

# North Lanarkshire Children's Services Plan 2021-2023

North Lanarkshire Children's  
Services Partnership



# Contents

## **Our children's services planning**

National context	06
Local context	08
Our landscape	09
Coronavirus	10

## **North Lanarkshire profile**

Our children and young people	16
Identifying our priorities	20
Our vision and values	24

## **Our plan**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	28
Voice	30
Family	35
Care	41
People	48
Scaffolding	52



# Introduction

In North Lanarkshire, our vision is to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people, by ensuring they are loved, nurtured and empowered and so able to thrive in all aspects of their lives.

We will work collaboratively with children, their families and our partners to ensure our children have the best start in life and are supported to fulfil their potential.

We will do this by making sure we have the right supports available, at the right time and delivered in the right places to ensure equity for all.



Safe Healthy Achieving Nurtured Active Respected Responsible Included

# Our children's services planning

All local authorities and NHS boards in Scotland have a duty to work together to produce and update a Children's Services Plan.

This brings together our thinking about how we best deliver services and supports for children, young people and families in North Lanarkshire and outlines what we want to achieve. In North Lanarkshire we do this through North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership (CS Partnership).

This is where the key agencies and organisations work together to identify shared priorities and to plan, deliver and improve services and supports for children, young people and their families.

Partners include children, young people and families, key public sector agencies, independent sector organisations and the community and voluntary sector. Rather than oversee the full breadth of work that directly or indirectly relates to children, young people and families, the focus of the CS Partnership is on the shared priorities identified in this Plan for the period 2021-23.

Each partner has duties and responsibilities beyond the scope and work of the CS Partnership.



# Our children's services plan 2021-23

All partners have been active in the development of this Plan.

There has been engagement with young people to inform the plan and young people have directed some of the priorities. There has been collaboration around our vision and consultation on a final draft, engaging young people, agency staff and community and voluntary sector representatives.

Their views and comments led to changes to this final copy that better represent the staff, volunteers, communities, children, young people and families in North Lanarkshire.



# National context

The starting point for all our plans in North Lanarkshire is the National Performance Framework Outcomes.

The outcomes reflect the Scottish Government's values and aspirations for the people of Scotland and are aligned with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) to help to track progress in reducing inequality.

These national outcomes are that people:

- Grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential
- Live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- Are creative and their vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely
- Have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy
- Are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
- Value, enjoy, protect and enhance their environment
- Have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone
- Are healthy and active
- Respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination
- Are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally
- Tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally

Although all these outcomes are relevant there is one with a particular focus for our children and young people; We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential.



We grow up loved, **safe and  
respected** so that we realise  
our full potential

## The Scottish Government also:

- Legislated for a national approach to work with children, young people and families that is known as Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).
- Plan to incorporate [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (UNCRC) into Scots Law.
- Published the results and developed a plan following an independent care review called [The Promise](#). This reflects care experiences of 5,500 children, young people and adults and tells Scotland what it must do to make sure our most vulnerable children feel loved and have the childhood they deserve. [The Plan](#) outlines how the Scottish Government will Keep The Promise.

GIRFEC, UNCRC and The Promise are critical to children's services in North Lanarkshire and will be talked about more in this plan.

Nationally, and as part of our GIRFEC approach, there are wellbeing outcomes that we strive to achieve for all children and young people:

**Safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included.**

# GIRFEC in North Lanarkshire

Based on research, we know that intervening early with families can, for many, help to prevent a problem escalating and can generally lead to better outcomes for children and young people, especially in the longer term.

Most children and young people get all the support and help they need from their parent(s), carers, wider family and community. There may be times however, when they need additional help to develop their wellbeing. Where possible, children's needs are met by universal service provision such as health professionals and education staff who have a role to nurture wellbeing. Within the children and young people's population there is a small but significant number of children and young people who need additional supports, as well as an even smaller number who may require access to specialist and intensive services to meet their needs.

To meet the diversity of needs of all children and young people, early intervention and prevention are at the centre of planning and delivery of children' services.

Universal services have a role to identify and support children, young people and families who may need additional support at the earliest possible stage. There is a single pathway that supports agencies and organisations to work together to assess, plan and assist children, young people and their families and ensure the most timely and proportionate support is available.

As well as supporting the role of universal services, the focus of the CS Partnership is directed more towards priorities and actions that support those who require additional, specialist or intensive supports.

More information and resources can be accessed at [Girfec in NL](#).



getting  
it right  
for every child  
in North Lanarkshire

Safe Healthy Achieving Nurtured Active Respected Responsible Included

# Local context

## The Plan for North Lanarkshire

[The Plan for North Lanarkshire](#) sets out a shared ambition among the community planning partners where North Lanarkshire is a place for inclusive growth and prosperity for all to Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit. These community planning partners are the national and local public sector bodies who deliver services in North Lanarkshire together with the community and voluntary sector.

The plan has five priorities, which will together improve the wellbeing of children, young people, and their families. These priorities are to:

1. Improve economic opportunities and outcomes.
2. Support all children and young people to realise their full potential.
3. Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.
4. Enhance participation, capacity, and empowerment across our communities.
5. Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base.

These strands are all reflected in The Plan for North Lanarkshire Programme of Work which shows the key actions/activities we will deliver. It includes the delivery of 5,000 new council homes by 2035, delivery of the City Deal programme and development of our new town and community hubs.

North Lanarkshire Partnership (the community planning partnership) and each individual partner:

- Adheres to relevant Scottish Government legislation.
- Looks to national strategies, plans to inform and guide what we do.
- Develop our own strategies and plans to guide our decisions and actions, articulate and share what we hope to do and achieve.
- Links with other areas of work to co-ordinate ambitions and activities

Since the previous plan the landscape around children's services in North Lanarkshire has changed and developed. In September 2020 we refreshed this plan to update contents and reflect the Corona virus pandemic. We agreed to postpone our new plan until 2021. This allowed us to reflect on the lessons learned from the pandemic and to identify the broad ranging policy, strategy, activity and connections that support children, young people and their families.



# Children's services landscape

## Our landscape

Since the previous plan the landscape around children's services in North Lanarkshire has further developed. The CS Partnership brings this information together and, at least annually, reviews and updates the information to share across the partnership. This supports us to make sense of the complexities and relationships impacting on our plan and priorities.

These are grouped into four main categories and there is a description of each element.

- National drivers - This includes National legislation that places a responsibility on partners either individually or together
- Local links - these are the main North Lanarkshire Partnership strategic plans and policies
- Improvement programmes - these are the key pieces of work we have identified and are involved in which we believe will improve our services and supports
- Planning, delivery and ongoing work - this is how we currently plan for and deliver our existing services and supports.

This can be referenced [here](#).



# Coronavirus

In March 2020 the World Health Organisation announced a global pandemic in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19).

As a result, the UK has taken measures to control the virus including periods of national lockdown. Public bodies, organisations and local groups quickly responded to the pandemic, redirecting resources and efforts to address the impact on individuals, communities, services and supports.

It is anticipated that the virus and the impact will be with us for some time and we will continue to respond to our communities in line with current guidance. This is outlined and updated by the Scottish Government on their website.

How we, as citizens, have led our lives has become quite different e.g. limited attendance at schools and community hubs, work and learning at home, changed processes to access services and supports, changes to availability of services and supports, online and digital interactions. Many challenges have been presented or have emerged as a result of these changes.

Across the Children's Services Partnership:

- Wherever possible staff have been working from home.
- The reduction in 1:1 and group contact with children, young people and families has required personal protective equipment (PPE) or, in many settings, social distancing.
- The majority of meetings and interactions have moved online.



Partners responded quickly and have been in a cycle of assessing need, reprioritising and developing or adapting responses.

During 2020, we gathered information about the response and changes to assess our own work, plans and priorities for the recovery and renewal. In doing so we shared the areas of work that were new, continuing, adjusting or on hold. We also began to identify the challenges for organisations, networks and groups and, most importantly, for children, young people and families. Reduced contact with those considered vulnerable, digital inclusion, family stresses, employment and financial difficulties, bereavement and impact on mental health and wellbeing are a few examples of the challenges.

Nationally and locally there is research that highlights the challenges for particular groupings such as lone parents, families who have children with disabilities, carers including young carers and those experiencing poverty.

During this time, we have also identified strengths and learning.

**Examples are:**

- The community response was fast and brought the strengths and capacity of the community and voluntary sector into focus as staff and volunteers rallied around to provide community and individual support.
- The positive relationships of staff from different agencies enabled partnership working and a focus on children, young people and families who were vulnerable.
- We have increased our capacity to identify children, young people and families who we consider to be vulnerable and to gather data to monitor the impact of COVID-19 and our responses.

**In addition:**

We have seen a system emerge to identify and support joint planning for over 6000 children and young people who have been identified as vulnerable or in vulnerable situations.

The rapid response and role of the Community and Voluntary Sector during this time has been highlighted. More information and a report about this can be found on [Voluntary Action, North Lanarkshire's](#) website.

From February 2021 there was funding available to provide direct and flexible financial support to vulnerable families. Staff worked with vulnerable families to identify what would support them to alleviate the impact of the pandemic facilitating this with non-recurring funding of up to £500 per child and up to a maximum of £1500 per family.

Funding was also allocated to work to support children and young people's mental health.

The focus is currently on recovery and this is outlined in partner Recovery Plans. e.g. [North Lanarkshire Council](#) We will continue to adapt and change in line with [Scottish Government guidance](#) and national and local research that brings the experiences and challenges faced by individual and communities into focus.

# North Lanarkshire profile

The following section provides headline statistical information that helps us to better understand what it is like to live in North Lanarkshire. This helps us to look at the big picture.

North Lanarkshire is the 4th largest local authority in Scotland. There are six locality areas: Airdrie, Bellshill, Coatbridge, Motherwell, North Locality and Wishaw. For each of these localities, a [locality profile](#) has been created that provides additional information and statistics.

Nine community boards, for each of the areas above, with the addition of Cumbernauld, Shotts and Kilsyth, have been established to support local involvement and community - led decision making.

## Population

North Lanarkshire has an estimated resident population of 341,370 (2019):

- 18.4% are aged under 16; 64.3% are adults aged 16-64 and 17.3% aged 65+
- 2.1% of our population belong to an ethnic minority. This equates to 7,048 people as at the 2011 census

It should be noted that it is ten years since the last census in 2011. The next UK Census in 2022 will provide us with a more up to date picture.

Currently the population is predicted to increase by 0.3% by the year 2028, compared to growth of 1.8% in Scotland. With a decrease in those aged 15 and under (-6,142) and in the working age (-4,330) but a significant increase in the population aged 65+ (+11,466).

This is a concern because the reduction in working age population could lead to a reduction in income (e.g. government expenditure and council tax revenue) and possibly labour market shortages. In these circumstances, inward migration becomes significantly important. Currently more people (+1.62/1000) are coming into North Lanarkshire than leaving, but this is at a lower rate than Scotland (+3.84/1000). The increase is not uniform across all age groups.

Life expectancy at birth (as at 2017/19) is 75.2 years for men (Scotland average 77.1) and 79.6 for women (Scotland average 81.1).



The link between lower life expectancy and deprivation should be noted. These are average figures and vary in different localities in North Lanarkshire. The detail can be found in our [locality profiles](#).

### Housing and communities

Central to the well-being of individuals and families is a safe and secure home. The [North Lanarkshire Housing Strategy](#) (2016-21) provides an assessment of housing needs, demand and provision. The strategy for 2021-25 is drafted and will be published in Autumn 2021.

- There are 151,744 households in North Lanarkshire (2018). 60% are owner occupied compared to national average of 59% and 23% are local authority compared to national average of 12%. The council is the largest local authority landlord in Scotland with a stock of 36,315 homes (2018)
- Total recorded crime has reduced by 20% in North Lanarkshire from 2019 to 2020, compared to a 29% decrease in Scotland

From our Realigning Children's Services Wellbeing Survey (NL RCS, 2017) the majority of pupils were positive about their local area, with around three-quarters either strongly agreeing or tending to agree that they felt safe being outside with their friends in their local area (76%), that it's a really good place to live (72%) and that people often say 'hello' and stop to talk to each other in the street (69%).

A slightly smaller proportion agreed that you could ask for help or a favour from neighbours (67%) or that they can trust people from round here (64%).

The most negative views were evident in relation to the issue of activities and amenities for young people: 48% agreed that 'there is nothing for young people to do in this area', while only 33% disagreed.

### Economy

[NL Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan](#) provides and updates information and our ambitions for the local economy

- 76% of all people economically active are in employment (2019) compared to a Scotland average of 76.5%
- 4.6% are unemployed (September 2020) compared to a national average of 3.5%
- The average earnings per week of people who both live and work in North Lanarkshire is £580.50 (2020) compared to a Scotland average of £595.00. Earnings in North Lanarkshire have seen a year on year increase, but at a lesser rate than the national average.
- In the national [Lockdown Lowdown Report](#) (2020), almost two thirds of the young people who responded (61%) stated that they were moderately or extremely concerned about the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on their future. Over a third were moderately or extremely concerned about their employment situation. The results for the 151 young respondents from North Lanarkshire only 28% agreed that they felt good about their future employment prospects, 26% neither agreed or disagreed and 46% disagreed.
- Young people: Young people aged 16-24 across the UK are the cohort most likely to have lost work or seen their income drop as a result of the pandemic. In October 2020, 3,060 of North Lanarkshire's young people claimed unemployment related benefits. This represented 8.5% of 16-24 year olds and an increase in the claimant rate of this cohort by almost 85% in just 8 months. A likely reason why young people have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic is due to the types of sectors which they tend to work in such as the hospitality and leisure sectors which have been particularly hard hit by restrictions and government policy responses. [\(North Lanarkshire Economic Recovery Plan 2021\)](#)

## Health and wellbeing

NHS Lanarkshire produce a Child and Young People's Health Plan to drive improvement in health and health services for children and young people across North and South Lanarkshire.

We know that

- 82.5% of children reviewed at 27-30 months had no concerns recorded compared to a Scotland average of 85.5% (2018/19). Early identification of developmental issues is crucial to ensuring that children reach their full potential.

### From NL RCS (2017)

- Most pupils in S1 to S4 in North Lanarkshire (82%) assessed their own general health as being either good (44%) or very good (39%). By contrast, only 2% rated their health as bad or very bad. Most children in P5 to P7 also rated their own health as either very good (44%) or good (39%) and only 2% rated it as bad or very bad.



- Overall, 13% indicated that they had a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting (or expected to last) 12 months or more. This is below the best available national comparison (Scottish Health Survey 2015) which indicated that across the whole of Scotland 18% of children aged 12-15 reported having a long-term health condition.
- There was evidence of a link between health status and deprivation: those in the most deprived SIMD quintile were less likely to have good or very good health (79%) than were those in the other quintiles (80% to 88%).
- We are aware of the importance of mental health and wellbeing for children, young people and their families and the need to build resilience to be able to cope with life's challenges. The RCS data highlighted that, while young people's self-reported wellbeing was higher than might be expected, there were areas of concern. Our previous plan established Mental Health, Wellbeing & Resilience as a priority area and this is also reflected in the [Lanarkshire Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#). The Scottish Government have also focused on CYP mental health, publishing a range of strategic documents to support work in this area. Children and young people's mental wellbeing is also affected by that of their parents so holistic approaches are vital in any work we do in this area.
- There is increasing awareness and evidence on the impact of the pandemic on mental health and well being amongst children and young people. There will be information to compare with RCS from the planned Wellbeing Survey in North Lanarkshire in Spring 21. This will inform local planning.
- 27.2% of babies are breastfed at 6-8 weeks compared to a Scotland average of 43.9% (2018/19), suggesting fewer babies get the best start in life in North Lanarkshire.
- Maintaining a healthy weight in childhood is associated with many health benefits. 12.2% of children in North Lanarkshire reviewed at Primary 1 assessment were at risk of being overweight, this is slightly higher than the national average of 12.1%. In addition, 12.1 % of children in North Lanarkshire were at risk of obesity, which is higher than the national average of 10.2%.

### Information Services Division 2018/19 Primary 1 BMI Data

- In 2018/19 on average 9.1% of infants and children in North Lanarkshire were exposed to second hand smoke at 27-30 months. Evidence suggests that children who live in the more deprived areas are exposed to higher levels of second hand smoke. Reducing children's exposure to second hand smoke remains a priority in North Lanarkshire. Lanarkshire Tobacco Control Strategy

### Poverty and deprivation

- The percentage of children living in poverty in North Lanarkshire in 2018/19, after housing costs, was 26%. This is slightly higher than the Scottish average of 24%.
- North Lanarkshire ranks 6th in terms of its share of datazones in the 20% most deprived, sitting behind: Glasgow City; Inverclyde; North Ayrshire; West Dunbartonshire; and Dundee City.
- In 2017 12,470 children in 7,400 families in North Lanarkshire live in households who receive out of work benefits. (HMRC Aug 2019).
- Across North Lanarkshire, 50,897 (15%) people are income deprived, the Scottish average is 12%.

### Education

- 33% of pupils gained 5+ awards at level 6 compared to a Scotland average of 35% (2018/19). This is an improvement from 23% in 2011/12.
- 21% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas (according to the SIMD) gained 5+ awards at level 6 (2018/19) compared to a Scotland average of 18%. This is an improvement from 12% in 2011/12.
- 35 pupils per 1,000 were excluded from school in 2018/19 compared to a Scotland average of 21.6 per 1,000.
- North Lanarkshire has one of the highest rate of exclusion from school for looked after children with latest figures (2018/19) showing a rate of 293.1 exclusions per 1,000 pupils, compared to a Scotland average of 152 per 1,000.

- 94.3% of North Lanarkshire's pupils enter a positive destination upon leaving school (2018/19) compared to a Scotland average of 95%. This is an improvement from 87.6% in 2011/12.
- 15.1% of North Lanarkshire's working age population (aged 16 to 64) have no formal qualifications (2019). Despite showing improvement and dropping from 20.1% in 2011, this remains higher than the Scotland average of 9.8%.



# Our children and young people

**The 0-17 age population breaks down as follows:**

Age	Persons
0-4	18,158
5-11	28,382
12-15	16,296
16-17	7,683
<b>All Ages 0-17</b>	<b>70,519</b>

The Children's Services Partnership monitors the trends in the under 18 population and, for young people who have experienced care until they are 26. In trying to ensure that our vision for children and young people is realised, information is gathered to identify children who are considered vulnerable or showing signs that they are experiencing difficulties. By gathering data information on the population of children and young people we improve how we:

- Identify difficulties as soon as they arise and prevent them from developing into more significant problems;
- Plan and resource the services and supports for children, young people and families;

- Support those who are vulnerable or experiencing difficulty, and
- Are aware of changes and able to assess if we are succeeding in supporting all children to thrive and realise their potential.

## Universal Health Visiting Pathway (UHVP)and Family Nurse Partnership

Information collated from the Universal Health Visiting Pathway for pre-birth to 5 years identifies children with a Health Plan Indicator (HPI) of core or additional.

- Core** - Health Visitors (HV) are confident that needs will be met with minimal support or without additional support.
- Additional** - Indicates that the child (and/or their carer) requires sustained (more than 3 months) additional input from professional services to help the child attain their health or development potential. Any services may be required such as additional Health Visiting support, parenting support, enhanced early learning and childcare or specialist medical input.

The table below tells us the figures for week ending 12th February 2021, for all 6 localities within North Lanarkshire.

	Total UHVP Cases	HPI - Core	HPI - Additional
<b>School Age</b>	449	271	158
<b>Pre school year Age 4-5</b>	3,659	3,044	615
<b>Children Age 0-4</b>	13, 610	11, 306	2,304
<b>Total</b>	<b>17, 718</b>	<b>14, 621</b>	<b>3,077</b>

This tells us that an average of 3,077 (17%) of the caseload will require additional support.

As at the end of January 2021, we have 218 young women enrolled on the Family Nurse Partnership programme in North Lanarkshire. We have 210 children aged under two years being supported by the programme and eight women in pregnancy and the young woman are aged 19 and under on enrolment to FNP.

### North Lanarkshire Education and Families

In North Lanarkshire there are 158 schools including Primary, Secondary, ASN and the Skills Academy and around 100 Early Years establishments. These schools are grouped into clusters and there are 32 clusters. There is also a Virtual School for care experienced children and young people.

NLC Education and Families have statistical information and data on our children and young people in nurseries, primary and secondary school. Attainment is one of the areas that is recorded and reported locally and nationally. It is recognised that there is a need to raise the attainment of children and young people living in deprived areas as there is an equity gap.

The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) aims to address the educational inequality through targeted improvement activity in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in specific areas of Scotland, including North Lanarkshire. It supports and complements the broader range of initiatives and programmes to ensure that all of Scotland's children and young people reach their full potential

Through SAC there is extensive evaluation and reporting to show changes in the attainment gap. How responses to Corona Virus have impacted on this are yet to be realised.

As part of the response, given there have been periods of lock down, reduced contact, home learning and prioritised places available in schools, there is continual assessment and review to identify and support those who are defined as vulnerable based on a broad definition from Scottish Government. The figure is reviewed each week and for the week ending 12 February 2021, the number of children and young people within this definition was 6,676.

These processes ensure we are monitoring the engagement and well-being of children and young people and can prioritise, respond and offer a range of supports and preventative measures.

Children and young people's needs are categorised as:

- **Universal:** Needs met by remote learning and contact with school staff (not attending school regularly, as per government guidance)
- **Additional:** Remote learning with additional support that may include partner agencies. Some of this group will also receive in-school support.
- **Intensive:** Higher level of support at home and partial or full time in-school learning. Support to children shielding.

**Children and young people experiencing care or care experienced:**

- On 31 July 2020, 95.5% of children and young people experiencing care are in a community setting - this is one of the highest rates in Scotland. Of these, on average:
  - 71% are looked after in a home setting/kinship care setting with family/relatives
  - 24.5% within another community setting, such as foster care, and
  - less than 4.5% in residential setting, such as children's houses.

As at 31 July 2020, there were a total of 817 children and young people experiencing care in North Lanarkshire. This is broken down into different settings or placement types below.

At home with parents	<b>280</b>
Foster cares provided by local authority	<b>82</b>
Foster carers purchased by local authority	<b>55</b>
In local authority children's house	<b>34</b>
Children and young people in kinship	<b>304</b>
Recorded as having a permanence order (therefore cared for in either local authority or purchased foster care, a children's house or independent residential setting)	<b>62</b>

**In addition, there were:**

Community based aftercare	<b>174</b>
Supported care aftercare	<b>14</b>
Continuing care - kinship	<b>27</b>
Continuing care - foster	<b>10</b>
Continuing care - children's house	<b>6</b>

**Our child protection registrations as at 31 July 2020 were 118. There were:**

- 7 pre-birth registrations
- 111 child protection registrations

**The reason for registration is broken down as:**

Emotional neglect	<b>52</b>
Physical injury	<b>10</b>
Physical neglect	<b>46</b>
Sexual abuse	<b>3</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>111</b>
Pre birth	<b>7</b>
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>118</b>

**Children in North Lanarkshire, subject to Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSO), based on the age as at 31st March 2021 are:**

Age	CSO
0 – 4	<b>90</b>
5 – 11	<b>178</b>
12 – 15	<b>141</b>
16 – 17	<b>41</b>
<b>All Ages 0-17</b>	<b>450</b>

## **Disability**

We have information about those who link into services and supports for disability and children and young people who have additional support needs. However, this does not enable us to confidently estimate the numbers of children and families affected by disability.

With the introduction of national welfare benefits for children with a disability we anticipate being able to gather this information with more confidence. Families with children with a disability has been emerging as an area that we will focus on and there is increasing research and evidence about their experiences. Our GIRFEC approach is child centred. This means we focus on each individual child and their particular circumstances, experiences and strengths. It is from this position that we consider and identify the supports and interventions that will improve wellbeing outcomes.



# Identifying our priorities

In developing our plan, we use a range of sources, information and experience to aid us in identifying our priorities. We also take cognisance of national strategies and frameworks.

During our last plan for 2017-2021, we were involved in a Scottish Government programme called Realigning Children's Services (RCS). We gathered information about children and young people's wellbeing, the services and supports that are offered and how we invest, plan and organise services and supports for children, young people and families. The aim was to improve our knowledge and understanding and inform the work we do together to improve children's services. The learning from this is referred to in the previous sections.

**Wellbeing surveys** - We invested in research to get a fuller picture of wellbeing amongst children and young people. We undertook surveys with a sample of parents of children under 8 and with all children and young people in Primary 5 to 7 in our primary schools and in S1-4 in our secondary schools.

They were asked questions across all of the wellbeing outcomes - **safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected, included**.

The research asked about and offered a detailed report covering

- General well-being - health, activity, diet and nutrition, smoking, e cigarettes, drinking and drugs
- Mental health and wellbeing - strengths and difficulties, supports
- Social well-being - family, caring, worries, education and learning, relationships, bullying and discrimination
- Place and well-being - community

A brief overview of what we learned included:

- Most children in North Lanarkshire appear happy, consider themselves healthy, like the areas they live in and have good relationships with family, peers and teachers.
- However, there are always children who do less well and there are some specific areas of concern, including substance misuse, diet and physical activity and mental wellbeing.
- There are persistent and pronounced inequalities in some health and wellbeing outcomes among children and young people in North Lanarkshire.
- Poor outcomes in one area of wellbeing are often accompanied - and potentially compounded - by poor outcomes in another.
- Experience of - and engagement with - school itself is a powerful predictor of mental wellbeing.
- Efforts to improve attainment and wellbeing need to remain closely aligned, as pressure of schoolwork is associated with poorer mental wellbeing, especially among girls.
- In secondary schools, girls have poorer mental and emotional wellbeing and are less likely to engage in physical activity, especially as they get older.
- As both age, attitudes towards school, family and their local area tend to become more negative.

- Services are not necessarily reaching the right children.
- Underlying parental attitudes towards professional support may be an important factor in influencing service uptake.

The surveys gave us an overview of the wellbeing of children and young people in North Lanarkshire. We have used this information alongside other data, research and trends in a number of different ways.

#### **Examples include:**

- Information was broken down, offering a picture of wellbeing for each small cluster of schools. This was used to highlight strengths and concerns and informed improvement planning in each school.
- NLC Education and Families Mental Health, Wellbeing and Resilience Delivery Plan that sets out priorities and provides a focus for activities and resources in the following areas
  - Nurture and resilience
  - Promoting Positive Mental Health and Suicide Prevention
  - Mental health curriculum
  - Staff wellbeing
- It informed the review of our approach to family support, where we recognise that children and young people do best when they are well supported by their parents and carers, family and communities.
- Information about safety informed decision to progress the Contextual Safeguarding approach; 71% of young people in most deprived areas in NL felt safe in their community.

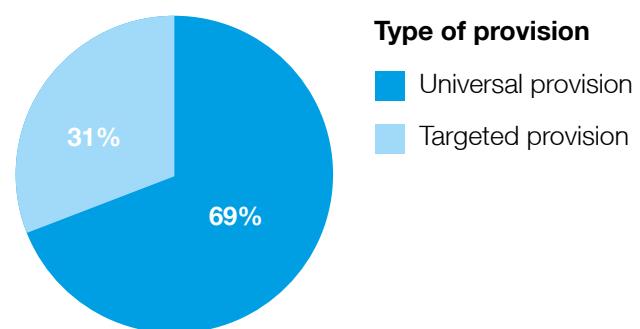
Service Map - Another part of Realigning Children's Services was bringing together information about what key agencies and sectors invest in children's services and supports, the type of service and what age group is targeted. This brought together everything that we do and was organised to show how investment is distributed across age groups and in universal or targeted provision.

The Service Map was the first time we brought together investment in service and supports that are directly for, or relate to, children, young people and families into one place.

Investment by key agencies for the year ending March 2017 was over £400 million and was distributed as follows.

Age	Investment
Pre - Birth	<b>1.5%</b>
Age 0 - 2	<b>6.8%</b>
Age 3 - 5	<b>8.0%</b>
Primary	<b>38.6%</b>
Secondary	<b>28.3%</b>
16 - 18 in education	<b>10.0%</b>
16 - 18 not in education	<b>1.9%</b>
>18 Young adults	<b>1.7%</b>
Adults	<b>3.1%</b>

In March 2017, 69% of our investment was in universal services and 31% in targeted provision.



Although a valuable exercise, it was recognised that there was room for refinements in our process such as more time to gather information from the diverse community and voluntary sector. There have been changes to services and supports due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some of which will continue or develop as we recover.

In 2021-23 we plan to revisit our service mapping and update the information to consider changes in distribution of invest as we realise the ambitions of the CS Partnership.

In Spring 2021, NLC will undertake The Wellbeing Survey. A wellbeing assessment will be administered to all school aged children and young people. The purpose is to establish children's current wellbeing needs, particularly at this time when they have been affected by COVID-19 restrictions and lock down. It will

- Tell us about any changes or trends in wellbeing.
- Inform our direction and approach, school planning and enable more targeted support to be provided for children and young people.
- Be a key element in the Integrated Wellbeing Approach being delivered through the cluster model in Education and Families.
- Pick up on any improvements or changes since RCS and provide us with an up to date picture of wellbeing amongst children and young people

Although research and surveys represent the collective voice and experience of children, young people and families we have also engaged their voice through, direct representation, co-production, consultation and development of online feedback mechanisms.

The NL Youth Work Delivery Plan 2020-22 consulted with young people to find out the issues that mattered to them the most. These are summarised as:

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Things to do and places to go
- The environment

- Youth Voice
- Employability jobs and training

[Lockdown Lowdown](#) The Scottish Youth Parliament, YouthLink Scotland and Young Scot partnered to deliver this survey of young people from across Scotland on their concerns about COVID-19. Results for North Lanarkshire only were made available.

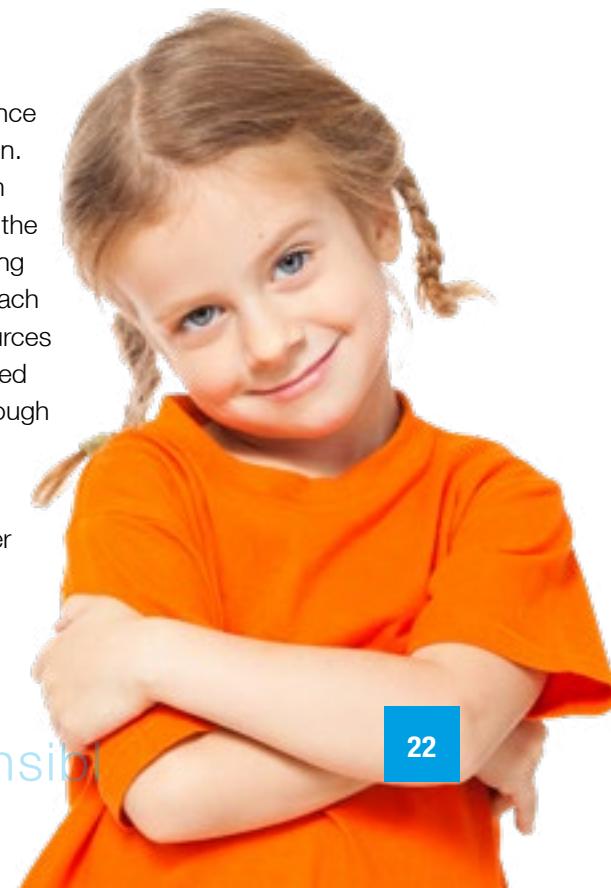
North Lanarkshire Youth Council worked with us to do a survey on children's rights. They used the results to identify actions for this plan. There is more detail in UNCRC Page( Currently 24)

We brought together research and evidence that informed our approach to family support and will consult with parents and carers to identify their priorities in April 2021.

### **Joint strategic commissioning**

Our partnership approach has evolved and developed over time, learning from experience as well as research, evidence and evaluation. We recognise where there are benefits from working together such as improvements in the experience and outcomes for children, young people and families. The partnership approach has strengthened in response to new resources and workstreams. New funding, administered through one partner, has been directed through joined up planning with resources being allocated across sectors.

There are increasingly opportunities to further this approach and to evaluate the impact.



## **Self evaluation**

When we develop our plan we are not starting from the beginning, we are building on the previous plan and on ongoing work. As well as being aware of trends, we also need to know that what we are doing is impacting positively on outcomes for children, young people and families. To do this we evaluate the work that we do using the [Quality Improvement Framework](#) and update this regularly. Although the task of updating this in 2019-20, was not finalised and published, due to the pandemic, the draft has informed the ongoing work and the priorities in this plan.

## **Climate emergency**

We know that young people in North Lanarkshire are concerned about the environment and the current climate emergency. This was identified as a priority through engagement with young people in the Youth Work Strategy.

In 2019 the Scottish Government declared a climate emergency and passed the Climate Change Act that commits Scotland to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2045. Public bodies have formal responsibilities to achieve net-zero emissions by this date and are already making good progress. North Lanarkshire Council has set the challenging goal of achieving net-zero in North Lanarkshire 15 years sooner by 2030. In autumn 2020, North Lanarkshire Partnership agreed to develop the Action Together on Climate initiative (ACT Now NL) to support a partnership approach.

ACT Now will support action to tackle the climate emergency in North Lanarkshire by supporting an “inclusive and green recovery” from COVID-19 which is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable and which improves people’s quality of life, wellbeing and equality. ACT Now will achieve this ambition by:

- working with residents, communities and organisations in all sectors to raise awareness of the climate emergency
- support individuals and families to transition to “low-carbon” living
- support all organisations - including community and voluntary groups and business organisations - to reduce their carbon emissions.

A secure and healthy future for children and young people can only be realised if the climate emergency is tackled. Children and young people can also play a greater role in helping to tackle the climate emergency and ACT Now is committed to working closely with children and young people in a variety of ways including:

- leadership roles through Youth Climate Ambassadors including representation on the ACT Now Co-ordinating Group
- participation in climate action through schools, colleges and community organisations

There is further information on [ACTNowNL](#) website.

## **Tackling poverty**

Nationally and locally poverty, and in particular child poverty, is a concern and a priority. The Scottish Government has set long term targets to significantly reduce child poverty by 2030. North Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership outline the commitment to reduce poverty and the action plan setting out the approach to address the drivers of poverty in Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire - Tackling Poverty Strategy, 2019 - 23 .

The focus on child poverty is detailed in the annual Child Poverty Action Report which outlines the activity and future plans about how we are reducing poverty states how we are progressing towards meeting government targets.

There are close links between this work and the work of the Children's Services Partnership and shared commitments and responsibilities in achieving the ambitions to significantly reduce child poverty in North Lanarkshire. In our own annual action plans, for each area of work, there is consideration given to the impact on child poverty.

# Our vision and values

## Our vision

*In North Lanarkshire, our vision is to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people, ensuring they are loved, nurtured and empowered to thrive in all aspects of their lives.*

*We will work collaboratively with children, their families and our partners to ensure our children have the best start in life and are supported to fulfil their potential. We will do this by making sure we have the right supports available, at the right time and delivered in the right places to ensure equity for all.*

## Our values

All the work of partners and key stakeholders in the delivery of supports and services to children and young people is supported by our key values:

1. Children, young people, and families are stakeholders and partners in the planning and delivery of children's services.
2. All children and young people are included, irrespective of health, sex, gender, ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation, economic circumstances, religion, or belief.
3. We promote and safeguard the rights of children and young people and make sure everybody is aware of these rights and understand what they are, as expressed in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.
4. Getting it Right for Every Child is our approach to working with children, young people and families:

- We are child centred - children are viewed as individuals and their wider world is recognised.
  - Shift to prevention - we seek to identify difficulties and solutions as early as possible to prevent more or bigger problems in the future.
  - Partnership - we work together to ensure children, young people and families get the support they need when they need it.
  - We take an asset-based approach that recognises and builds on the strengths that already exist within children, young people, their families, and communities.
5. Our approach has nurture at its heart with a focus on developing strong, positive relationships between and amongst all those who are part of the children's services partnership community.
  6. We promote resilience in those experiencing adversity.
  7. We work together to reduce inequalities and the impact of poverty on children and families.
  8. Our actions are informed by evidence or contribute to an evidence base and new ideas are tested and evaluated.
  9. We gather information to identify the needs of children, young people, and families in North Lanarkshire, determine what is important, decide where we target our resources, and identify how we can improve.

## Our ambitions

Building on the Scottish Government's ambition for Scotland 'to be the best place in the world to grow up' so that children are 'loved, safe, and respected and realise their full potential'; within The Plan for North Lanarkshire one of our key priorities, shared across all partners, is 'to support all children and young people to realise their full potential. [www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articled=1240](http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articled=1240)

Our ambitions are to:

- raise attainment and skills for learning, life, and work to enhance opportunities and choices;
- enhance collaborative working to maximise support and ensure all our children and young people are included, supported, and safe;
- engage children and families in early learning and childcare programmes and making positive transitions to school;
- invest in early interventions, positive transitions, and preventative approaches to improve outcomes for children and young people, and
- engage with children, young people, parents, carers, and families to help all children and young people reach their full potential.

Everyone has a part to play in achieving our ambitions for children and young people in North Lanarkshire. We will provide a broad range of services and supports to meet the needs of all children. For the majority, this will be within our universal services. Some children will require additional supports and a small number will need specialist or intensive services to meet their needs. All of this will be supported by our agreed Programme of Work and our Children's Services Annual Action Plan.



our children, young people, and their families. Within this context the Children's Services Partnership recognised the significance of the Care Review and 'The Promise'. Whilst focused on how we support children, young people, and families as in crisis, the partnership recognises that the foundations in The Promise apply to all our children and young people:

### Our approach

The partners within North Lanarkshire are conscious of the ever-changing external environment within which we deliver our services and supports to

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

**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 which get in the way.

**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.

**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.

**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.

*Source: The Promise - Independent Care Review - February 2020*

To support us to deliver these foundations we have agreed to restructure and focus our partnership work around these 5 foundations and this plan has been structured to reflect these.

### Our governance

Children's services in North Lanarkshire are provided by a broad range of agencies and organisations. They come together as the North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership Board (CSPB) to co-ordinate their services to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people making the best use of resources available. The CSP's purpose is to:

- Identify and address shared priorities
- Provide strategic direction to the planning of children's services

- Act as a forum for partners to communicate about key developments and develop proactive responses to change, and
- Share responsibility and be accountable to our communities linking to North Lanarkshire Partnership.

The structure to support the work of the CSPB includes the Improving Children's Services Group which delivers and reports on the range of plans whose actions are taken forward through the task groups and linked networks.

The CSP also links with North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee (NL CPC), each with their own agenda for delivery but shared responsibility for delivery of combined actions focusing on continuous improvement and workforce development.

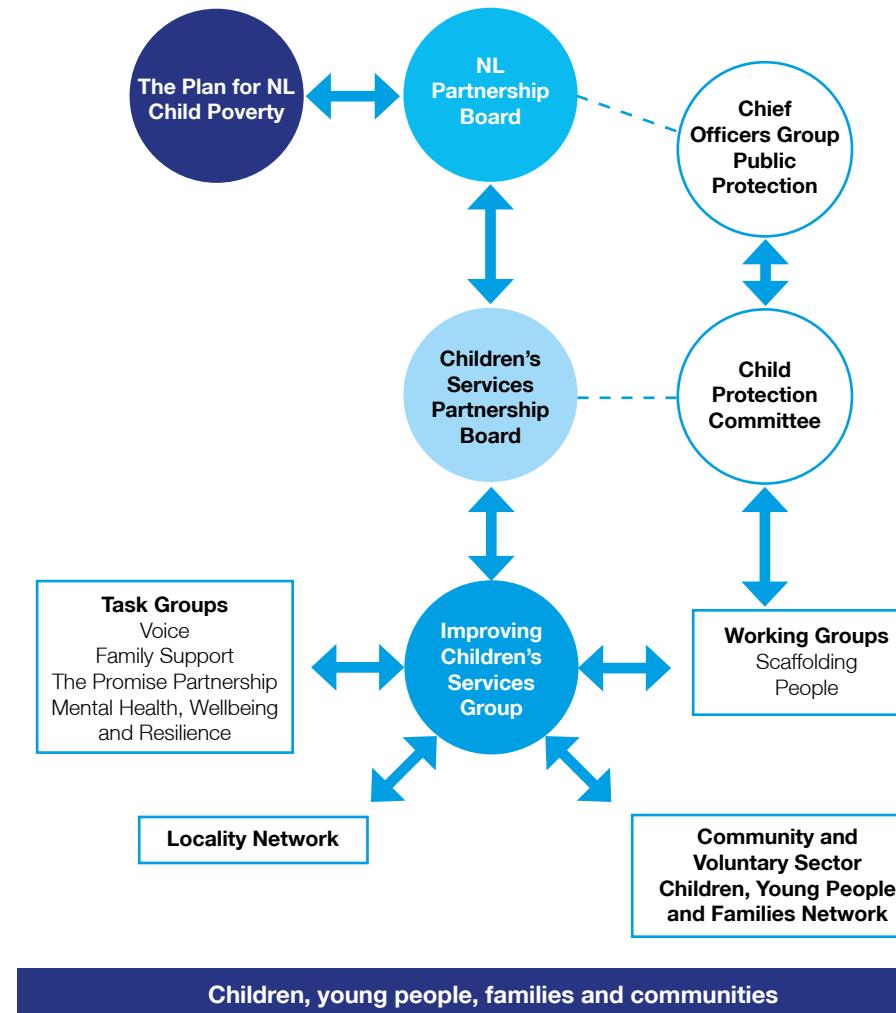
Within this structure, community and voluntary sector involvement is supported by the Community and Voluntary Sector Children, Young People and Families Network, facilitated by Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL).

We reviewed our structures and processes during the term of our last Children's Services Plan and the improvements included:

- representation on the Children's Services Partnership Board extended to include:
  - North Lanarkshire Youth Council representatives
  - Elected members
  - Non-executive member of the Health and Social Care Integrated Joint Board
  - Links to Champions Board and Today not Tomorrow
  - Champion for children and young people who are experiencing care or care experienced.
- developing focussed task groups to identify and take forward a small number of improvement areas rather than working with the themed subgroups.

The governance structure is shown below:

### North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership



**Children, young people, families and communities**

# Our plan

The following pages show what we plan to achieve as North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership during the period 2021-23.

As previously stated, we have structured these around the five foundations of The Promise. In each of the foundations we provide some context and background information followed by diagrams to outline the thinking behind each one. This is followed by a table of priorities, actions and measures.

The section begins with children's rights. UNCRC and children's rights are important to every one of the foundations and underpin and by beginning with children's rights we are reflecting how we will approach the work across the partnership. One of our priorities is to develop our capacity to measure performance and evidence the impact of actions and interventions.

Although we have included measures, this is an area that will develop further during the period of this plan. We have ambitions to improve practice, ensuring that we are integrating into existing and new areas of work, the identification of a baseline or starting point from which improvement can be assessed and measured against.



# United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

In developing our children's services plan we recognise that children's rights, as stated in United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, underpin each of the foundations of The Promise.

The following section outlines the progress we have made towards a rights-based approach and the actions we will take over the period of this plan.

Children's rights are not a new area of focus. They are already embedded into training, practice and professional standards, providing a good foundation to build upon. The delivery of the plan will support further improvement.

## **What do we want to achieve in this area?**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is something that we have worked to 'further and better' as part of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Scottish Government Plan to incorporate Children's Rights into Scottish Law and we have been working on this with young people.

We will develop a rights-based approach to children's services in North Lanarkshire.

## **Why do we want to achieve this?**

A rights-based approach means that children's rights are at the centre of policy and practice. It means integrating rights into policies and how we operate as agencies, organisations, and individuals. Putting children's rights into practice lies with every adult citizen, particularly those that work with and for children and young people. The CSP workforce have a duty to promote, respect and protect children's rights.

In November 2020, North Lanarkshire Youth Council (NLYC) took on a task to identify actions for this plan relating to UNCRC.

We worked together to gather views from children and young people in North Lanarkshire about UNCRC. A young person on their foundation apprenticeship, assisted with the design and distribution of a survey to assess awareness of children's rights and UNCRC. This went out to local networks through social media, community and voluntary organisations and there were over 400 responses. This included a high level of engagement from often marginalised groups such as care experienced individuals and children and young people with disabilities.

The responses were analysed and presented to NLYC. The majority of respondents said they knew that they had rights, but they did not know about UNCRC.

Approximately 95% of those who responded said that adults in their life helped to make sure their rights were respected but they felt only 60% of adults knew about UNCRC.

Knowing about UNCRC is knowing what your rights are and it was concluded that actions should focus on raising awareness. NLYC identified actions to be included in the plan.

**UNCRC**

<b>OUR PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS</b>	<b>HOW WILL WE KNOW?</b>
1. Promote awareness of children's rights, not just amongst children and young people but also adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people co-design a campaign that runs in Autumn 21.</li> <li>Revisit the baseline from the 2021 survey to assess if there is increased awareness of children's rights and UNCRC.</li> </ul>
2. NLYC co-produce a workshop programme, informed by 2021 survey and co-deliver this with staff to children and young people in NL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback from those participating in the programme of workshops including information relating to the numbers and diversity of those participating.</li> </ul>
3. CS Partnership will develop briefings, information and training to ensure the workforce is kept up to date with UNCRC in response to changing legislation and policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% of staff, carers and volunteers who participate in briefings or complete rights based UNCRC training.</li> </ul>
4. The CS Partnership will undertake Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments wherever relevance and advocate and support the use of these beyond the CS Partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of Children's Rights and Well being Impact Assessments completed at Stage 1 and Stage 2.</li> </ul>
5. Policies and procedures are reviewed to further support a rights based approach across the partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collate and share information about changes in policies and procedures to develop a rights-based approach.</li> </ul>
6. The CS Partnership will report to Scottish Government every 3 years on what is being done to further and better children's rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information is published and shared with Scottish Government and across the CS Partnership.</li> </ul>

# Voice



# Voice

It is important that we listen and respond to the views of children, young people and families and this is included in the planning of integrated children's services. Those affected by decisions will be engaged and their views included in decision making processes. We will create opportunities for participation in all aspects of services and supports, from assessment and planning to activity programmes and service design.

## We do this best if we:

- Know and understand the needs and aspirations of the children, young people and families
- Seek views, listen and respond to what is said **individually** and **collectively** and this is included, represented and acted upon.
- Develop and use a range of approaches to reach the diversity of children, young people and families, including those considered marginalised or vulnerable, whose voices and opinions often go unheard

## Examples of the methods and approaches are:

- Looking at existing research and collecting data about what we do
- Gathering views through tailored surveys and consultation
- Seeking feedback about the experience of services and supports - e.g. Mind of my Own
- Incorporating co production into developments and service redesign
- Representation of young people on decision making groups and partnerships
- Ensuring staff have the skills and support they need to engage, develop relationships, and plan with children at the centre

## We will be building on work to strengthen engagement during 2017-21

- Our partnership agreement with young people in North Lanarkshire was an important step to improve how we engage with those who access or may access children's services and supports.
- Youth representatives have contributed positively to the Children's Services Partnership Board.
- A Champions Board was established. This is a forum for care experienced young people to meet with key decision makers to amplify their voice in decisions that affect the experiences of care and opportunities for care experienced children and young people.
- We have strengthened links with the Community and Voluntary Sector, through the Children, Young People and Families Network. This network reaches the diversity of children, young people and families in the communities they are based in or work with.
- A team of development workers will be employed from March 2021 to work with partners to progress our commitment to the Promise. There will be a focus to include the voices of those who are care experienced and the links between Voice and care

We need to improve the co-ordination of the range of engagement activities including sharing information, learning from people's experiences and planning changes with those who will be affected.

We have worked to improve engagement with children and young people and recognise that we need to do more to engage with families.

Outcome	What is it we want to do?	Why do we want to do this?	Actions
<b>VOICE</b>  We listen and respond to the views of children, young people and families and this is included in planning integrated children's services.	<p>Through engagement and participation, we know and understand the collective views, needs and aspirations of children, young people and families.</p> <p>We take steps to ensure quieter voices are heard e.g. care experienced children and young people and children involved in child protection.</p>	<p>There is a co-ordinated approach and a range of methods are applied</p> <p>A range of approaches and methods are applied - e.g. research, consultation, co production, feedback</p> <p>Equality and equity for all ages and care groups. Reach out to the diversity of children, young people and families in NL</p>	<p>All the CSP task groups and working groups engage with children, young people and families in the planning and delivery of the priorities and actions they are taking forward and the co-design of services and supports.</p> <p>Engagement activities and the outcomes of these are included in plans and are reported and evaluated.</p> <p>The team of development workers supporting partners to deliver The Promise gather views and experiences as part of the process to redesign services and supports for care experienced children and young people.</p> <p>Monitoring and awareness of those we engage with reflects the diversity of the children, young people and families we are working with</p>

Outcome	What is it we want to do?	Why do we want to do this?	Actions
<b>VOICE</b> <p>We listen and respond to the views of children, young people and families and this is included in planning integrated children's services.</p>	<p>Through our GIRFEC approach, views, interests and needs of individual children young people and families are known, represented and acted upon.</p>	<p>In applying our GIRFEC approach staff engage directly with children, young people and families and apply processes and a variety of tools and resources to seek their views.</p> <p>The Child's Plan, both single and multi agency, includes all relevant views and how they will be acted upon</p> <p>Information can be aggregated. Themes and learning can be identified.</p>	<p>GIRFEC practice Guidance is regularly reviewed and updated. Staff are briefed and training needs are assessed.</p> <p>Practice and resources are monitored and regularly reviewed.</p> <p>The tools and resources are developed, applied and reported on. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What I think</li><li>• Mind of my own</li></ul> <p>A section to assess engagement and participation is developed and included in the multi agency case file reading template.</p> <p>This is part of the reporting and learning.</p>

OUR PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS	HOW WILL WE KNOW?
7. Through engagement and participation, we know and understand the collective views, needs and aspirations of children, young people and families. We take steps to ensure quieter voices are heard e.g. care experienced children and young people and those children involved in child protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports on the progress of action plans will include information about what was done to seek and listen to views, how these were acted upon and the difference this made.</li> </ul>
8. Across the Children's Services Partnership, groups incorporate how they will engage and create opportunities for participation in planning and delivery of the priorities and the co-design of services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In our annual action plan and annual report, 100 % of the CSP task groups and working groups will include representation of the views of children, young people and families from the target group. This will be through a variety of engagement activities.</li> </ul>
9. Through our GIRFEC approach, views, interests and needs of <b>individual</b> children young people and families are known, represented and acted upon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will incorporate a measure into our multi agency file reading template to assess the quality and consistency of children and young people's views being sought and taken into account in decisions made.</li> </ul>

# Family



# Family

## Introduction

This section sets out the cross-sector developments that the partnership will take forward to support families. The aim is to have children feel safe and loved in their families and to be supported to remain there, other than in the most risky circumstances. This involves:

- Making the early years of parenting a positive experience regardless of the adversity that people face
- More children supported at home through the right family support available at the right time, with clear pathways to support when needed and a focus on preventing problems.
- Supporting good mental health, building emotional resilience, and developing trauma recovery.

The following have been identified as areas for change and development:

**Develop approaches to infant mental health** This requires both the development of a specialist IMH Team to deliver targeted specialist IMH interventions, and a wider system approach that provides IMH training and support to the wider workforce.

**Increase breastfeeding levels** In Lanarkshire, breastfeeding rates remain lower than we would wish them to be with a link to levels of deprivation. The Children's Services Partnership is committed to changing this and to change attitudes and create a positive culture around breastfeeding.

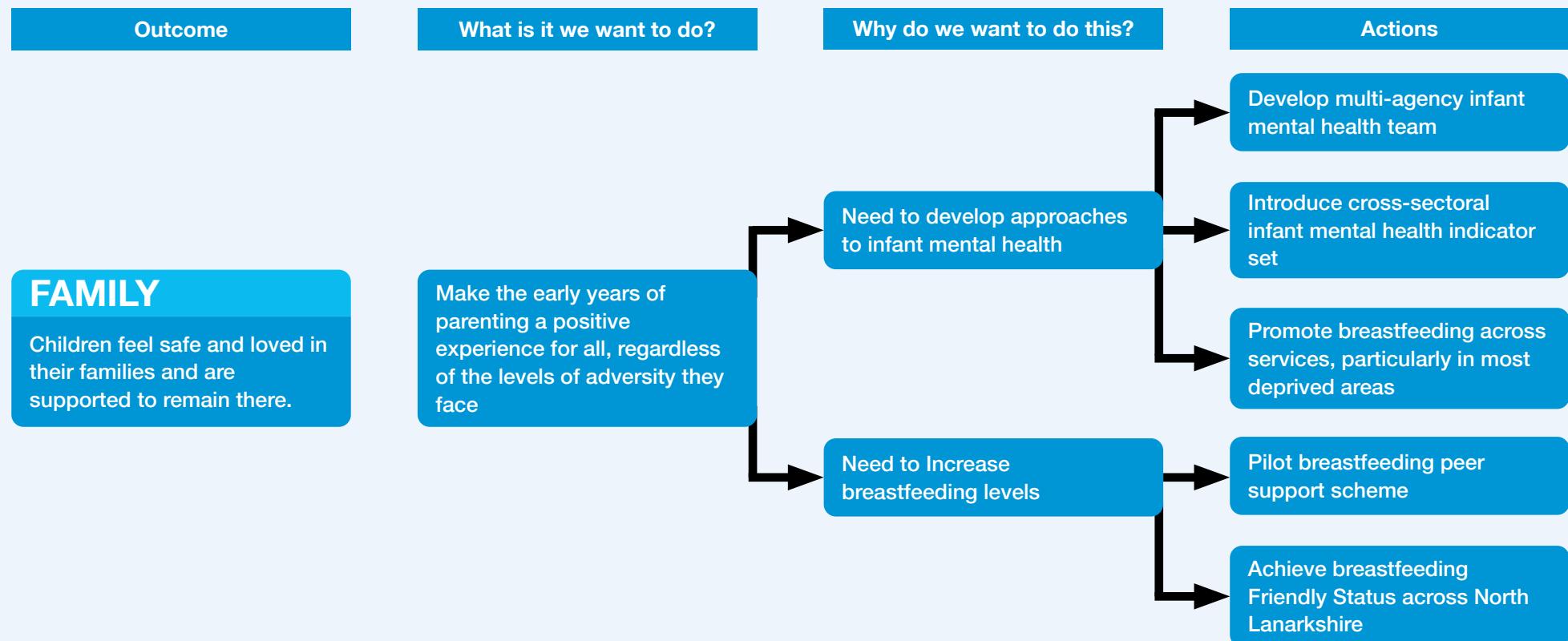
**Improve access to services through GIRFEC processes** The GIRFEC approach has been operating within North Lanarkshire for some years but requires modernisation to develop cross-sectoral working in local areas using models that promote better engagement with children and families.

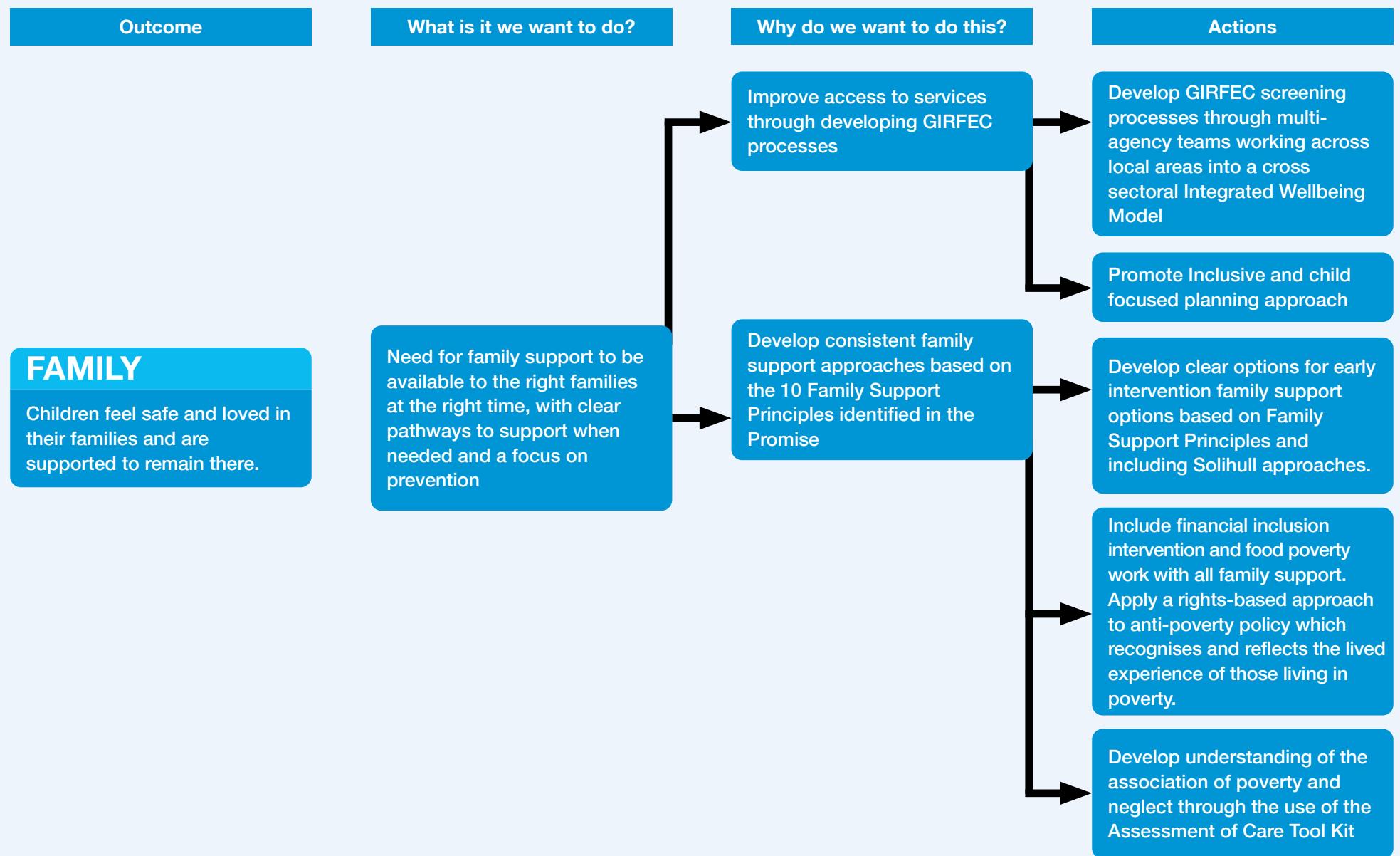
**Develop clear options for early intervention family support including financial inclusion, tackling food poverty and Solihull options** In the past the Solihull approach has been used widely within North Lanarkshire, in addition, other approaches built on the 10 principles of family support (The Promise) will also be used. Food poverty and financial inclusion will also be prioritised. The possible link between poverty and neglect will be explored through the use of the assessment of care toolkit as part of a pilot project.

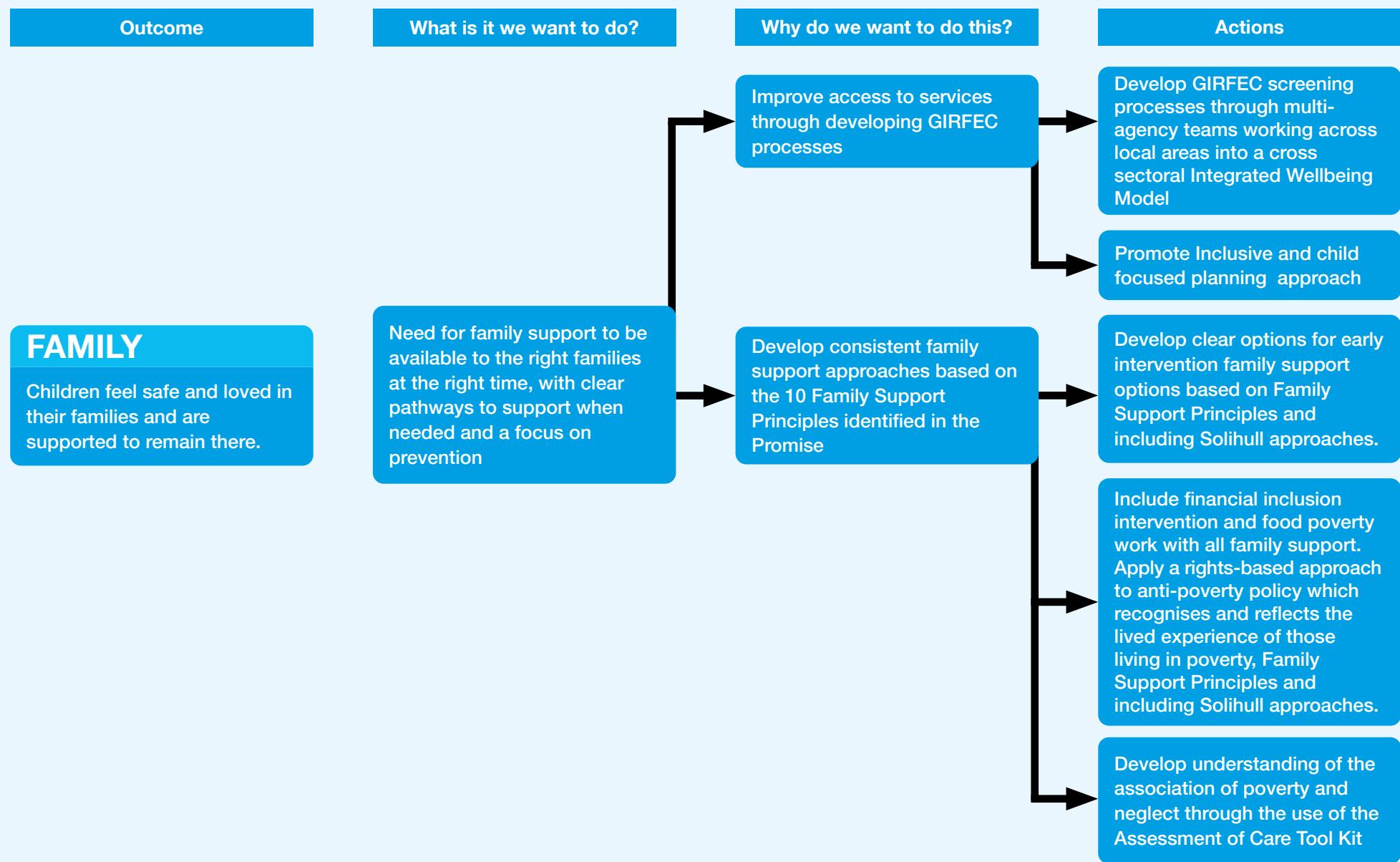
**Develop transitional support options for children requiring additional support** Children receiving additional and intensive support. Transition will be necessary from the early years into primary, from primary to secondary school and from secondary school to post school options, as well as when children and young people move home or school. It will be based on a principle that supports will remain with children and young people as much as possible.

**Develop consistent approach to trauma across agencies** The impact of trauma on children and young people has been recognised for some time. This plan restates a commitment to develop training to ensure that all staff and volunteers are trained to a trauma skilled level while those who have more regular contact with children at the additional and intensive support levels are trained and supported at the trauma enhanced level.

**Increase early intervention to support good mental health** For Children at risk of developing mental health difficulties, a range of community supports will be developed. This will include Social Prescribing intervention consistent with the Better Mental Health for All strategy of NHS Lanarkshire and developments through the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework.







OUR PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS	HOW WILL WE KNOW?
10. Develop a cross-sectoral Infant Mental Health Indicator Set	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of the IMH indicator set</li> </ul>
11. Increase breastfeeding levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of the IMH indicator set</li> <li>• Numbers of infants being breast fed</li> <li>• Number of Public Premises across North Lanarkshire with Breast feeding friendly status</li> </ul>
12. Increase inclusiveness of child and family planning processes (GIRFEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey sample of children and families about their satisfaction with the planning process</li> </ul>
13. Increase awareness for families, volunteers and staff of the relationship between poverty and neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post training survey of staff undertaking awareness training</li> </ul>
14. Provide Transitional supports to children and families receiving additional and intensive levels of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey children and families following key transitions to gauge satisfaction with support</li> </ul>
15. Develop options for early intervention family support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-evaluate family support offerings across the sectors using 10 principles of family support</li> </ul>
16. Train staff across the sectors to appropriate level in working with trauma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers undertaking training and training evaluation data</li> </ul>
17. Increase availability and awareness of early intervention mental health supports based on relational approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of children and young people offered early intervention approaches</li> <li>• Increase in the % of appropriate referrals to CAMHS</li> <li>• Increase in practitioner awareness of the wider community supports and services</li> </ul>

# Care



# Care

The care foundation mostly relates to children and young people who are currently experiencing care at home, including kinship care and compulsory supervision, those currently being cared for away from home, residential care, foster care, continuing care and those who have previously experienced care, including young people receiving after care.

The scale of the ambition of The Promise is challenging and implementation is for the whole council and its partners, who have corporate parenting responsibility, to change culture and mobilise resources. We are aware that the impact of care is life long and The Promise is much wider than care. Family support and prevention is at its heart.

The Promise, demands a radical re-design of services, including those services for children currently experiencing care and those who are care experienced and involving children, young people and their families. We will recalibrate the whole system and culture to ensure children and young people currently experiencing care have nurturing relationships in which to thrive. Milestones will be identified over 5 and 10 years and during 2021-23 we will start work and focus on the priorities identified in this Plan. The priorities and actions are detailed in the North Lanarkshire Corporate Parenting Strategy and Improvement Plan: Shared Parenting, Families and Professionals Together which is led by a sub group of the Children's Services Partnership. Areas identified to work together on include

**Care leavers** Ensure support, advice and guidance for care experienced young people is there for as long as needed.

**Contact with brothers, sisters, parents, peers and other relationships** We need to review and further improve family time and time with others.

**Education** Education is important for both those experiencing care and who have moved on and wish to pursue education at a later stage in their life.

**Housing** Building on established good practice, making sure care experienced young people have flexibility, choice and access to a permanent home, with support from agencies as and when required.

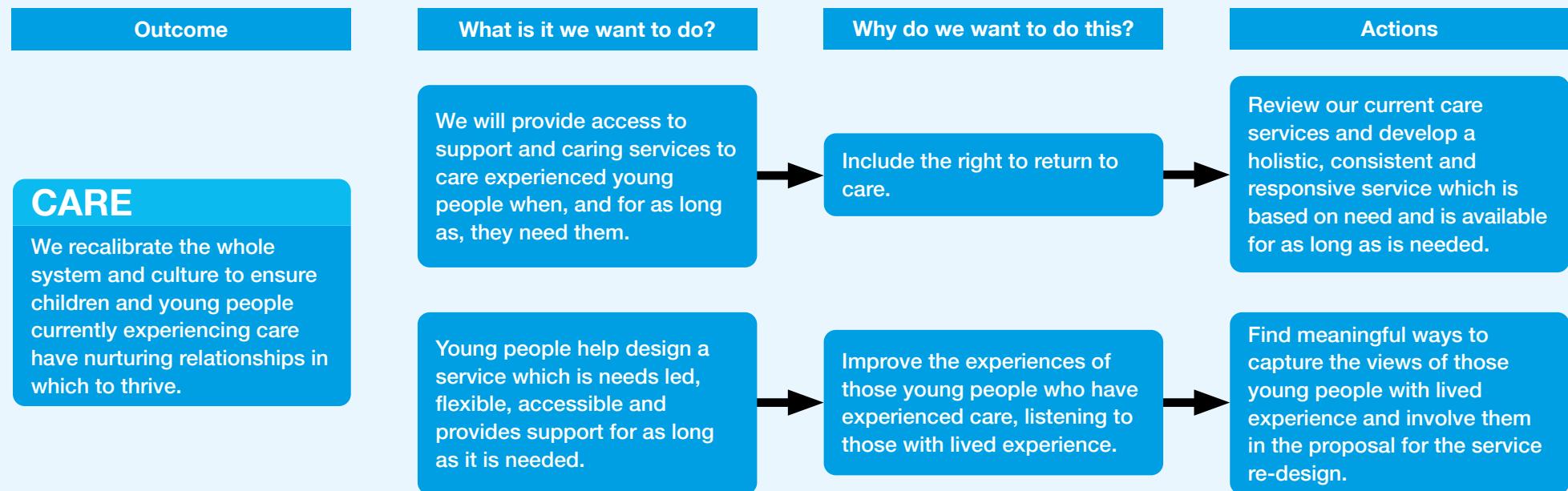
**Voice** Ensure all voices including those described as the quieter voices, are heard and views and opinions inform developments including the design, co-design and redesign of service and practice improvements.

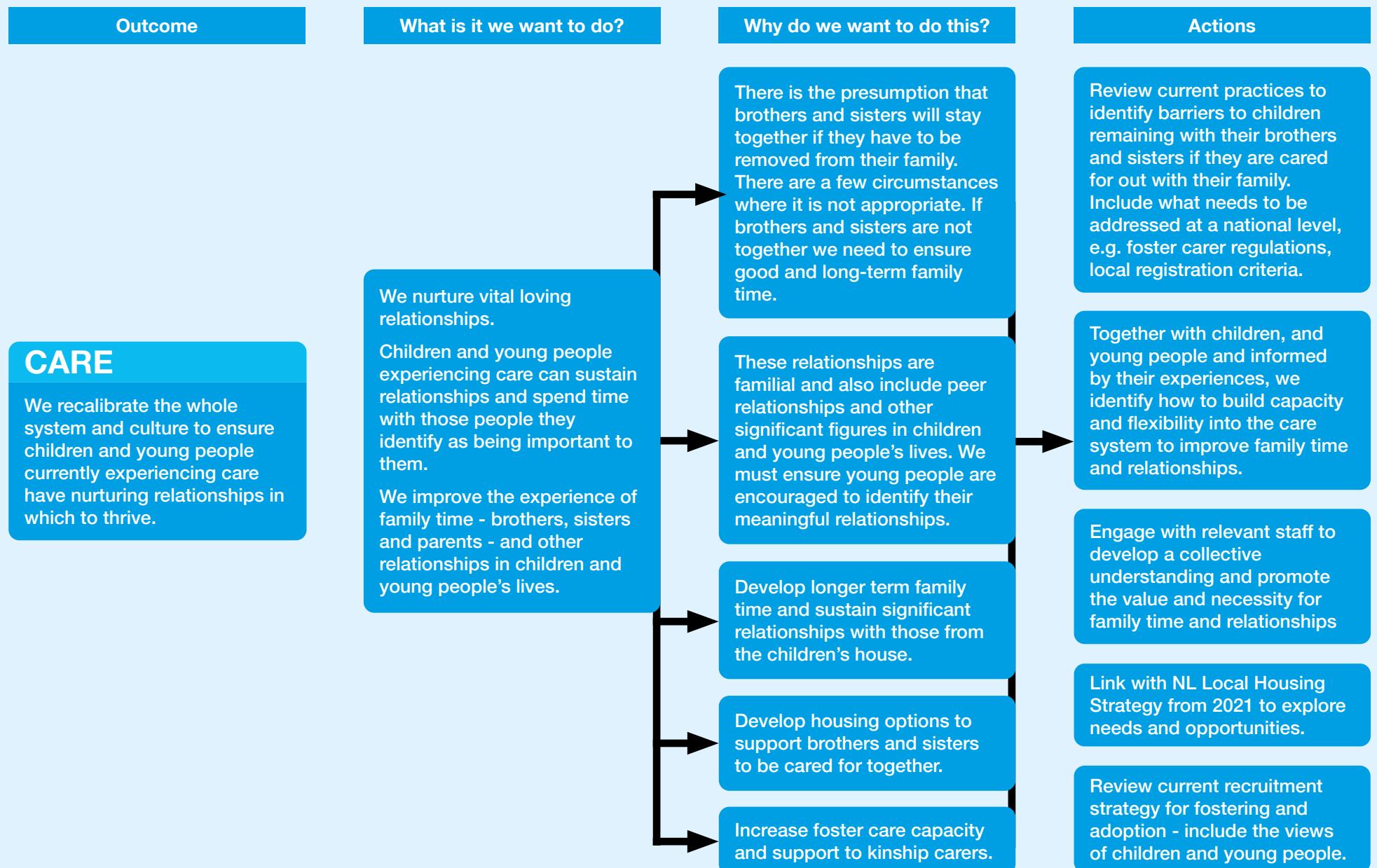
**Addressing the impact of poverty** Within the context of the council and its partnership approach to tackling poverty, ensure any additional support for care experienced children and young people is available to improve their life chances including improved experiences in education and support to secure employment

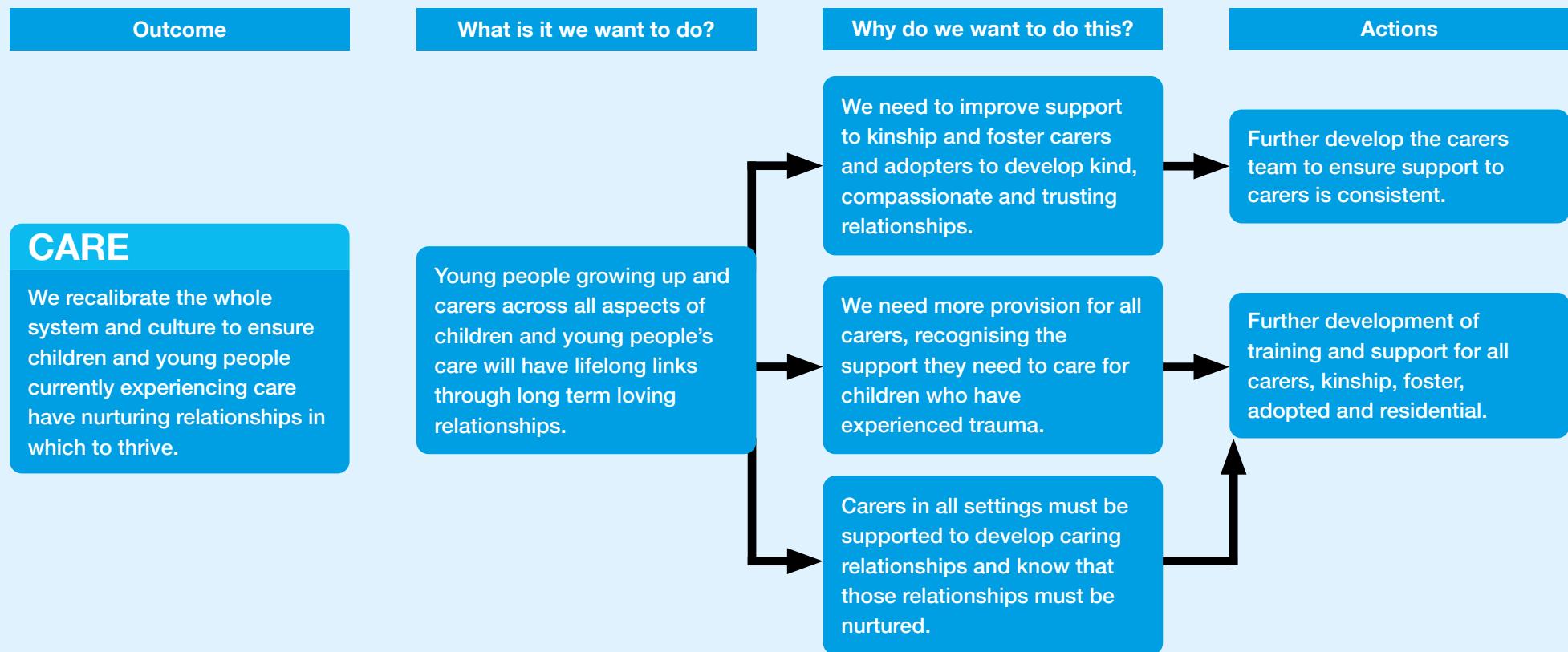
**Health needs** Address unmet health needs for children experiencing care and care experienced young people to make sure they enjoy the benefits of better health and get the required treatments without delay

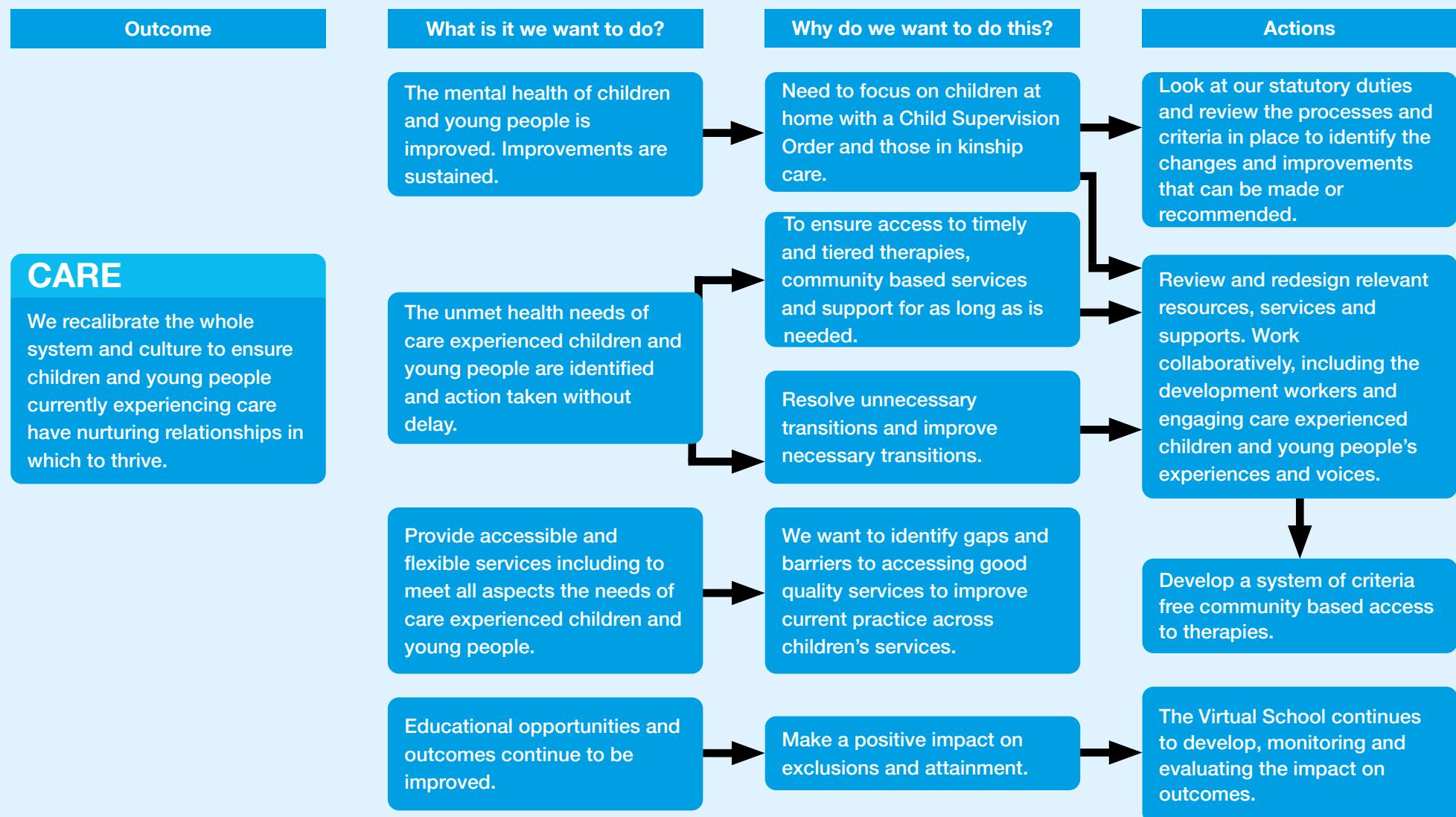
**Mental health** We know mental health across the population of children and young people is a concern for children, young people and adults, for children and young people within 'care' the Promise calls for criteria free community based access to therapies, including family therapy for all types of family including kinship, adopted and foster

**Relationship** Relationships characterised by care and love for all those caring and working with children, building a culture which is not disjointed or piecemeal but a whole systems approach to create an environment where love is possible









OUR PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS	HOW WILL WE KNOW?
18. Through service redesign, that includes the experiences and voices of care experienced children, young people and their families, the experience of care is improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milestones for the process of redesign in different areas of service redesign are identified and shared.</li> <li>The participation and influence of care experienced children, young people and their families is recorded and evidenced.</li> <li>Improvements in the experience of care are evidenced by the measures below, through case file reading and feedback.</li> </ul>
19. We nurture vital loving relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in unnecessary transitions.</li> <li>Young people and carers maintain lifelong links.</li> <li>Increase of those being cared for remaining in their family group, when safe to do so.</li> <li>Increase in number of carers able to offer flexible care to brothers and sisters together.</li> <li>Through co-production the barriers and solutions to improvements in family time and time spent to nurture important relationships are identified.</li> <li>Case file reading shows increased focus on vital relationships.</li> </ul>
20. Services and supports for care experienced children and young people are more accessible and flexible. Support, advice and guidance is there when needed and without delay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through co production, identify the barriers and improvements that would increase access and flexibility. Develop a baseline from which changes can be measured and evaluated.</li> </ul>
21. Improved access to and experience of educational opportunities, health care, mental health services and community based supports including therapies for care experienced children, young people and their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting, evaluation and measurements from Virtual School.</li> <li>Improvements in attainment and reduction in exclusions.</li> <li>A reduction in out of authority educational placements.</li> <li>Incorporate measurement into redesign of aftercare services.</li> <li>Increased access and a reduction in delays to community based supports including therapies.</li> <li>Changes to criteria, increased access, and a reduction in delays to mental health services.</li> <li>All health needs are met without delay and there are sustained improvements in reported health.</li> </ul>

# People



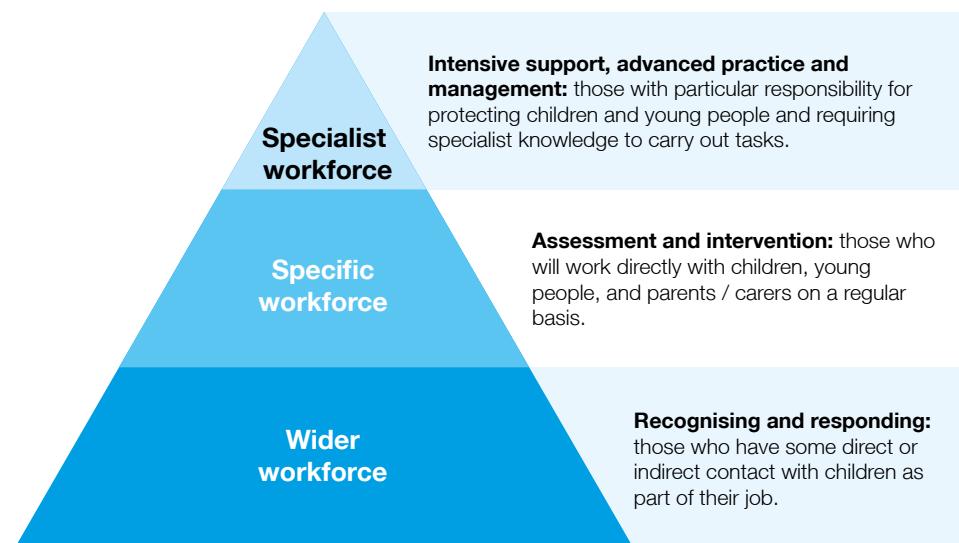
# People

*'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.'*

## The Promise 2020

The following section outlines the actions that relate to the children's services workforce across sectors. The workforce is referenced as 'staff', and this includes all volunteers, carers and employees who have a role in improving wellbeing of children, young people and families. This might be through direct contact or indirectly through a supporting role. It may be within a statutory service or as part of a community group or organisation. There are a broad range of professions and roles, and therefore diversity, of staff across the partnership.

The diagram below details this breadth:



We have identified core competencies that apply to all staff working with children, young people and families and have a shared approach to some areas of learning and development. Current cross sector training programmes are informed through needs assessment and evaluation.

The shift to deliver more learning opportunities online will potentially support opportunities to increase joint learning and training activities. Opportunities include reaching a wider audience and pooling online learning resources.

We need to ensure that our workforce is skilled, empowered and connected to positively impact on the wellbeing of children, young people and families and deliver the vision for NL CS Partnership. In progressing this, priorities will also identify and address challenges for staff and the impact on children, young people and families arising from changes such as working from home and connecting online.

The work required to keep The Promise for all our children and young people is significant and challenging and will be a key area of our workforce development. We recognise there is much to build on and key areas that can be started immediately including changing our language, introducing love, kindness and relationships as key concepts and practices in the work across children's services.

We need to be aware of the learning and development needs of the workforce to ensure learning opportunities are relevant and delivered in a way that makes best use of resources. We previously undertook an options appraisal and now need to develop a joint workforce learning and training strategy and plan. This will take into consideration changes in legislation, policy, priorities and working practices.

Outcome	What is it we want to do?	Why do we want to do this?	Actions
<b>PEOPLE</b>  Our workforce are skilled and empowered to work with children, young people and families to deliver the vision for NL CSP.	<p>There is a shared understanding of the vision, values and core competencies across the cs workforce.</p> <p>The CS partnership increases its capacity for joint training.</p> <p>Staff facilitate and enable the relationships, networks and connections that support our children, young people and families.</p>	<p>Staff feel connected to the CS Partnership.</p> <p>Staff working across children's services are aware of the vision, drivers and key messages.</p> <p>The joint workforce development areas that relate to Our Approach to family support are progressed.</p> <p>There is a shift to increase online learning opportunities.</p> <p>These relationships may be at home, in kinship, foster, adoptive or residential setting.</p> <p>We all recognise that key relationships can be provided by a peers, volunteers, workers and professionals in both universal and targeted services and supports.</p>	<p>Review our workforce development paper, updating our knowledge and understanding of the children's services workforce.</p> <p>Develop a communication plan that reaches to the workforce and promotes the achievements of the CSP.</p> <p>Audit current single and multi-agency/sector learning and training and embed the principles of trauma-informed and strengths-based working across all cross sector training and development.</p> <p>Continue joint workforce development programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GIRFEC refresh</li> <li>• Child Protection annual programme</li> <li>• Nurture- Solihul and parenting programmes</li> <li>• Trauma informed practice.</li> </ul> <p>Link with FAMILY and CARE to shift our language and introduce love, kindness and relationships as key concepts and practices in the work across children's services.</p>

OUR PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS	HOW WILL WE KNOW?
22. Review our workforce development paper, updating our knowledge and understanding of the children's services workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisit national professional guidelines and core competencies to support developing concepts and practices.</li> <li>There is a review of the workforce development paper that includes confident estimates of the numbers of staff in each category and refreshed core competencies.</li> </ul>
23. Develop a communication plan that supports our vision and values, reaches the diverse workforce and promotes the achievements of the CS Partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We gather baseline information to assess awareness of the CS partnership amongst the workforce.</li> <li>A communication plan with a baseline, measures and reporting is agreed. Monitor, report and evaluate our communication activities.</li> </ul>
24. Audit current single and multi-agency/sector learning and training activity and embed the principles of trauma-informed and strengths-based working across all multi-agency/sector training and development activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit complete and follow up identified.</li> </ul>
<p>25. Continue to deliver current joint workforce development programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GIRFEC refresh</li> <li>Child Protection</li> <li>Nurture - Solihul and parenting programmes</li> <li>Trauma informed practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring and reporting of activity.</li> <li>Evaluation of programmes including impact evaluation.</li> </ul>
26. Change our language and introduce love, kindness and relationships as key concepts and practices in the work across children's services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflective feedback incorporated into planning cycle. The shift in language is apparent in meetings, conversations and relevant plans and papers.</li> </ul>

# Scaffolding



# 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.'*

## The Promise 2020

The challenge presented here requires leadership and coordination at both a national and local level. As in other areas, the change is significant and will extend beyond the period of this Plan. We look to the Scottish Government to make changes to the 'complex legislative and policy framework' for children's services. Changes that result in a landscape that is less cluttered and systems that are simplified and uphold rights.

Locally, during the lifetime of this plan we will work together to develop our own framework and ambitions to realise our vision. We want to ensure that our governance, culture, systems and processes empower staff to support children, young people and families to realise our shared vision. We have begun this by refreshing our vision in collaboration with young people and other stakeholders.

Getting it Right for Every Child, the national approach designed to improve outcomes and supporting wellbeing of our children, is the approach we have embedded across all partners and we continue develop and improve this approach. We work towards achieving the wellbeing outcomes for children and young people: safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving responsible, respected, included.

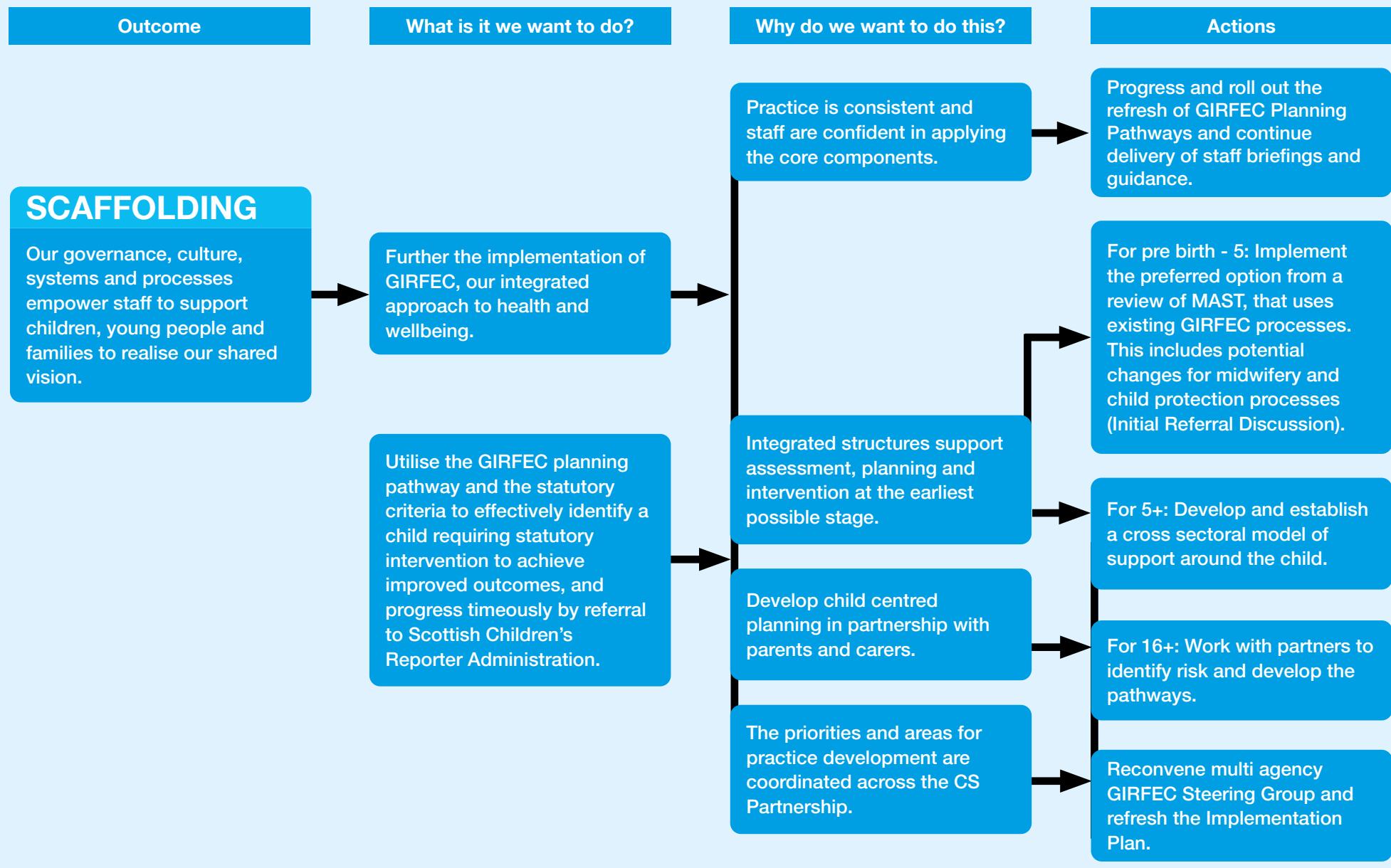
Also part of our scaffolding supporting what we do are:

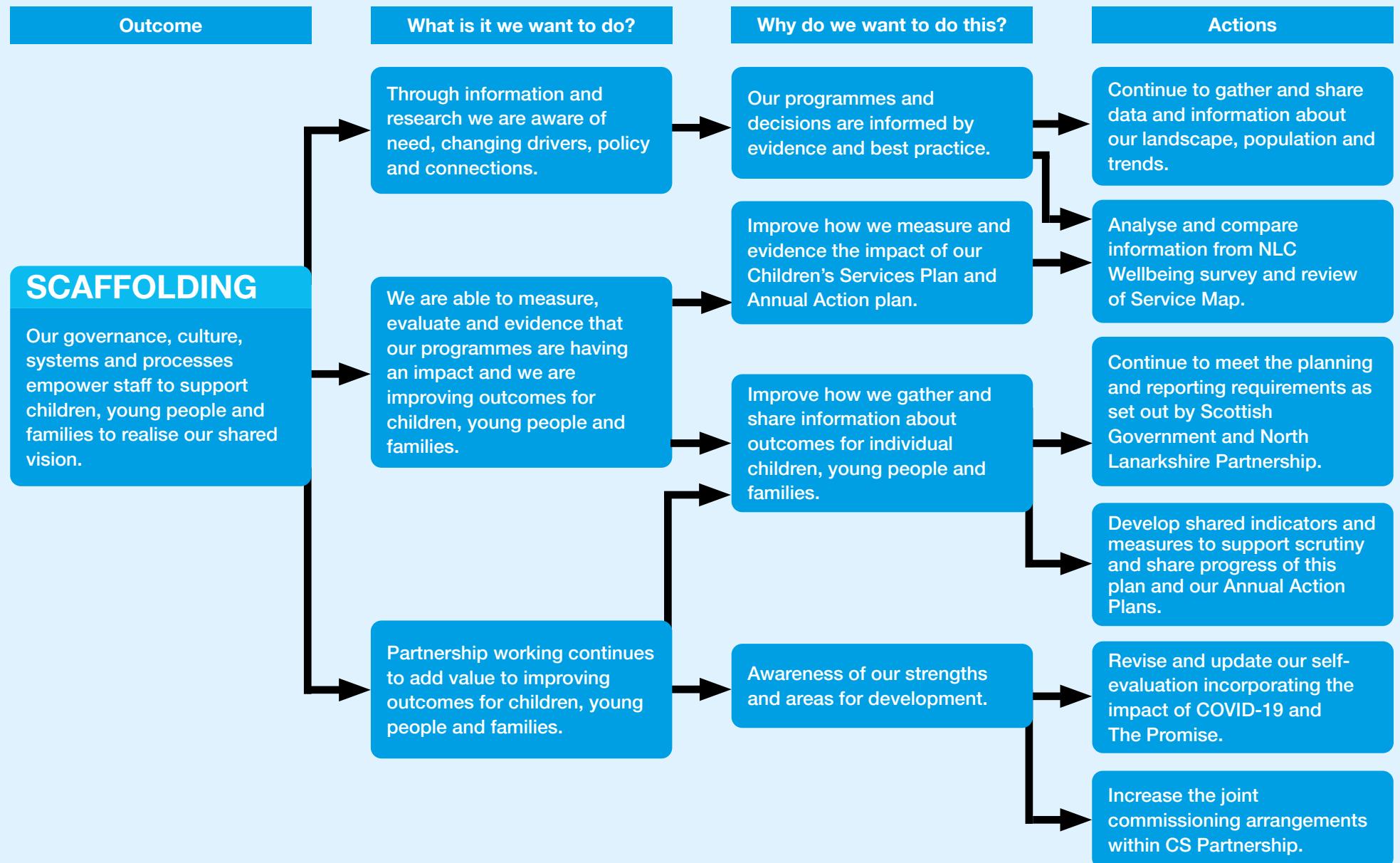
- Children's rights, (refer to page - currently P24)
- Strengths- based practice
- Working with partners through Towards a Fairer North Lanarkshire, Tackling Poverty Strategy to mitigate the impacts of poverty
- Nurture and resilience and how we work together to promote attachment and develop trauma informed practice (refer to page - currently P30 - 33)

We recognise another area for development is how we gather knowledge and understanding of the impact of the services, supports and activities across the partnership. What were the outcomes and did the work we did together make a meaningful difference for children, young people and families?

Continuous improvement is not new and there is much in place such as self-evaluation, gathering of data, seeking views and feedback. There is however much to be improved. Over the duration of this plan we will develop our performance management and quality improvement framework.

This will be brought together into a dashboard which will be refined and developed in the longer term. In our existing work, and as we approach redesign and new areas of work, we will consider our starting point or baseline and build in evaluative measures and processes. We will find out what matters from the perspective of children, young people and families and build our measures of success from this.





OUR PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS	HOW WILL WE KNOW?
27. Further the implementation of GIRFEC, our integrated approach to health and wellbeing. Utilise the GIRFEC planning pathway to identify support needs at the earliest possible stage, including those requiring statutory intervention, to achieve improved outcomes, and progress timeously by referral to Scottish Children's Reporter Administration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate into performance framework dashboard quantitative indicators and qualitative information from Universal Health Visiting Pathway, pre-5 and school age multi agency meetings and Scottish Children's Reporter Administration.</li> </ul>
28. Through information and research, we are aware of need, changing drivers, policy and connections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint strategic needs assessment is integrated as part of our continuous improvement framework, is evident in the work across the Children's Services Partnership and is documented in our self-evaluation.</li> <li>Annual review and update of Landscape summary and descriptors document.</li> </ul>
29. We are able to measure, evaluate and evidence that our programmes are having an impact and we are improving outcomes for children, young people and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We develop our performance information and continuous improvement framework.</li> <li>There is a dashboard on measures produced by June 2021 that is developed during the period of the Children's Services Plan 2021-23.</li> </ul>
30. Develop our practice to better integrate performance and measurement into planning and review of our workstreams. Staff engage with performance information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflective feedback is incorporated into our planning cycle with reference to agendas, minutes, planning and evaluation.</li> </ul>

**List of partners:**

North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership  
Care Experienced Champion  
Community and Voluntary Sector, Children, Young People and Families Network  
Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire  
NHS Lanarkshire  
North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee  
North Lanarkshire Council  
North Lanarkshire Youth Council  
Police Scotland  
Scottish Children's Reporter Administration  
Scottish Fire and Rescue  
Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire

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