**A Good Childhood: Support**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| Every child that is ‘in care’ in Scotland will have access to intensive support that ensures their educational and health needs are fully met. Local Authorities and Health Boards will take active responsibility towards care experienced children and young people, whatever their setting of care, so they have what they need to thrive. (Change Programme, p26) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| In relation to support for **education**, consider the extent to which: * our schools are providing care experienced young people with places, stable and nurturing relationships and opportunities (such as mentoring) to help them thrive (P71)
* the broader workforce and carers are supported to value and engage with the educational progress of the children in their care (p71)
* we are ensuring the consistent application of legal requirements so that children receive all they are entitled to (p71)
* schools are reducing stigma by ensuring that all parents and pupils understand and accept ‘care experience’ as part of their communities and as another type of family (p72)
* universities and colleges are ensuring that CEYP are provided with access to mentoring and support throughout their studies (p93) and that there are flexible entry routes to further education that take account of prior learning and experience, including lived experience (p108)

In relation to supporting good **physical, emotional, mental and sexual health**, consider the extent to which: * CEYP have timely access to mental health support (including a range of appropriate therapies) before a crisis point and without the need for a diagnosis (p51, p84)
* CEYP are supported to build and maintain good dental, physical, mental and sexual health routines and practices (p89)
* Staff and carers stop stigmatising health assessments for care experienced children (e.g. annual health check-ups) (p89)
* All staff and carers are supported to notice and act on changes in children’s physical or mental health (p89)
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| **What are we doing well?** |
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| **What are we not doing well?** |
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| **How do we know?** |
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| **What are our priorities for change?** |
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**A Good Childhood: Right to Education**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| Care experienced children and young people will receive all they need to thrive at school. There will be no barriers to their engagement with education and schools will know and cherish their care experienced pupils. (Change Programme, p28) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| In relation to care experience young people this will be characterised by: * Robust tracking of attendance and attainment (p72)
* Active participation in all subjects and extra-curricular activities (p72)
* The end to formal and informal exclusion from education, including excessive reductions in timetables (p72)
* Young people going on to genuinely positive destinations such as further education and employment (p98 and P108)
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| **How do we know?** |
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| **What are our priorities for change?** |
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**A Good Childhood: Relationships**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| **Outcome Overview**All children living in and around Scotland’s ‘care system’ will be maintaining safe, loving relationships that are important to them. There will be no barriers to ‘contact’ and children will be supported to have time with people they care about. (Change Programme, p30) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Children must be supported to build and maintain relationships that are important to them (p21). Whether cared for at home or removed from their family, all children must be supported to participate in wider family and community networks and to build and maintain a wide range of relationships (p22).
* Where children grow up with those they are not related to, and these relationships feel important to the child, they must be respected and protected (p62)
* The scaffolding of care approaches must protect and promote loving, long lasting relationships (p25) and the starting point for decisions about care must be how to best protect relationships that are important to children (p30).
* Services and carers must support children to understand their birth identity and maintain relationships, including with their family of origin where it is safe to do so (p75). Systems should be in place to ensure that, where safe family contact is not possible, family contact details are maintained for the future (p63).
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**A Good Childhood: Brothers and Sisters**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| Scotland will stop the practice of separating brothers and sisters, unless for reasons of safety. Relationships between brothers and sisters will be cherished and protected across decision making and through the culture and values of the people who care for them. (Change Programme, p32) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so (p19)
* The rights of brothers and sisters must be upheld including notification about sibling hearings and speedy rights of appeal where required (p40)
* Decision making should take account of sibling dynamics and sibling voices must be heard (p62)
* Decision-making and processes should reflect an expansive understanding of siblings that includes half, step and adoptive siblings (p62)
* There should be a sufficient number of high quality kinship, foster carers, adopters and other carers available to meet the needs of sibling groups (p62)
* Decision making in relation to any sibling separation must be accurately recorded and reviewed (p63)
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| **What are our priorities for change?** |
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**A Good Childhood: Youth Justice**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| The disproportionate criminalisation of care experienced children and young people will end. 16- and 17-year-olds will no longer be placed in Young Offenders Institutes for sentence or on remand. There will be sufficient community-based alternatives so that detention is a last resort. Children who do need to have their liberty restricted will be cared for in small, secure, safe, trauma-informed environments that uphold their rights. (Change Programme, p34) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Children in contact with the justice system must be dealt with in a way that is appropriate, proportionate, recognises their age and is trauma informed and responsive (p41).
* There must more efforts to ensure children stay within The Children’s Hearing system (p41).
* Children must be provided with all the support they need to fully participate and be heard in Hearings. At a very minimum, plain, accessible language must be the norm for all professionals appearing at Hearings (p42).
* To reduce criminalisation, the workforce must be supported to behave and treat children in a way that is relational rather than procedural and process driven, mirroring the tolerance and understanding of a good parent (p91).
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**A Good Childhood: Advocacy**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| All care experienced children and their families will have access to independent advocacy at all stages of their experience of care. Advocacy provision will follow the principles set out in the promise. Care experienced children and young people will be able to easily access child centred legal advice and representation. (Change Programme, p36) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Families must be provided with therapeutic support, advocacy and engagement in line with principles of intensive family support, even after children have been removed from the family’s care (p63).
* Young people with care experience must have access to independent advocacy and legal representation so that they are able to access services and benefits to which they are entitled (p93).
* Care experienced children and adults must have the right and access to independent advocacy, at all stages of their experience of care and beyond (p115).
* Advocacy must be readily and quickly available to all families who are in contact with the ‘care system’. Families must be supported to understand and advocate for their rights and entitlements (p115).
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**A Good Childhood: Moving On**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| Decisions about transitions for young care experienced people who move onto independent living or need to return to a caring environment, will be made based on individual need. Each young care experienced adult will experience their transition as consistent, caring, integrated and focussed on their needs, not on ‘age of services’ criteria. Housing pathways for care experienced young people will include a range of affordable options that are specifically tailored to their needs and preferences. Youth homelessness experienced by young care experienced people will be eradicated and they will have no need for any emergency provision or for rough sleeping because options are available and planned. (Change Programme, p38) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Services should prepare young people for a life of independence, self-reliance and stability, but also recognise that, often, young people may need to stay ‘at home’ or return home at various times (p92).
* Young adults for whom Scotland has taken on parenting responsibility must have a right to return to care and have access to services and supportive people to nurture them (p92)
* Older care experienced people must have a right to access to supportive, caring services for as long as they require them (p92)
* When young adults move on to independent living or need to return to a caring environment, all decisions must be made in their best interests and not on the strict application of age criteria. After-care plans should be developed in a thoughtful, person-centred way to ensure gradual transitions (p92).
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**A Good Childhood: Physical Intervention**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| All care experienced children, wherever they live, will be protected from violence and experience the safeguard of equal protection legislation. Restraint will always be pain free, will be used rarely, and only when required to keep a child safe. There will be well communicated and understood guidance in place that upholds children’s rights and reflects equal protection legislation. The workforce will feel supported to respond to behaviour in a trauma informed way that reflects a deep understanding of the children in their care. (Change Programme, p40) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * The workforce must be supported to respond to challenging behaviour in a trauma informed, and highly person-centred way (p85). De-escalation techniques and the use of reflective practice should be used to support preventive practice (p86).
* Services should work to create environments that actively reduce the likelihood of restraint (p85)
* Settings of care must establish a leadership culture that upholds children’s rights and applies the values of care, attachment, attunement and co-regulation in day to day life (p85).
* All restraints and uses of seclusion must be recorded and reported to support monitoring and develop understanding, with a view to eradicating its use (p86)
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**Whole Family Support: Family Support**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| The 10 principles of intensive family support will be embedded into the practice (planning, commissioning and delivery) of all organisations that support children and their families, directly or indirectly. 1. Holistic and relational 2. Therapeutic 3. Non-stigmatising 4. Patient and persistent 5. Underpinned by children’s rights 6. Community Based 7. Responsive and timely 8. Work with family assets 9. Empowerment and agency 10. Flexible (Change Programme, p42) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Preventive work to address poverty should be undertaken with families (p46/47)
* Families should have access to attachment based parenting education (p48)
* Universal supports for families should be easily accessible within the community.
* Intensive, non-stigmatising supports designed to keep children at home should be available (p52)
* Particular thought should be given to how services ensure holistic family support and individualised planning with the principles of ‘one family one plan’ wraparound support for all families in and on the ‘edges’ of care (p52). This includes families affected by substance misuse, mental health, imprisonment, learning disabilities and domestic abuse.
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**Whole Family Support: Peer and Community Support**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| There will be a consistent, national approach to ensure there are places in every community for parents of young children to meet other local parents, to stay and play with their children, and get support and advice. (Change Programme, p45) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * All communities should have supportive, universally accessible places out of the home where parents can build relationships, share their parenting experiences and be supported with their children (p49)
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**Whole Family Support: Service Integration**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| Scotland’s family support services will feel and be experienced as integrated to those who use them. (Change Programme, p47) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * There should be no barriers to families’ wishes being carried out, with members of various services and organisations available as a support team (p57).
* Intensive family support must be geographically located in local communities, with the explicit intention of maximising the assets of the community and community-based relationships. Support must be connected to, or even housed in, locations that work for local families and the community, such as schools, health centres, village halls and sports centres. Communities must have a say in where support is located (p57).
* Scotland must support a model of a workforce learning together, both in a multidisciplinary context and with families… This must involve shared learning across professional disciplines to create a common language and culture, transferable skills and better information sharing between sectors… There must be an identification of gaps in the training of the workforce in some related sectors (such as education, justice and health) to ensure they are addressed as a matter of urgency (p107)
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**Whole Family Support: Family Therapies**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| All families will have direct and clear access to family therapies and specific support across a range of issues, so that accessing support is seen as something that a range of families may need throughout life. (Change Programme, p48) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * There must be greater availability of family therapy, for all families (kinship, foster, adoptive, family of origin) so that accessing support is not stigmatised, but seen as something that a range of families may require throughout life. (p51)
* Support must be family based. Interventions must be focused on the wider family context so that there are not a multitude of services addressing specific, isolated and individual issues within families… Support must look across the width of the family and not simply the variety of issues that the family may present with. Family plans must incorporate the child’s plan (and the needs of all other children who may be impacted by changes in the family setting) and these must always be actively considered as part of decision making. (p58)
* Foster carers must have access to all the support they need to care and avoid ‘crisis’ point interventions to help them continue to support children in their care and this must mirror the ten principles for intensive support. (p77)
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**Supporting the Workforce: Workforce Values**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| There will be a national values-based recruitment and workforce development framework in place and adhered to by all organisations and professions involved in supporting children and their families. (Change Programme, p49) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Scotland must retain and recruit a workforce that really wants to work with children, young people and families and make a difference. That workforce must be supported to develop the space within which loving care and nurturing relationships can develop. (p103)
* Services must recruit people with the right ethos and qualities rather than qualifications. This means a shift away from reliance on specialism to an understanding of the importance of relationships, values and peer networks of support and care. (p23)
* The workforce must have a strong values framework. Those values must be multidisciplinary to be shared by teachers and learning assistants as much as by social workers and prison staff. The values must reflect that the primary purpose of care is to develop nurturing, patient, kind, compassionate, trusting and respectful relationships so that children feel loved and safe. (p99)
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**Supporting the Workforce: Trauma Informed**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| Organisations that have responsibilities towards care experienced children and families and those on the edge of care will be able to demonstrate that they are embedding trauma informed practice across their work and within their workforce. (Change Programme, p51) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * All of the workforce should access, at a level appropriate to their role, initial and lifelong learning that is grounded in attachment theory, trauma responsive care and the clear understanding and application of children’s Rights. (p108)
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**Supporting the Workforce: On-going Relationships**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| There will be no blanket policies or guidance that prevent the maintenance of relationships between young people and those who care for them. Settings of care will be able to facilitate the protection of relationships that are important to children and young people. (Change Programme, p53) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Young people who leave residential care may wish to maintain relationships with workers and this must be supported and given time. Blanket policies that prevent the maintenance of these relationships must be removed. (p79)
* The workforce must be supported to maintain relationships with young people who leave a particular care setting and must understand that as part of their role. (p93)
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**Supporting the Workforce: Workforce Support**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| A new framework of support will be in place to ensure people involved in the care of care experienced children and young people feel valued, encouraged and have supportive relationships for reflection with high quality supervision and environmental conditions. (Change Programme, p54) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Providing adequate time for effective, flexible, day to day and more regular structured support, supervision and reflective practice is vital in caring for the workforce so that they can care for others. (p100)
* Reflective practice (coaching, mentoring, and supervision) must include things that matter to children, including how loved they feel, how their rights are upheld and how stigma is being reduced. This must emphasise support for the worker and their relationship with the child over evaluation of performance. (p100)
* Employment conditions must allow people involved in the care of children to flourish and feel valued, including attention to workload, remuneration, employment status and environmental conditions. (p101)
* The workforce must be supported to work autonomously so that they can make decisions that are natural and thoughtful. Developmental training and ongoing professional development must give the workforce the tools and confidence to exercise effective judgement. (p104)
* Scotland must support the workforce to contribute to a broader understanding of risk including the risk of children not having loving supportive relationships and regular childhood and teenage experiences. (p104)
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**Planning**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| Scotland will have a national, strategic planning process in place that ensures that children who are cared from away from their family of origin ‘belong to a loving home.’ The planning process will reflect the needs of Scotland’s children and young people whilst operating with the expectation that more children will remain with their families. It will reflect the principles of the promise ensuring: Scotland’s most vulnerable children are not profited from; standards of care are consistent; end to the selling of care placements to Local Authorities outside Scotland and; acute and crisis services are phased out to promote early intervention and prevention. (Change Programme, p56) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Scotland must ensure Public service planning and commissioning strategies and procurement are attuned to the needs of brothers and sisters to promote those relationships and prevent separation. (p62)
* There must be sufficient availability of safe, loving environments for those children who are removed from their families. Those must be able to accommodate sibling groups. This will involve robust planning, recruitment and support for carers. (p67)
* Adoption has an important role in providing permanent, loving nurturing homes. Adoption must continue to be supported in policy and planning. (p75)
* Aftercare must take a person-centred approach, with thoughtful planning so that there are no cliff edges out of care and support. (p96)
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**Planning: Investment**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| Investment in the lives of children and families will be considered strategically and holistically in the context of their experiences. The human and economic cost modelling that underpinned Follow the Money and The Money reports will be embedded into organisational and budgeting processes across Scotland. That process will have involved organisations working together to spread investment, align budgets and pool resources. (Change Programme, p58) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Scotland must ensure Public service planning and commissioning strategies and procurement attuned to the needs of brothers and sisters to promote those relationships and prevent separation. (p62)
* There must be sufficient availability of safe, loving environments for those children who are removed from their families. Those must be able to accommodate sibling groups. This will involve robust planning, recruitment and support for carers. (p67)
* Adoption has an important role in providing permanent, loving nurturing homes. Adoption must continue to be supported in policy and planning. (p75)
* Aftercare must take a person-centred approach, with thoughtful planning so that there are no cliff edges out of care and support. (p96)
* There are challenges in the management of places and the sustainability of settings of care, but strategic planning must reflect the needs of children in Scotland’s Local Authorities… There must be strategic, needs based planning for children so that they are provided with warm, relational, therapeutic, safe, loving environments when they are required. (p111)
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**Planning: Information Sharing**

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| **Outcome Overview** |
| Organisations with responsibilities towards children and families will be confident about when, where, why and how to share information with partners. Information sharing will not be a barrier to supporting children and families. (Change Programme, p60) |
| **Promise Recommendations** |
| * Services and support surrounding care experienced children have a responsibility and need to share information and use it to improve outcomes. Information that is collected should reflect the experiences, feelings, relationships or outcomes of the child not just service the administrative requirements of the ‘system’ (p31)
* Processes and procedures should facilitate swift and smooth information sharing (p36)
* The culture surrounding information sharing should not be a barrier to protecting children (p36)
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