

The Dundee Partnership
**Promise to our Care
Experienced Children
and Young People**



Our Promise

This Promise outlines the Dundee Partnership intention to ensure that Care Experienced Children and Young People have the very best support, life chances and opportunities possible so they can lead loving, settled and fulfilled lives well into adulthood.

As a partnership, we are committed to promoting the wellbeing and rights of all vulnerable and looked after children, young people and care leavers as one of our most important responsibilities. In doing so, we will provide the highest quality care, support and protection which:

- Helps all vulnerable children, young people and parents/carers to flourish
- Enables care experienced children and young people to thrive at home
- Improves educational attainment levels and all transitions into adulthood
- Listens to family voices and continually adapts and improves our support

We know that although care experienced children and young people can have particular needs associated with their health and wellbeing, they also have enormous strengths which can grow even more with the right support. We intend to work with and for them to overcome any barriers to them realising their full potential.

This Promise outlines our commitment to a range of actions which build on and accelerate how we have developed this support over the last 3 years. We believe that, in doing so, we will continue to transform our approach to engaging with and improving outcomes for care experienced children and young people in our city.



**#Keep
The
Promise**

Our Journey

Over the last 3 years, our Corporate Parenting Partnership has led on the development and implementation of a Corporate Parenting Plan 2017-2020. The partnership has coordinated or contributed towards an extensive range of initiatives with and for children, young people and young adults at risk of entering care or already in care:

- An Addressing Neglect Enhancing Wellbeing programme
- A What Matters 2 U programme
- A Fast-Online Referral Tracking (FORT) system
- Trauma informed and nurturing practice in all residential and school settings
- Parity of financial support for kinship carers and foster carers
- An initiative designed to accelerate moves to permanence in care
- A Children and Families Service Charter with 19 principles for change
- An Engagement and Participation Strategy
- A Breakthrough Mentoring Programme in all 8 secondary schools and Offsite
- Additional Pupil Support Workers in all cluster areas
- A Champions Board, Young People Participation Group and 4 Change Group
- Signing up to the Scottish Care Leavers Covenant
- Implementation of Continuing Care for young people aged 16-21 years
- A Housing Protocol for care leavers
- A guaranteed interview scheme with the Council for all care leavers
- Improved use of data to inform wider improvement
- Development and implementation of the Better Hearings Agenda

We believe these developments are jointly helping to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. From reductions in the number entering care; increases in the number of local family-based living arrangements; improved stability; better educational attainment; and positive destinations, our data shows real progress:

Number of Looked After Children

Reduced from 585 in 2015 to 517 in July 2020

Family based living

The number living with kinship carers increased from 99 to 147 in 2019-20

The number living with internal foster carers increased from 147 to 162

Stability

The stability of all living arrangements has increased

School exclusions 2016-17 to 2018-19

Reduced from 202 per 1,000 to 110 per 1,000

Attainment 2017-18 to 2018-19

SCQF 5 in literacy and numeracy increased from 19.5% to 27%

Positive destinations

Increased slightly from 86.7% to 87.5% in 12 months

Continuing Care

The number in Continuing Care increased from 18 to 23

Justice

Reduced the number of all young people entering secure care or prison

However, our city still has a very high rate of care experienced children and young people; fewer live at home with their parents; higher proportions have more than 1 placement move when compared with the national average; more could benefit from entering Continuing Care; and positive destinations are not always sustained.

Equally, although we have made progress in engaging with care experienced children and young people and their parents/carers to inform some developments, we believe there is much more we can do to extend approaches and use them to routinely inform how we continually adapt and improve support.

Our Promise therefore expands our approach across the whole partnership and to all communities of our city so we improve all services at pace, with an emphasis on engagement and participation with all vulnerable families, including care experienced children and young people

Some Key Policies and Legislation

As a partnership, our work is strongly informed by policies, legislation and research. This includes the Children and Young Person's (Scotland) Act 2014; Getting it Right for Every Child; the Scottish Attainment Challenge; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; and research on child development. Some key themes include:

Children and Young Person Act 2014

Sets out the key responsibilities and duties for relevant public bodies requiring them to be systematic and proactive in their efforts to meet the needs of looked after children and care leavers (Appendix 1).

Getting it Right for Every Child

A framework to place families at the centre of decision making and ensure services consistently provide integrated support to children, young people and families as part of their wider community.

Children Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011

Embeds the rights of children in the Children's Hearing system, including the recently enacted right to advocacy. This Act also enshrines the duties of the Local authority to ensure children's rights are upheld in the system.

Scottish Attainment Challenge

Aims to raise the attainment of children and young people living in deprived areas, in order to ensure that every child can succeed in school, gain the skills for life and close the equity gap. It recognises that holistic support is essential.

UNCRC

Outlines 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and explain how Governments and adults must work together to make sure all children can enjoy their rights. It has been incorporated into Scottish domestic law.

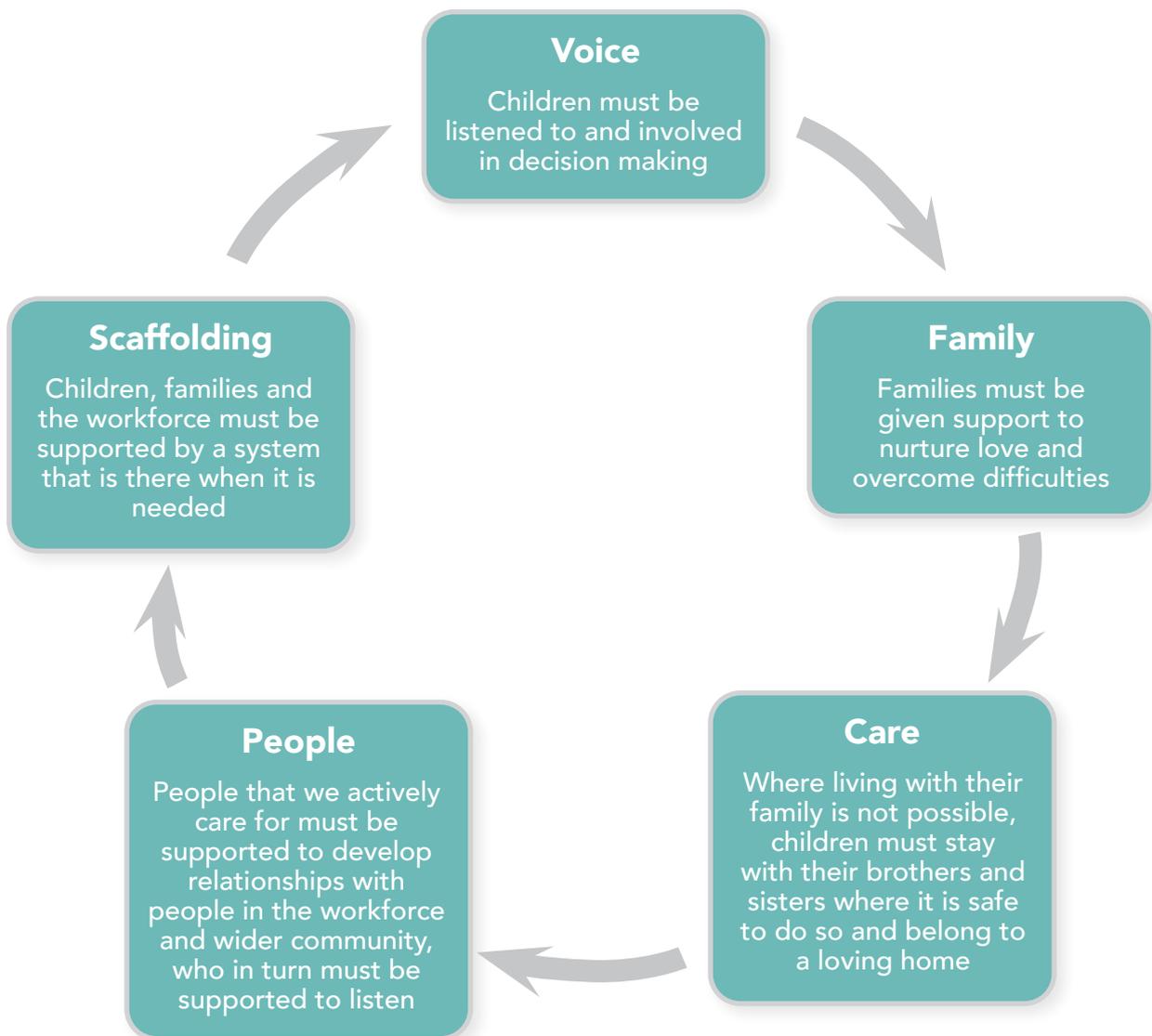
Research on child development

Includes the importance of recognising the pivotal first 1,000 days; stages of development from birth to adolescence; stable, positive attachments with nurturing carers; and the impact of adverse childhood experiences.

In addition, there is also strong evidence that social and economic inequalities increase the stressors in families and make parenting more difficult. Our Promise therefore recognises the impact poverty has on families and complements our Fairness Commission Action Plan. Some key themes include:

- Ensuring timely and easy access to support
- Developing flexible and responsive support
- Targeted and adapting support to meet specific needs
- Support in key transitions of early years/primary/secondary school/employment

Crucially, the findings of the Independent Care Review have also informed how we have arrived at Our Promise. This hugely important review sets 'a higher collective ambition that enables loving, supportive and nurturing relationships as a basis on which to thrive'. It includes 5 foundations which we have used to shape our plan:



Governance and Partnership Arrangements

In this context, over the next 3 years our Corporate Parenting Partnership, which has been re-named as 'Our Promise Partnership' and includes a care experienced young person, will work collaboratively with other partnerships and report to our Children and Families Executive Board, along with other Boards or Committees where relevant.



Developing joint approaches with Protecting People partnerships is a key priority, because they coordinate services to vulnerable adults and children and young people who can present a risk to others and/or themselves. For instance, as a result of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect. This relationship is outlined below:



When these issues are so significant and/or persistent they can result in children and young people being at risk of harm if they remain in the family home, requiring alternative care arrangements and becoming Looked After. Our approach therefore includes a key focus on supporting parents and carers.

Consultation

In order to inform the content of Our Promise, all partner services and care experienced children and young people have been consulted. This has ensured that partners have every opportunity to outline their contributions to our Delivery Plan. Comments from children and young people included:

- They like the title, style and content of Our Promise
- They believe the plan is ambitious but we make no apologies for that
- They offered helpful advice on language and the use of acronyms
- They suggested some of the actions could be more specific and clear
- They were particularly interested in being involved in developing their own plans

This feedback has informed the content of the plan, including in relation to the consistent use of the term care experienced instead of looked after children and young people; changing the term respite which has negative connotations to short-breaks; and describing all current and planned methods of engagement and participation.

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Article 12

Governments “shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.”

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY



Scaffolding

Providing support when it is needed

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
	Building the capacity of universal services	We will implement revised arrangements for Named Person's to identify, assess, engage and support	Chief Education Officer, Dundee City Council	January 2022	Number of Health Visitors and Primary Schools delivering ANEW Quality of Child's Plans prepared by universal services
	Listening to families to inform service design/delivery	We will scale a What Matters 2 U initiative to all 8 wards across the city and align it with other initiatives	Head of Children's Service, DCC	January 2022	Number of parents/carers consulted and supported
	Providing accessible and flexible family support	We will develop clear and flexible family support services able to meet all needs with the Third Sector We will ensure support is accessible via the Fast-Online Referral Tracking (FORT) system	Assistant Director of Barnardo's Assistant Director of Barnardo's	March 2021 March 2021	Number of families supported and qualitative data on outcomes
	Supporting vulnerable children in school	We will implement a counselling service in schools We will implement our Care Experienced Charter in all schools We will implement revised Team Around the Child arrangements We will provide targeted support to children at risk of exclusion	Education Manager, DCC Education Manager, DCC Education Manager, DCC Education Manager, DCC	March 2021 March 2021 March 2021 March 2021	Exclusions, attendance, attainment and destination

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
<p style="text-align: center;">Scaffolding</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Providing support when it is needed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Supporting vulnerable children in school</p>	<p>We will provide targeted support to children not attending school</p>	<p>Education Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	
		<p>We will explore the delivery of the Youth in Iceland model</p>	<p>Education Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	
		<p>Re-establish a monthly multi-agency Employability Support drop-in service for young people and care leavers under the age of 26 alongside Youth Employability.</p>	<p>Senior Manager DCC</p>	<p>May 2021</p>	<p>Improved outcomes and positive destinations for care leavers</p>
		<p>Establish a quarterly multi-agency employability support forum. This will track young people and care leavers who are supported by the Throughcare and Aftercare Team who are not currently in education, employment or training. Contributing partners will identify the most appropriate employability support opportunities to offer individual young people.</p>	<p>Senior Manager DCC</p>	<p>April 2021</p>	
		<p>Re-establish a weekly support and guidance drop-in session at Dundee and Angus College in partnership with Student Services for young people and care leavers under the age of 26.</p>	<p>Senior Manager DCC</p>	<p>April 2021</p>	

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
<p style="text-align: center;">Scaffolding Providing support when it is needed</p>					
<p>Continue to facilitate bi-monthly review meetings in partnership with Dundee and Angus College student services in order to identify any barriers, support needs and progression routes for young people and care leavers who are supported by the Throughcare and Aftercare Team</p> <p>We will Work with Care Leavers to understand their transition and employability needs and develop appropriate and targeted pathways</p> <p>We will Implement enhanced transition process for care leavers who are leaving school</p> <p>We will ensure targeted outreach and engagement work with Care Leavers aged 16-19 identified through the national Participation Database as not in a positive learning experience</p> <p>We will develop an integrated vocational training and progression pathway for care leavers</p>					
<p>Senior Manager DCC</p> <p>Youth Employability Service</p> <p>Youth Employability Service</p> <p>Youth Employability Service</p>					
<p>Current</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>March 2022</p>					
<p>Number and % of care experienced children and young people with a completed employability action plan</p> <p>Increase in number of CEYP young people in positive and sustained destinations</p> <p>Number and % of care experienced young people in vocational opportunities</p> <p>Number and % of care experienced young people in opportunities matched by brokerage service</p>					

Scaffolding

Providing support when it is needed

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
		<p>We will work with employers to develop an employment brokering facility to match job ready care leavers with career and apprenticeship opportunities</p> <p>We will develop Supported Pathways for Care Leavers with Employers</p>	<p>Youth Employability Service</p> <p>Youth Employability Service</p>	<p>March 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p>	<p>Number and % of care experienced young people in supported pathways such as kickstart or Youth Guarantee provision</p>
	Supporting vulnerable women and families	<p>We will sustain a Pause Programme for women at risk of pregnancy and repeat admissions into care</p> <p>We will report on the impact of targeted support to pregnant women whose children are at risk</p> <p>We will report on targeted gender-informed support to women in the criminal justice system</p> <p>We will report on the impact of Safe and Together to enhance support to victims of domestic abuse</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p> <p>Senior Manager, DCC</p> <p>Senior Manager, DCC</p> <p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>May 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p>	<p>Number of women supported by Pause; impact on repeat pregnancy; and positive feedback</p> <p>Number of pregnant women supported; % children who become care experienced; and positive feedback</p> <p>Number of men attending the Caledonian Programme; compliance/successful completion; and feedback from victims</p> <p>Report on Safe and Together</p>
	Consistent and defensible decisions on placements	We will review the terms of reference and resources of a Kinship Panel and Resource Management Group	Senior Manager, DCC	March 2021	

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
<p>Family</p> <p>Support to nurture love and overcome difficulties</p>	<p>Promoting the stability of families</p>	<p>We will explore implementation of Safe Families to provide targeted respite support to vulnerable families</p> <p>We will provide and measure the impact of voluntary support provided by Social Work teams</p> <p>We will implement a Kinship Hub providing holistic one-stop-shop support to kinship carers</p> <p>We will report on the impact of targeted support to parents/carers with substance use problems</p> <p>We will increase the capacity of foster carers through recruitment, training and development</p> <p>We will deliver trauma informed training to all professionals and families supporting care experienced children</p> <p>We will deliver targeted parenting programmes to vulnerable families, with a focus on early years</p> <p>We will progress a test of change with a focus on best practice in supporting families where domestic abuse is problematic. This will draw on the knowledge and experience of a range of staff across the service and partners and will focus on improved outcomes for the whole family.</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p> <p>Education Manager, DCC</p> <p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p>	<p>Number of families receiving respite support and % reporting a positive impact</p> <p>Number of families supported by SW teams where the children do not become care experienced</p> <p>Number of kinship carers accessing support and % reporting a positive impact</p> <p>Number of parents/carers receiving support and % reporting a positive impact</p> <p>Number of newly registered foster carers and annual training and development plan</p> <p>Number and % of staff/parents/kinship carers receiving training</p> <p>Number of parents/carers of care experienced 0-5 year-olds receiving training</p> <p>Reduce the number of children on Child Protection Register and becoming accommodated due to domestic abuse</p>

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
	<p>Developing a trauma informed workforce</p>	<p>We will roll out trauma informed training for all staff and carers</p>	<p>Protecting People Team, DCC</p>	<p>May 2021</p>	<p>Number of staff trained in trauma informed practice and feedback</p>
	<p>Improving assessment and engagement</p>	<p>We will deliver bespoke training and enhance staff support</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>May 2021</p>	<p>Number trained in assessment and engagement and feedback</p>
		<p>We will ensure all care experienced children and young people have an up-to-date assessment and plan</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>May 2021</p>	<p>% of cases where practice is rated as Good or better</p>
	<p>Developing a culture of reflective practice</p>	<p>We will carry out an annual multi-agency self-evaluation of practice</p>		<p>Monthly and quarterly</p>	<p>% of cases where practice is rated as Good or better</p>
		<p>We will carry out small monthly and larger quarterly single service self-evaluation</p>			<p>% of cases where practice is rated as Good or better</p>

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
 <p>Children must stay with their brothers and sisters where it is safe to do so and belong to a loving home</p>	<p>Supporting children to attend early learning and childcare</p> <p>Building capacity to allow siblings to remain together</p> <p>Ensuring care experienced teenagers remain in family homes</p>	<p>We will ensure all eligible care experienced 2-5 year-olds are offered a nursery place</p> <p>We will scale a PACE initiative to ensure children and young people progress to permanence appropriately</p> <p>We will support family, kinship and foster carers to have sufficient house space to care for sibling groups</p> <p>We will remind siblings about their right to family life noting the "ABC" case (2019) and the findings of the court that siblings have rights within the children's hearing system</p> <p>We will implement Functional Family Therapy for vulnerable families with teenagers, including siblings</p>	<p>Education Manager, DCC</p> <p>Improvement Manager, DCC</p> <p>Head of Service, Neighbourhood Services, DCC</p> <p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>May 2021</p> <p>August 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>April 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p>	<p>Number and % of care experienced 2-5 year olds attending nursery</p> <p>Number trained in assessment and engagement and feedback</p> <p>Reduced % of families unable to care for sibling groups due to limited space</p> <p>Number of families supported with FFT and % reporting greater stability as a result</p>

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
 <p>Children must stay with their brothers and sisters where it is safe to do so and belong to a loving home</p>		<p>We will implement the Tayside Parenting Strategy with a particular focus on supporting vulnerable families</p>	<p>Education Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>Number of families receiving recognised parenting support and % reporting benefits</p>
	<p>Supporting families with children with a disability</p>	<p>We will implement new assessment, planning and respite arrangements for families with children with a disability</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>Number of families receiving respite and % reporting benefits</p>
	<p>Preventing unnecessary escalation or criminalisation</p>	<p>We will report on Whole Systems Approach for young people in order to support them with their families in the local community</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>Number / % of young people subject to Early and Effective Intervention, Diversion, Community Payback Orders and custody</p>
		<p>We will carry out a self-evaluation of practice in relation to new Secure Care Standards</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>October 2021</p>	<p>Completed self-evaluation and improvement plan</p>
		<p>We will hold regular multi-agency meetings on identified high risk young people</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>Multi-agency plans to support young people in their local community</p>
		<p>We will pro-actively support all young people to remain in Continuing Care</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>Number and % of care leavers entering Continuing Care</p>

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
 <p>Children must stay with their brothers and sisters where it is safe to do so and belong to a loving home</p>	<p>Providing high quality residential care to young people</p>	<p>We will ensure all Children's Houses are graded as at least Good in inspections</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>Number and % of Children's Houses graded Good or better</p>
	<p>Meeting all health needs of Looked After Children</p>	<p>We will ensure all care experienced children and young people have a full health needs assessment</p>	<p>Senior Manager, NHST</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>Number and % of care experienced children and young people with a health needs assessment</p>
		<p>We will provide physical and mental healthcare support to care leavers</p>	<p>Senior Manager, NHST</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	
	<p>Ensuring supported transitions into adulthood</p>	<p>We will develop and implement a new Transitions Pathway</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>Number and % of care leavers aged 17-21 in further education, training or employment</p>
	<p>Supporting care leavers well into adulthood</p>	<p>We will ensure all care leavers are exempt from Council Tax until aged 26</p> <p>We will ensure care leavers are an outright priority for housing options</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>		<p>Number and % of care leavers not paying Council Tax up to age 26 years</p> <p>Number of care leavers reporting as homeless</p>

FOUNDATIONS	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	LEAD	TIMESCALES	SOME KEY INDICATORS
 <p>Listening to care experienced children and young people and involving them in decision making</p>	<p>Meaningful engagement and participation</p>	<p>We will develop a multi-disciplinary Care Experienced Children and Young People's Voice Team</p> <p>Voice Team will develop an Action Plan</p> <p>We will ensure care experienced children and young people are included in plans for all engagement and participation opportunities with their peers</p> <p>We will support care experienced children and young people to be active members of Our Promise Partnership</p> <p>We will ensure all Care Experienced Children and Young People are offered an advocate</p> <p>We will ensure Care Experienced Young People are involved in recruitment to key posts</p> <p>We will ensure all care experienced children and young people are involved in and have an understanding of their Care Plan</p>	<p>Senior Manager, DCC</p> <p>Senior Manager, DCC</p> <p>Education Manager, DCC</p> <p>Senior Manager, DCC</p> <p>Senior Manager, DCC</p> <p>Senior Manager, DCC</p>	<p>December 2020</p> <p>February 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p> <p>January 2021</p> <p>January 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p>	<p>Engagement action plan leading to demonstrable improvements in relationships and outcomes for care experienced children and young people</p> <p>Number and % of care experienced children offered and accepting an advocate</p> <p>Number of posts where care experienced children participated in recruitment</p> <p>Number of care experienced children and young people</p>

Appendix 1

Children Children and Young Person's (Scotland) Act 2014 Corporate Parents

- The Scottish Ministers
- A Local Authority
- The National Convener of Children's Hearings Scotland
- Children's Hearings Scotland
- The Principal Reporter
- The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
- A Health Board
- A Board constituted under section 2(1)(b) of the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978
- Healthcare Improvement Scotland
- The Scottish Qualifications Authority
- Skills Development Scotland Co. Ltd SC 202659
- Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (the Care Inspectorate)
- The Scottish Social Services Council
- The Scottish Sports Council
- The Chief Constable of the Police Service of Scotland
- The Scottish Police Authority
- The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- The Scottish Legal Aid Board
- The Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland
- The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland
- The Scottish Housing Regulator
- Bord na Gaidhlig
- Creative Scotland
- A body which is a "post 16 education body" for the purposes of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005



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