



COSLA PROMISE PROGRESS REPORT and SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES

Glasgow HSCP Update – March 2022

Glasgow's Promise Plan 21-24 reflects our partnership commitment to keeping the Promise. There are 44 named Promise Keepers and 100 actions highlighted in the Promise Plan. The Glasgow Care Experienced Board includes representatives from children's residential services, fostering and adoption services, the independent care and review team, specialist children's services, health visiting and nursing services, children's rights, alongside partners from education, Police Scotland, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) and third sector family support services.

The board meets on a 6 weekly basis and is chaired by the Head of Children's Residential Services and Families for Children (Fostering and Adoption Services).

The Care Experienced Board together created Glasgow's Promise Plan 21-24. Glasgow's Promise outlines how the city will together keep the Promise. It is an honest reflection of what we think we are getting right for our children, young people and their families; and where we need to get better. It embraces the use of non-organisational language as demonstrated in The Promise. The board are responsible for the implementation and overview of Glasgow's Promise.

The recommendations of the Promise and Plan 21-24 are welcomed and are directly aligned to the Glasgow's Transformational Change programme in children's services. Work is continuing within Glasgow, to consolidate and develop a vision for Children's Services which reflects the principles of GIRFEC, the Promise, the incorporation of UNCRC into legislation, and the fundamentals of the Christie Commission's report into public services. The next step will be to involve children, young people and families in creating a vision which makes sense to them. We want families to feel the difference, and we want our committed workers to feel that they are making that difference.

There are a number of positive developments within Glasgow that are directly aligned to our Promise, however for the purposes of national overview we have detailed headline areas that are likely to have most relevance.

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Foundation: VOICE

Children must be listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care, and with all those involved properly listening and responding to what they want and need. There must be a compassionate and caring decision-making culture focussed on children and those that they trust.

- Glasgow HSCP is in the process of employing 4 Promise Participation Workers to contribute to the delivery of Glasgow's Promise. Applications from people with lived care experience will be proactively encouraged. Their role will be to ensure that the stories and voices of children, young people and families are at the very heart of our service design and that they hold us to account by ensuring that we keep Glasgow's Promise – with the longer-term ambition of co-design across our children's services.
(Supporting the Workforce)
- **875** children and young people, and **450** parents, carers and practitioners contributed to the development of our Integrated Children's Services Plan (2021-2024).
(Building capacity)
- The Care Experienced Board have secured the website name www.glasgowspromise.org.uk and work is currently underway to build this website with the help of children and young people. Discussions are underway to progress a #Glasgowspromise twitter account.
(Building capacity)

Foundation: FAMILY

Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together, to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties that get in the way.

- We have significantly reduced the numbers of children looked after and accommodated by 24% since the launch of the Independent Care Review. 988 of Glasgow's children were looked after and accommodated in February 2020, in February 2022 this was 751. This considerable reduction continues as a result of our Transformational Change programme – our commitment to keeping Glasgow's children with their families, in their own communities and at their own schools. This is overall a 46% reduction in the number of Glasgow's children looked after and accommodated since the programme commenced in 2016 (1381 children in February 2016). This is keeping Glasgow's Promise.
(Planning/Whole Family Support)
- In December 2020, Glasgow received a grant from the Scottish Government of £4.2m from the Winter Plan Social Protection Fund. The grant was awarded to offset the impact of the pandemic in relation to staffing in residential services, to support the recovery of Children's Hearings and, critically, to address the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on the most disadvantaged. Our social workers, health visitors and family nurses identified children and young people who would most benefit from a small grant to improve their experiences.

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6,922 children and young people received a grant of £400 in January 2021, and a further 5,463 received £145 in January 2022. Consequently, £3.3M has been distributed directly to families.

(A Good Childhood/Whole Family Support/Planning)

- The city has doubled the investment in Family Support, this has also enabled the Glasgow Intensive Family Support Service (GIFSS) to work to support families with young people who are at risk of becoming looked after, working during the evening and at weekends, in order to address families' needs at the times they most need support. This model is based on the principles of Voice, Validation and Hope – listening to families and respecting them as experts of their own situations.

Validating and Giving Families a Voice

- 100% of our families described the GIFSS worker as a good listener and supportive;
- 80% described the GIFSS worker as caring, friendly, trustworthy, and doing what they promised – they said the worker had good ideas and didn't give up;
- 60% described the GIFSS worker as believing in me;
- helping me to be heard; and
- helped my family to be heard.

'Knowing that they are available whenever is very reassuring and calms anxieties of ever feeling like there is no one to help or listen.'

Responsiveness to Glasgow's Families' Needs

'I appreciate the support from the service and knowing I can contact any time, is a real help and support.'

- 62.5% reported the most helpful aspects to the service were:
 - getting advice/ help when needed;
 - immediate response from a real person;
 - solving problems without involving police/out of hours social work team; and
 - freephone support number
- 75% also reported GIFSS made them feel reassured.
- 70% said they were there when needed and flexible.

'I appreciate the support from the service and knowing I can contact any time, is a real help and support.'

'Would just like to say that GIFSS have been amazing for my son and cannot thank them enough!'

- 100% of our families would recommend GIFSS
- 80% of families reported that they found GIFSS more helpful than other services

Flexible Supports that Revolve around the Lives of Families

- 100% of our families reported that availability of evening and weekend support was vital to them.
- 90% reported using weekend supports.

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'The weekends can be long for my child especially in today's current circumstances. Having someone be able to spend some time out of the house at weekends has been amazing.'

'Everything I have asked they have gone above and beyond and give alternatives, or find other agencies to give advice if it is not something they are 100% on.'

Sustaining Long Term Change for Families and Developing Meaningful Hope for the Future

- 70% reported improvements in family relationships;
- 70% reported that GIFSS helped the family identify their strengths;
- 60% reported being happier and having improved confidence in life; and
- 80% reported less worries.

'GIFSS have followed through with everything they said they would and built good relationships with our family.'

(A Good Childhood/Whole Family Support/Planning)

Foundation: CARE

Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so, and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.

- We have developed the Family Connections Assessment and Plan – a tool to assist practitioners to understand the important relationships for children and young people with care experience, and to keep them connected. Children and young people, their brothers and sisters, family members, foster families and social workers contribute to the plan. This focuses not only on brother and sister relationships, but all relationships – keeping children and young people connected to people that they identify as important to them. CELCIS are supporting us with the evaluation of the Family Connections Assessment – with the findings of this work being reported into the national “Staying Together and Connected” implementation group.
(A Good Childhood/Supporting the Workforce)
- Glasgow was a significant contributor to the “Staying Together and Connected: Getting it Right for Sisters and Brothers: National Practice Guidance”. We co-facilitated a workshop with CELCIS, with 20 practitioners from across our children's services. Good practice examples from Glasgow are included in the national practice guidance.
(A Good Childhood/Supporting the Workforce)
- Our Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's) are responsible for whole family groups in order that they have a focus on close family relationships – with brothers and sisters contributing to one another's plans, and attending one another's meetings.
(A Good Childhood/Supporting the Workforce)

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Foundation: PEOPLE

The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to listen and be compassionate in their decision-making and care.

- Colleagues from our children's residential services and psychological services teams worked together on the "How Nurturing is our Children's House?" project. This is was tested as a whole system approach in one children's residential house. As a result of the approach, young people reported better relationships with their carers, carers felt that they had better relationships with the young people that they supported, there was a decrease in the number of incidences of reported violent behaviour in the house, a reduction in the number of times that physical intervention was considered needed to support young people, and a reduction in staff absence due to work-related stress. Overall – a happier house for all. This investment in relationships, care and love has been considered so valuable that Glasgow is now committed to taking this forward in all of our children's houses.
(A Good Childhood/Supporting the Workforce)

Foundation: SCAFFOLDING

Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.

- Glasgow's families told us what support they needed in their own communities. This resulted in Glasgow City's first integrated Family Support Strategy. A clear focus has been around the offer of early help and support to families with a shift in practice away from a focus solely on risk, to engaging families in a much more strength-based intervention; fundamentally, recognising families as experts in their own lives. Glasgow City HSCP have invested an additional £1.6m into the family support infrastructure. This has resulted in a total investment of £5.4m per year citywide for family support in 2020/23. The service has been commissioned and is being delivered in conjunction with the 3rd sector.
(Planning/A Good Childhood/Whole Family Support)
- Glasgow's Virtual School (GVS) provides support to care experienced children and young people, including those at the edge of care, and disrupted learners whose education has been impacted through health reasons or other exceptional reasons. It also supports learning provided by the current Hospital Education Service and Interrupted Learners Service. It supports the aims of our nurturing city approach and promotes the vision, values and aims of an inclusive school always striving to achieve the best outcomes possible for our children and young people. The key aim of GVS is to return our learners to school by supporting the continuity of their learning, and their health and wellbeing. Continually linking with the host school is paramount to achieving this, including when those schools may be in another Local Authority. Staff will work closely with colleagues in the HSCP and other partners to ensure the best outcomes for our children and young people.
(Planning/Building Capacity/A Good Childhood/Supporting the Workforce)

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In summary, Glasgow has shared our learning with 7 other Local Authorities in Scotland, the Welsh Government's Children's Minister/ Department, Irish Children's Service (TUSLA), Community Services Victoria (Melbourne), the English Independent Care Review and presented two sessions for the CWIP in England. This transformational programme has also been commended by the findings of the Child Welfare Inequalities Project (2020) highlighting our focus on prevention:

“The Transformation programme for children’s social care in Glasgow has resulted in almost fewer than 500 children in foster and residential care, a third of the total in 2016, and a 60% reduction in the numbers of children entering care. A spin off has been a remarkable 70% reduction in placement moves for children in care. These changes have been accompanied by and have facilitated a doubling of expenditure on family support. This has been based on a recognition that services were too focused on moving from risk to removal, rather than on reducing risk while maintaining existing relationships.”

(Bywaters and CWIP, 2020, page 51)

(All five priority areas)

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