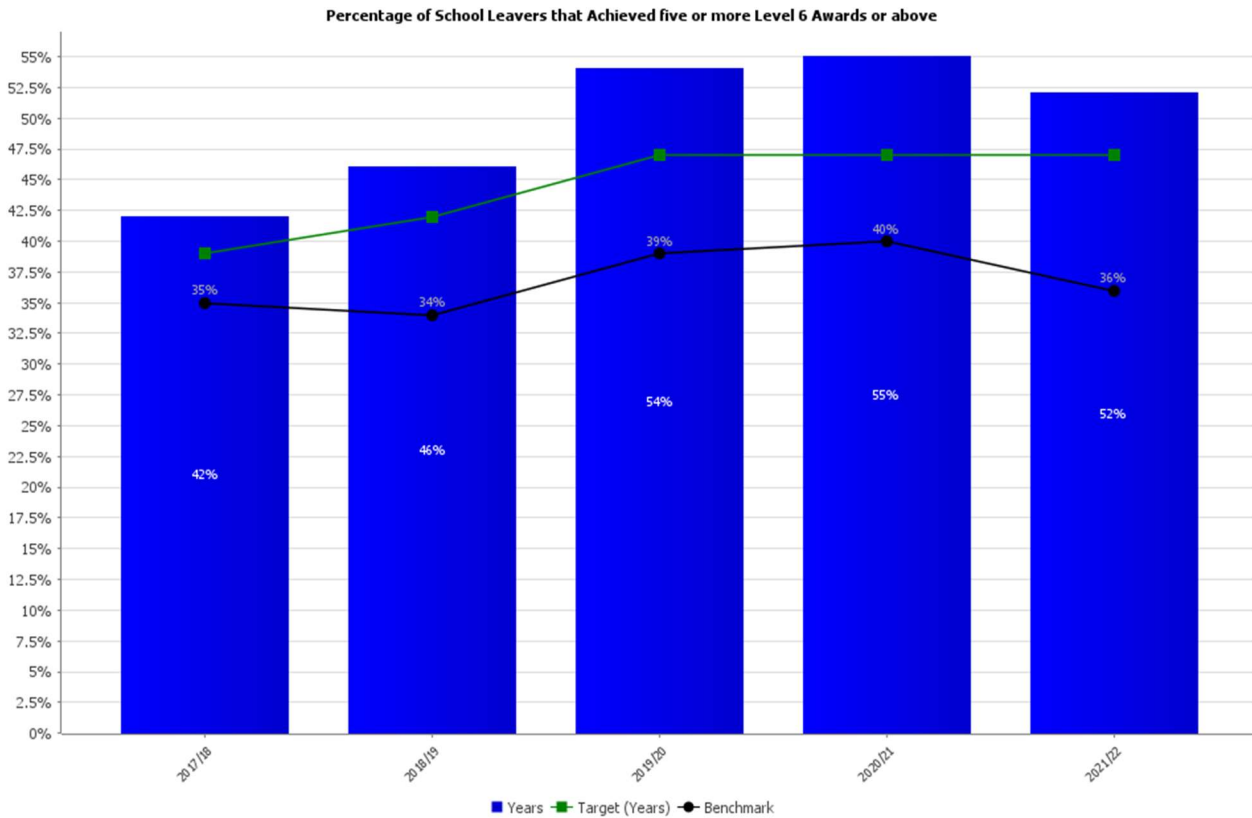


Raising Achievement and Attainment

Key Performance Indicator for this priority:

Performance in this indicator in 2021/22 was 52% which was below performance in 2020/21 of 55% but above the target of 47% due to our ongoing review of curricular models and delivery to maximise and raise attainment.

Entry and attainment figures for the years up to and including 2019 and 2022 are derived from different awarding approaches than 2020 and, separately, 2021. Comparisons of entries, attainment volumes and attainment rates should only be made with full consideration and recognition of each of these different approaches.



Strengthening Corporate Parenting

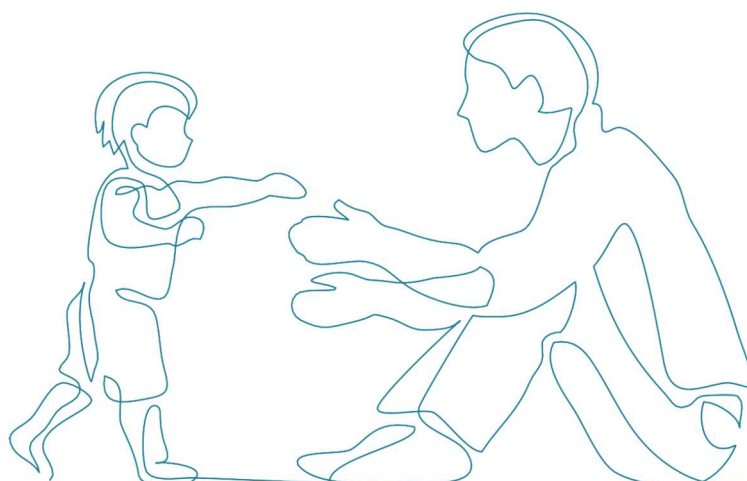
The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 defines corporate parenting as "the formal and local partnerships between all services responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers". This includes infants, children, young people and care leavers who are:

- in residential care, including secure care
- in foster care
- in kinship care, who live with a family member other than a parent
- looked after at home
- disabled and who receive overnight respite
- left care – up to the age of 26 years

In West Lothian, the Corporate Parenting Plan is developed by the multi-agency Corporate Parenting Strategic Group and with engagement with children and young people. West Lothian are proactively working in partnership to embed the Promise Scotland Change programme and ensure that children and young people grow up loved, safe and respected.

There are four priority areas that partners will work together on as outlined below and these form the basis of West Lothian’s Corporate Parenting Plan.

Wellbeing Outcomes: Nurtured, Respected, Included	
UNCRC articles: 2,3,4,5,8,12,13,14,16,17,18,20,21,25,27,30	
We will work together to:	How we will measure this
Improve our care and care planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of children and young people who participate in Looked After Children (LAC) reviews
Improve the health and wellbeing of looked after children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average time taken from point of accommodation for a child under the age of 5 to obtain a permanent placement decision • Percentage of looked after children who report they feel safer as a result of intervention or support
Raise attainment and promoting positive destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of school leavers (Looked After Children) entering a positive destination
Provide effective through care and aftercare support and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of young people eligible for an Aftercare service experiencing one or more episodes of homelessness • Monitor and report on the Corporate Parenting Action Plan



Strengthening Corporate Parenting

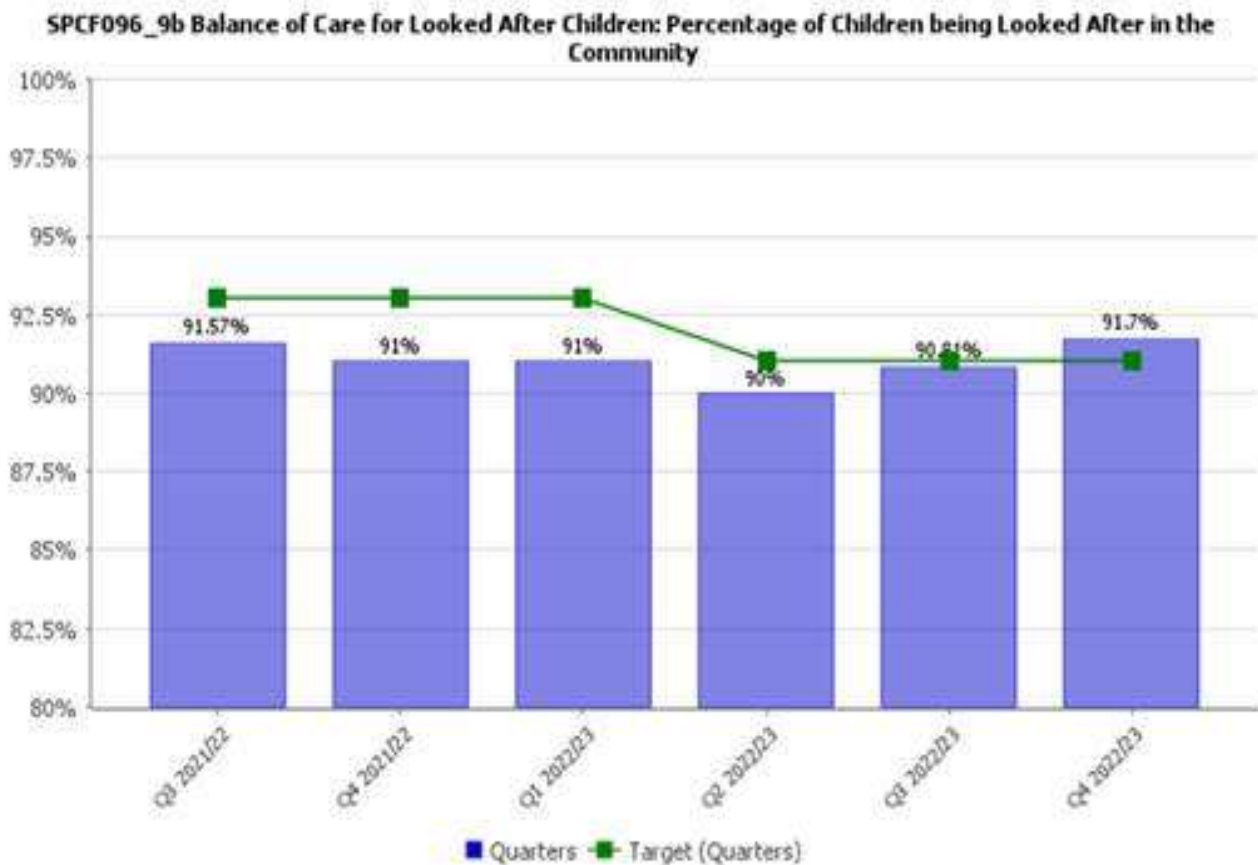
To support this priority, West Lothian partners work collaboratively on actions to deliver on the priorities:

- The improvement actions and activity for each priority area are progressed by workstreams that report to the Corporate Parenting Strategic Group.
- The total number of West Lothian children looked after has followed a downward trend over the last five years. There is a strong focus on providing earlier interventions and more intensive support when that is needed. Service redesign in social work services has enabled a shift away from provision of residential care support to enhance the support provided for families to prevent children being placed away from their homes. Family Group Decision Making forms a part of the activities and responses available to support families and the kinship network to care for their children.
- There is a commitment to shift the balance of care: prevention work supporting families at the earliest opportunity and ensuring children remain within their own family networks and communities when possible. There is a commitment for brothers and sisters to remain together when possible and analysis of performance data will support ongoing improvement.
- An intensive fostering service is being developed that will meet complexity of needs and ensure foster carers have the necessary skills and are adequately supported, to improve outcomes and experiences for children. There will also be an increase in short-break community based provision for children with a disability to support families.
- The Vulnerable Pregnancy Service provides an early intervention service working with families in the ante-natal stage of pregnancy where vulnerabilities and risks are identified. This promotes early support and the opportunity for relationship building and robust planning. When additional risks are identified as child protection concerns, timely responses can be made in line with child protection procedures.
- There is a continued commitment to the Permanence and Care Excellence Programme (PACE), that aims to ensure timely care planning and to improve timescales for making permanent care planning decisions for children. Four workstreams actively develop practice in this area, each focusing on a different stage of a child's journey to permanence.
- Kinship Care Support workers are providing practical and emotional support to Kinship carers and intensive support to children and young people to assist these care arrangements being sustained. The aim is to enable children and young people to remain within their family network and community.
- Mental health and wellbeing support can be accessed through the Inclusion and Support Service, at times resulting in the Wellbeing Recovery Group, a multi-agency forum considering the most appropriate intervention, where care experienced young people's needs are prioritised. The Looked After Children and Aftercare Nurse also provides a valuable service in supporting children and young people.
- The Level Up Project supports care experienced young people to re-engage with learning, attain qualifications and secure positive destinations. The Inclusion and Support Service provides education attendance support for care experienced young people and their families.
- The Social Policy Throughcare and Aftercare Service provides support to young people who are looked after or care experienced, including asylum seeking young people. Established partnerships with Housing and the third sector ensure clear pathways to support transitions and matching of young people to suitable support packages and accommodation provision.

- A participation and engagement strategy is being developed to support the framework for engaging with care experienced children, young people, families and carers in service design and delivery. West Lothian have a well-established multi-agency children’s rights working group focused on increasing opportunities for participation and engagement at all levels. Raising awareness of children’ rights and ensuring rights respecting services is a priority.
- Having Your Say provides support and a platform for experienced young people in West Lothian.
- Advocacy services are accessible and promoted for looked after and care experienced children and young people.

Key Performance Indicator for this priority:

The service has been striving to sustain and improve to support children in community placements. The challenges have been supporting young people to move on to independent living from residential placements when appropriate supported options are limited and there have also been circumstances where children have required specialist provision due to complex needs. Performance in this area is under significant scrutiny and is being closely monitored.



Promoting Children’s Rights and Participation

All partners are committed to progressively realising the embedding of children’s rights in all of the services we deliver. As duty bearers we will work to respect, protect and fulfil all children’s rights working compatibly with the UNCRC requirements.

The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 1st September 2020 and was passed unanimously on 16th March 2021. The UNCRC sets out the specific rights that all children have to help fulfil their potential, including rights relating to health and education, leisure and play, fair and equal treatment, protection from exploitation and the right to be heard

The GIRFEC approach is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC),

and requires those who work with children and young people to put children at the heart of their day-to-day practice.

Putting children at the centre in particular meets the requirement to consider the best interests of the child (Article 3) and the need for children’s views to be considered when decisions are being made about matters which affect them (Article 12).

The UNCRC has 54 articles in all, each outlining in detail the basic rights of every child. These can be summarised into four core principles:

- Non-discrimination
- Devotion to the best interests of the child
- The right to life, survival and development
- Respect for the views of the child

Wellbeing Outcomes: Respected, Included UNCRC articles: 2,3,4,6,8,12,13,14,16,17,18,23,26,27,30	
We will work together to:	How we will measure this
Proactively promote, protect and enable the implementation of UNCRC into practice, supporting all children to know their rights	National CYPF Wellbeing Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % P5-S3 children who say they feel safe when out in their local area <i>always or most of the time</i> • % of P5-S3 children who agree their local area is a good place to live • % P5-S3 children who say they were bullied in the last year • % P5-S3 children who agree adults are good at taking what they say into account Local: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a system to measure the % of children who say they know what their rights are • Establish a child friendly complaints and remedy system to understand where rights are considered to be violated • Report annually / 3 yearly on the Implementation of the UNCRC
Ensure duty bearers across the multi-agency partnership understand their roles and responsibilities and act compatibly with UNCRC requirements in delivering services	
Empower all children to be human rights defenders with a voice in all matters affecting them and access to an effective remedy where their rights are considered to have been violated.	
Ensure CYP are able to safely and easily make use of facilities and activities across West Lothian	



Promoting Children's Rights and Participation

To support this priority, West Lothian partners work collaboratively and are part of a children's rights working group. Together they work on numerous projects to ensure every child has the support to reach their full potential through early intervention and prevention approaches. These include:

- A Children's Achievement Awards event is hosted annually to celebrate the successes of the children and young people living in West Lothian.

The latest event took place in November 2022 when 100 young people were celebrated at an award ceremony. Children and young people were fully involved and their views informed the planning and hosting of this ceremony (article 12, article 31)

The ceremony recognised the achievements of young people under 5 categories:

1. **Caring for/helping others**
2. **Successful learners**
3. **Achievement in physical activities**
4. **Achievement in Arts**
5. **Contributing to the community**



- A children rights officer for court ordered contact ensures that children have a voice in decisions that are being made about them in Child Welfare Hearings. The model is based on a research project with children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse and have court ordered contact. The service works collaboratively with Education, Health, Police and the Domestic and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT). The approach is informed by the Lundy model of child and young people's participation. This has been a positive development and working relationships have been developed with Sheriffs, with the views of the child provided directly to the Sheriff (articles 12 and 13)
- West Lothian's Having Your Say care experienced participation group has been active for 20 years. Young people lead this group and set the agenda for sessions. The young people supported Children's Hearing panel member training and contributed to Scottish Government consultations on such topics as the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 and the Rights of Siblings.
- My planning meetings enable regular reviews and ensure the views of children and young people are gathered as part of this process (articles 25, 12 and 13)
- NHS Lothian's Health Visitors are supporting children's rights in various ways:
 - supporting parents to access housing and referring for income maximisation to promote the right to be free from financial harm and poverty
 - supporting parents to access eligible 2 nursery placements to promote the right to education
 - supporting children and families to access health appointments such as referrals to speech and language, child development clinics and supporting access to GP's and immunisations to promote the right to be healthy
 - universal pathway supports parents to important health advice and signposting to appropriate services to promote the right to be healthy and inclusion.

The Children's Rights Group are currently agreeing relevant local Key Performance Indicators to evidence our progress and impact on embedding children's rights into all aspects of service delivery and ensuring all children and young people know and understand their rights.

Reducing Harm from Substance Use

Substance use can affect children and families in a variety of ways. Children and young people may experience direct harm from their own drug or alcohol use, or through their parent’s use.

Those who experience harm from substance use may have experienced difficult life circumstances and be among the most vulnerable in society.

Parents who use substances may have challenges in caring for their children or providing them with the necessary emotional and physical support to help them develop and grow. Improving outcomes for children affected by parental substance use (CAPSU), is a priority in West Lothian.

We recognise that some young people are at high risk of developing addiction issues in adulthood if not supported. Often, these young people are already known to services and engage in other risk-taking behaviours.

The ADP aims to improve its services aimed at preventing children or young people taking up drug or alcohol use, as they may go on to experience serious harm, particularly if they start using substances at a young age.

Evidence shows that young people at risk of addiction do not engage well with intervention models currently used for adults. They do however engage in services which offer them a persistent key working relationship, meaningful activities and assistance to improve their educational attendance and achievement or their employability.

The ADP have developed a Whole Family Approach Public Social Partnership (PSP) to coordinate existing approaches, as well as trial a range of additional interventions. These services adopt preventative and early interventions strategies, as well as providing direct support to both children or their families who are using substances.

Wellbeing Outcomes: Respected, Included

UNCRC articles: 2,3,4,6,8,12,13,14,16,17,18,23,26,27,30

We will work together to:	How we will measure this
Deliver a Rights Based Approach to Alcohol and Drug strategy development and service provision for children and families	Services will be evaluated through Scottish Government’s Survey on Services for Children and Young People and Holistic Whole Family Approaches/Family Inclusive Practice.
Ensure there is a robust plan for prevention of problematic substance use by children and young people. This will address the link between problematic substance use and social / economic inequality	The West Lothian Alcohol and Drug Partnership will develop a series of measures of effectiveness for preventative approaches and service delivery.
Continue to provide specialist support for children and young people who use drugs or alcohol	The ADP and C&G SPG will coproduce approaches in partnership with families, children, and young people, as well as wider engagement in localities to ensure they are involved in service design and development.
Work directly with whole families affected by substance use, including children affected by parental substance use as well as parents, such as trialling a Dad’s Worker	
Continue to develop alternatives to treatment-based approaches, such as youth work and diversional approaches	
Pilot a perinatal worker to enhance the delivery of coordinated whole family support from pregnancy booking to one year postnatal	

Reducing Harm from Substance Use

To support this priority, West Lothian partners work collaboratively on numerous projects to ensure every child has the support to reach their full potential through early intervention and prevention approaches. The ADP Delivery Plan will detail the actions that contribute to national outcomes contained within the Rights Respect Recovery Strategy, and the National Mission Outcomes Framework. These outcomes have specific mention to prevention and early intervention, recovery oriented system of care, and supporting families affected by problematic substance use. An ADP Delivery Plan will be developed in accordance with the Partnership Delivery Framework agreed by Scottish Government and ADPs in 2019. The Partnership Delivery Framework outlines several quality standards that ADPs must adhere to.

Prevention actions have already been developed relating to alcohol and will be supplemented to include drugs. These include:

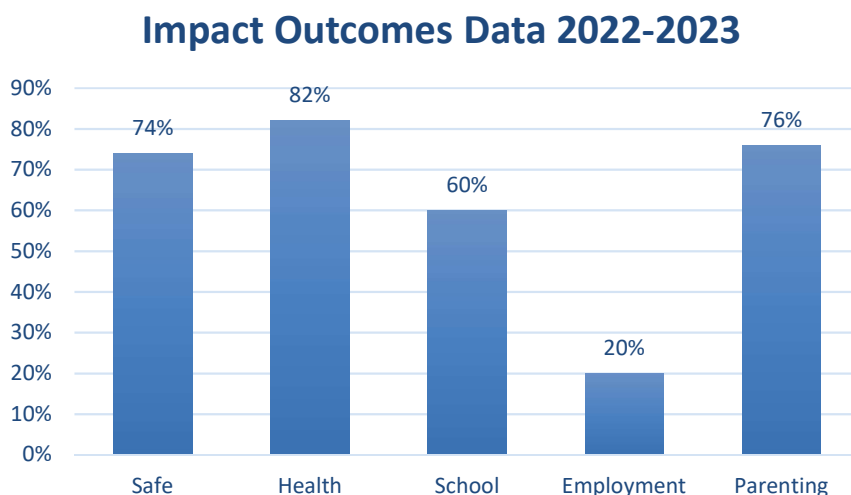
- **Therapeutic Support Service:** This service provides counselling & support to young people in West Lothian, aged 12-18, who are using drugs or alcohol at levels which are impacting on family relationships, education, offending or mental health.
- **Holistic whole family support:** a service for families affected by substance use, including 3 family outreach workers and a Fathers worker.
- **Families Together Service:** offers support to young women who are engaged in risk taking behaviour, including substance misuse.
- **Youth Inclusion Project:** offers a consistent resource and support for vulnerable young people aged 16-25 and aims to break down and overcome barriers which can prevent them moving on to positive destinations in all aspects of their lives.
- **Specialist Addiction Workers:** Work with families experiencing harm from drug or alcohol use.

Key Performance Indicator for this priority:

The family support service often termed 'Children affected by parental substance use' (CAPSU) service has five reporting areas agreed with WLADP and report on a quarterly basis:

- Families supported – 44 families were supported by Circle from April 22 to March 2023
- Domestic Abuse - Levels of domestic abuse are high Impacting over half of the families – 27 of 44 (61%)
- Treatment & Recovery - 44 families that engaged with Circle support 34 (77%) were also engaged with treatment and recovery services

The table below shows the percentage of families who made positive changes in their lives as a result of intervention where it was applicable



Reducing Harm for Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law

No single agency has sole responsibility for supporting young people to make positive lifestyle choices. Within West Lothian we are committed to working in Partnership to tackle the causes and impact of harmful behaviour for those in conflict with the law. We ensure adequate early intervention is provided through the Whole Systems Approach (WSA).

All partner agencies are working together to maintain consistent planning, assessment and decision-making processes which support those in conflict with the law to receive the right help at the right time. This approach ensures community safety remains a focus.

We are focused on the development of a rights respecting approach which ensures all children, young people and families we are working with are supported to share their views on all decisions that affect them and have an understanding of their rights.

Wellbeing Outcome: Responsible	UNCRC articles: 3,12,14,15,40
We will work together to:	How we will measure this
Develop a right-based youth justice service compatible with UNCRC which promotes participation and engagement	Local: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Scotland Youth Offending monthly comparison figures • Percentage of Early and Effective Intervention (EEI) cases 12 to 17 years who do not become known to the Youth Justice Team within 12 months • Percentage of young people who offend 18 years up to the age of 22 receiving a custodial sentence following completion of a Criminal Justice Social Work Report. • Percentage of young people who were previously Looked After Children (LAC) who become involved with the Justice Service within 12 months of ceasing to be LAC
Increase diversion from formal measures using a whole systems approach to improve life chances for children and young people in conflict with the law	
Focus on early intervention and prevention supports to reduce harmful behaviour	
Ensure multi-agency working and streamlined systems to support reintegration and transitions for young people	
Deliver trauma informed services which acknowledge the impact and cause of harmful behaviours and support communities to feel safe from crime.	

Reducing Harm for Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law

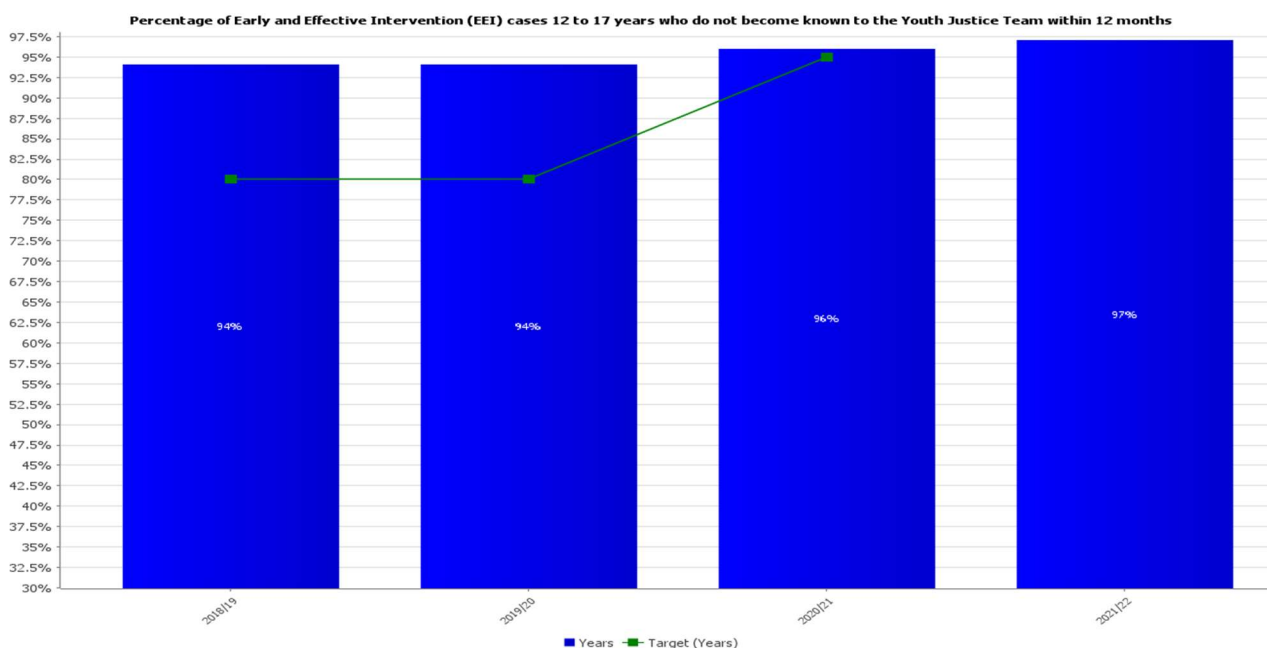
To support this priority, West Lothian partners work collaboratively on numerous projects to ensure every child has the support to reach their full potential through early intervention and prevention approaches. These include:

- **Fire Safety Education:** Partner agencies work together to raise awareness of fire safety and provide education regularly about the associated risks around fire. In addition, targeted education work is undertaken in relation to children and young people who have been involved in fire setting.

- **Seasonal Safety Actions:** Thematic plans are put in place to ensure actions are undertaken during specific seasonal periods, for example fire safety during bonfire season, water safety during hot weather and winter safety.
- **Community safety partnership** - weekly meetings are held to highlight operational issues that require a partnership approach by sharing intelligence and identifying locality areas to target the provision of street work and community interventions. This supports children and young people to remain safe in the community, prevent anti-social behaviour and reduce the numbers of young people who may come into conflict with the law.
- **Early and Effective intervention (EEI)** - this service works with young people who have been cautioned and charged with an offence (12-17 years). EEI provides a tailored plan of support for that young person to refocus the young person and assist them in making positive choices which prevent any further incidences of them being in conflict with the law.
- **Trauma Therapy** – a trauma therapist provides early intervention to young people (13-25) who are the survivors of sexual violence to ensure they are supported at the point of reporting abuse and continues to support them through any court processes. A safe space with therapeutic input enables the processing of and recovery from experiences of sexual violence. In addition, the therapist facilitates consultation with other practitioners working to support survivors of domestic and sexual assault to ensure they deliver supports that are trauma informed.

Key Performance Indicator for this priority:

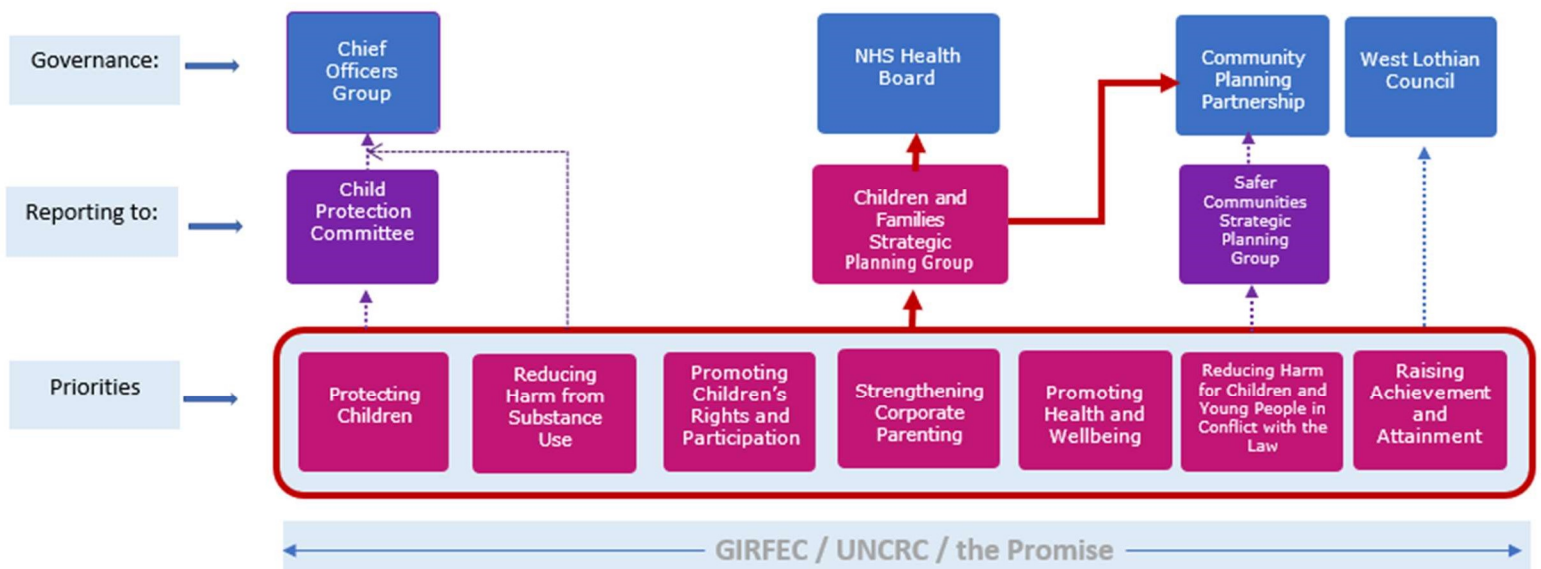
This indicator has been developed to help the service assess the impact Early and Effective Intervention is making on supporting young people not to reoffend. On 17th December 2021, the age of criminal responsibility was increased from 8 to 12 years of age. The data for 2021/22 reflects the increase in the age from 12-17 but the trend has not been impacted.



How We Work Together

The governance arrangements for the planning and delivery of services for children, young people and their families were reviewed in 2015 in light of the implementation of The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 and The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Services for children, young people and families are planned and monitored at a West Lothian wide level by the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group (C&FSPG) along with other partnership groups. The C&FSPG report to the Community Planning Partnership. Our governance arrangements provide clear linkages to:

- Community Planning Partnership (CPP)
- West Lothian Council
- NHS Lothian
- The Chief Officers Group (COG)
- Community Safety
- Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP)
- Community Justice Partnership



Workforce Development

The quality and effectiveness of our services rely on the commitment, dedication and ability of staff across West Lothian. On a daily basis, staff make a difference to the lives of children, young people and their families. The partnership is committed to ensuring that our collective workforce has the necessary skills and knowledge to provide a high quality services in this challenging environment. Access to appropriate training and development opportunities are promoted so staff are supported in their role, and also to support staff retention.

Creating a Trauma Informed Workforce

Adverse childhood experiences (ACES) are highly stressful and potentially traumatic events or situations that occur during childhood and/or adolescence. These experiences can include violence, neglect, grief and loss, and can have a long lasting effect on one's physical and mental health, affecting how they behave and their relationships with other people in their lives.

Evidence of the full impact of trauma has been emerging for several decades, establishing beyond doubt that its effects can be wide-ranging, substantial, long-lasting and costly. Trauma informed systems and practice being embedded can result in better outcomes for those who have experienced trauma.

Acknowledging the impact of such adversity West Lothian's Children's Services have been working from a trauma informed standpoint. Being trauma informed means being able to recognise when someone may be affected by trauma, adjusting how we work to take this into account, and responding in a way that supports recovery, prevents further harm, and recognises and supports resilience.

The Scottish Government made a commitment to preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and to support the resilience and recovery of all children and adults affected by trauma. A shared ambition to develop a trauma informed and responsive workforce across Scotland has been published.

The aim of this work is to ensure services are delivered in ways which prevent further harm or re-traumatisation for those who have experienced trauma or adversity.

Work is being undertaken in Partnership in West Lothian to support the development of trauma informed approaches and the improved understanding of the impact of trauma. In driving this change a trauma board has been established and a trauma champion has been identified along with a Business Support Officer. The remit includes co-ordinating the rollout of the National Trauma Training Programme and embedding the use of the trauma informed practice toolkit to support cultural and organisational change. Work has begun to ensure strong connections and good awareness of the national developments supporting this work.



Performance Management

During 2021 the Scottish Government worked with COSLA and Children's Services Planning Partnerships to develop a nationally agreed, Children, Young People and Families Outcomes Framework (CYPF) and a Core Wellbeing Indicator Set, which provide a holistic overview of wellbeing at local and national level and ensure they meaningfully reflect what matters to children, young people and families and enables measurement of progress.

The CYPF Outcomes Framework is being developed to provide an over-arching holistic picture and understanding of children and young people's wellbeing in Scotland. Its approach is grounded within GIRFEC, with children's rights at its core.

To align our local indicators to the newly established national indicators, a West Lothian Performance Management Framework has been produced to ensure the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group has identified its specific contribution to the delivery of the outcomes detailed within The National Performance Framework (NPF) and the CYPF.

Our priorities have been agreed and a robust suite of indicators using the SMART framework, aligned to the actions agreed in our action plan have been, or are being developed to ensure we achieve our intended outcomes in meeting Children and Young People's needs to achieve their potential. Indicators will be tracked through partner's performance information systems. Performance reports on the progress of the plan and the indicators will be submitted regularly to the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group and Children's Services Annual Reports and the 3-yearly UNCRC progress report will be submitted to the Community Planning Partnership to report progress of our Plan.

The West Lothian Assessment Model (WLAM) is a quality model that is used by West Lothian Council staff to improve the overall quality and performance of our services. The model and the process of self-assessment are part of a continuous improvement approach that helps the council and our stakeholders to monitor what we are delivering for West Lothian, particularly in our corporate priorities. The corporate Priorities are reviewed in consultation with key stakeholders every 5 years, in line with the corporate planning periods.



National Performance Indicators

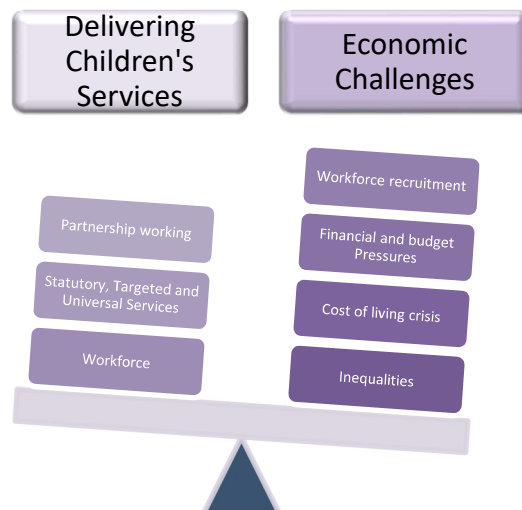
The Scottish Government's, Children, Young People and Families Outcomes Framework (CYPF) identify 21 Core Wellbeing Indicators. The Scottish Government have not set targets for these indicators but West Lothian will collate the indicator data and establish meaningful local targets to measure our performance of national indicators within our local area. West Lothian's priorities have been aligned to these indicators as well as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators and articles of the UNCRC as follows:

CYPF Topic of wellbeing	CYPF Core Wellbeing Indicator	West Lothian CSP Priority	SHANARRI Wellbeing Indicator	Links to UNCRC articles
Positive destinations of school leavers	% school leavers in positive destinations at 9-month follow up	Raising Achievement and Attainment	Achieving Included	12, 13, 17, 23, 26, 28, 29
Adult Employment - % Children in working households	Proportion of children under 16 living in households with at least one person age 16-64 where all individuals aged 16+ are in employment	Promoting Health and Wellbeing (Anti-Poverty)	Included	18, 26, 27, 28, 29
Digital Inclusion	% P7-S6 children with access to the internet at home / on phone / another device	Raising Achievement and Attainment	Included Achieving	15, 16, 26, 27, 28, 29
Peer relationships	% of P5-S3 children who agree that their friends treat them well	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Included Nurtured Safe	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 36
Neighbourhood safety	% P5-S6 children who say they feel safe when out in their local area <i>always or most of the time</i>	Promoting Children's Rights and Participation	Safe Included	12,19,28,29,33, 34, 35,36,37, 39,40
Play / participation in leisure activities	% S1-S3 children participating in positive leisure activities (at least one from list options)	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Active Respected	12, 15, 17, 18, 23, 24, 26, 27
Neighbourhood satisfaction	% of P5-S6 children who agree their local area is a good place to live	Promoting Children's Rights and Participation	Included Respected Safe	12, 15, 17, 18, 23, 24, 26, 27
Bullying	% P5-S3 children who say they were bullied in the last year	Promoting Children's Rights and Participation	Safe Respected	6, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23, 30, 31, 33, 36, 37 39
Protection from harm	Number of children subject to interagency Referral Discussions	Protecting Children	Safe Respected Nurtured Healthy Achieving Included	3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 32, 33, 34, 35,36
Housing security	Number of children in temp accommodation at 31 March	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Included Nurtured	20, 25, 26, 27
Physical activity yesterday	% P5-S6 children that had at least 1 hour of exercise the day before the survey	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Active Respected	15, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29

CYPF Topic of wellbeing	CYPF Core Wellbeing Indicator	West Lothian CSP Priority	SHANARRI Wellbeing Indicator	Links to UNCRC articles
Literacy	% of P1, P4 & P7 children achieving expected CfE literacy levels (reading, writing, listening & talking)	Raising Achievement and Attainment	Achieving Included	12, 13, 17, 23, 26, 28, 29
Numeracy	% of P1, P4 & P7 children achieving expected CfE numeracy levels	Raising Achievement and Attainment	Achieving Included	12, 13, 17, 23, 26, 28, 29
Mental Health / Mental Wellbeing	% S2-S6 children with <i>slightly raised, high or very high</i> Strength & Difficulties score	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Healthy Nurtured Included	14, 15, 19, 23, 24, 27, 31, 36, 39
Mental Health / Mental Wellbeing	Mean score on Stirling wellbeing scale (P5-S1 children) & Warwick Edi Mental Wellbeing Score (S2-S6 children) (WEMWBS)	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Healthy Nurtured Included	14, 15, 19, 23, 24, 27, 31, 36, 39
Being listened to and involved in decision-making	% P5-S6 children who agree adults are good at taking what they say into account	Promoting Children's Rights and Participation	Respected Responsible	4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 40
Diet	% P5-S6 children who eat both fruit and vegetables every day	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Healthy Nurtured Responsible	6, 23, 24, 27
Pre-school development	% children with a concern at their 27-30 month review (as a % of children reviewed)	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Nurtured Healthy Achieving	5, 6, 9, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31
Relationships – Trusted Adults	% of P5-S6 children who say they <i>always</i> have an adult in their life they can trust and talk to about any problems	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	Nurtured Safe Included	5, 6, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31
Child Poverty	Relative child poverty rate (after housing costs)	Promoting Health and Wellbeing (Anti-Poverty)	Included Nurtured Healthy Achieving	6, 15, 18, 19, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31
Quality Services - Easy access to good quality, responsive support	% settings provided ELC achieving Care Inspectorate grades of <i>good or better</i> across all 4 quality themes	Raising Achievement and Attainment	Nurtured Included Achieving	6, 15, 18, 19, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31

Budget Resources

This Plan highlights how we seek to deliver Children’s Services by achieving the best balance between statutory, universal and targeted services, re-distributing resources towards targeted activities with individuals, groups and communities and providing a greater focus on early intervention and prevention and building resilience.



Economic Challenges

Ongoing budget and financial pressures are expected to continue and difficult decisions will have to be made in order to prioritise the services that meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our community, such as children, young peoples and families living in poverty. The financial challenges reinforce the reasons why partnership working is more important than ever to deliver excellent services for children young, people and their families. By investing our shared resources in the delivery and development of services that focus on prevention and early intervention we can ensure that children’s needs are met and they are supported to achieve their full potential.

A Children’s Services Commissioning Plan is being developed to ensure planning of services that meet the needs of children and young people in West Lothian. There is a commitment to continually improving services, which requires ongoing assessment of needs, review of demand for services and engagement with children, young people and their families to understand how developments and future services will be effective.

The Scottish Government Whole Family Wellbeing Funding is enabling the partnership to further develop holistic family support by enabling transformational change and scaling up of existing services. The partnership will be progressing these developments as a Public Social Partnership (PSP), the Whole Family Wellbeing Alliance. All activities will be connected, promoting innovative whole family support, early intervention and prevention.

Children and Families services spend:

West Lothian Council 2023 / 2024	£,000s
Social Policy - Children and Families	32,391
Education	216,572
Community Learning and Development – Youth Services	1,925
TOTAL	250,888
Health Services 2022 / 2023	£,000s
Health Visitors	3,263
School Nurses	709
CAMHs	3,012
Midwives (Community)	1,290
Community Child Health	270
Family Nurse Practitioners	642
TOTAL	9,186
OVERALL TOTAL	260,074

Explanation of the SHANARRI Indicators and UNCRC Articles

Wellbeing Indicator	Suggested Links to the UNCRC
<p>Safe</p> <p>Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community</p>	<p>(11) abduction and non-return of children, (19) protection from violence, abuse and neglect, (22) refugee children, (32) child labour, (33) drug abuse, (34) sexual exploitation, (35) abduction, sale and trafficking, (36) other forms of exploitation, (37) inhumane treatment and detention, (38) war and armed conflicts</p>
<p>Healthy</p> <p>Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare and support in learning to make healthy, safe choices</p>	<p>(3) best interests of the child, (6) life, survival and development, (24) health and health services, (39) recovery and rehabilitation of child victims</p>
<p>Achieving</p> <p>Being supported and guided in learning and in the development of skills, confidence and self-esteem, at home, in school and in the community</p>	<p>(4) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights in systems that promote and protect these rights, (18) parental responsibilities and state assistance, (28) right to education, (29) goals of education</p>
<p>Nurtured</p> <p>Having a nurturing place to live in a family setting, with additional help if needed, or, where possible, in a suitable care setting</p>	<p>(4) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights in systems that promote and protect these rights, (5) parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities, (18) parental responsibilities and state assistance, (20) children deprived of a family, (21) adoption, (25) review of treatment in care, (27) adequate standard of living</p>
<p>Active</p> <p>Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, which contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community</p>	<p>(3) best interests of the child, (23) children with disabilities, (31) leisure, play and culture</p>
<p>Respected</p> <p>Having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them</p>	<p>(2) non-discrimination, (3) best interests of the child, (4) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights in systems that promote and protect those rights. parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities, (8) protection and preservation of identity, (12) respect for the views of the child, (13) freedom of expression, (14) freedom of thought, belief and religion, (16) right to privacy, (17) access to information; mass media, (18) parental responsibilities and state assistance, (30) the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family</p>
<p>Responsible</p> <p>Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles at home, in school and in the community, and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision, and being involved in decisions that affect them</p>	<p>(3) best interests of the child, (12) respect for the views of the child, (14) freedom of thought, conscience and religion, (15) freedom of association, (40) juvenile justice</p>
<p>Included</p> <p>Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities, and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn</p>	<p>(3) best interests of the child, (6) life, survival and development, (18) parental responsibilities and state assistance, (23) children with disabilities, (26) social security, (27) adequate standard of living</p>



Getting it Right for West Lothian's Children & Families 