



Annual Report
2021/2022
and
Business Plan
2022/2023



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preface

Des Murray, Chair
North Lanarkshire Chief Officer Group Public Protection

Welcome to the North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee (CPC) Annual Report covering the period 1st August 2021 - 31st July 2022 and the Business Plan which covers the period 1st August 2022 – 31st July 2023. The report reflects our achievements and developments during the year 2021/22 and the business plan sets out the key priorities for the committee in 2022/23.

As Chair of the Public Protection Chief Officers' Group, I would like to thank my fellow chief officers in health and police services for their support in taking forward this challenging and complex agenda. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our current Independent Chair and Child Protection Committee members for their commitment to adapting, sustaining and improving our partnership's work to protect children through a very difficult period.

Within North Lanarkshire child protection is viewed within the wider context of children's services. Our shared priorities across the planning partnerships includes supporting children and young people's mental health and addressing poverty and neglect.

We have continued to implement our new structures within Education and Families to support greater integration across our schools and communities. This is designed to provide support to children and their families at the earliest opportunity. In the year ahead we will continue to work in tandem with our partners to provide support to children and their families.

On behalf of the Chief Officers Public Protection, I endorse this, my fourth CPC annual report and business plan.





foreword

Marian Martin, Independent Chair,
North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee

I am pleased to present the latest Annual Report and Business Plan for North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee (CPC.) In the past year responding to the pressures of the Covid-19 pandemic has been a major focus of our work throughout 2022 even as we planned and implemented steps towards recovery. When we entered the first period of lockdown, none of us predicted that more than 2 years later we would still be experiencing high levels of Covid 19 with the resulting pressures of high demand for public services and high levels of staff absences across all public services. These pressures have been made worse by the effects of a war in Europe and the worst cost of living crisis for decades.

Ensuring that the most vulnerable children remain visible to staff across services and continue to receive appropriate support remains a priority for all services. Procedures and guidance have been refreshed or introduced to address the impact of working with families during the pandemic. A national data set known as the SOLACE data set was introduced on a weekly basis by Scottish Government to allow interrogation of the contact maintained by professionals with children and young people at risk of harm. Meetings continue on digital platforms which maximises attendance and there have been significant improvements in the range and sophistication of digital platforms and in the digital skills and experience of attendees. Awareness raising campaigns designed to enlist the help of the public in looking out for children were refreshed and continued during the past year. While the Public Protection Newsletter reverted to a monthly edition it continues to disseminate information, advice and helpful links to resources.

The publication by the Scottish Government of the new National guidance for child protection in Scotland in September 2021 together with guidance on the conduct of Learning Reviews has shaped our work over the last year and will continue to influence our workplan for the coming year. This is a major programme of change which the government advises should be implemented within a period of two years. The publication of the revised guidance is a major step in the national Child Protection Improvement Programme (CPIP) which began in 2016. The programme also focuses on the leadership of child protection work across the partnership and

in disseminating learning from case reviews. There are planned revisions to the existing Minimum Data Set adopted by the CPC in 2020 as part of the CPIP programme to enhance management information. Our work continues to be undertaken in partnership with colleagues in the national and regional child protection forums.

Strong partnership working continues to deliver good outcomes for the most vulnerable children in North Lanarkshire. The Child Protection Committee has close working ties with the other public protection groups within North Lanarkshire including the Adult Protection Committee (APC), the Violence Against Women Working Group, and MAPPA. We also work closely with the Child Protection Committee of South Lanarkshire. This close working ensures we minimise duplication of effort and realise the benefits of a shared approach to continuous improvement of public services.

As with the previous year there has been a focus on case reviews during the past year. Repeated delays in court proceedings as well as the impact of the pandemic on staff has meant that one review initiated in 2018 has not yet been fully concluded. Both the initial consideration of the case and a comprehensive interim report has allowed us to take forward improvements in advance of concluding the review. Although some quality assurance work has been scaled back this year as a result of the pandemic, we have undertaken smaller audits. We have published refreshed Inter-agency Referral Discussion (IRD) guidance and continue to monitor the involvement of health and education colleagues in child protection discussions and decisions. We have reviewed and refreshed our workforce learning and development programme which is now delivered on digital platforms.

The Annual Report contains both national and local child protection performance and management information. We continue to develop the management information we hold within the Child Protection Committee. Such information helps us to identify trends, and practice issues and allows for comparison over time and with other local authorities. It provides us with evidence to support or review our policies and procedures and lets us see whether we are making a difference to the lives of children in North Lanarkshire.

annual report

Introduction

North Lanarkshire's Child Protection Annual Reports provide details on the achievements and areas of improvement of the North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee (Child Protection Committee). The report covers the period from 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022. It summarises the Child Protection Committee's key achievements during that time supported by data analysis in relation to the work of the Child Protection Committee providing a context to the work that has been undertaken. The report will also detail our future plans for the year ahead August 2022- July 2023.

As part of our continued commitment to the environment we do not routinely print our Annual Report. You can read the report online at [Child protection | North Lanarkshire Council](#). Should you require a paper copy these are available on request via the contact details listed below: -

North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee, E-mail: ChildProtectComm@northlan.gov.uk



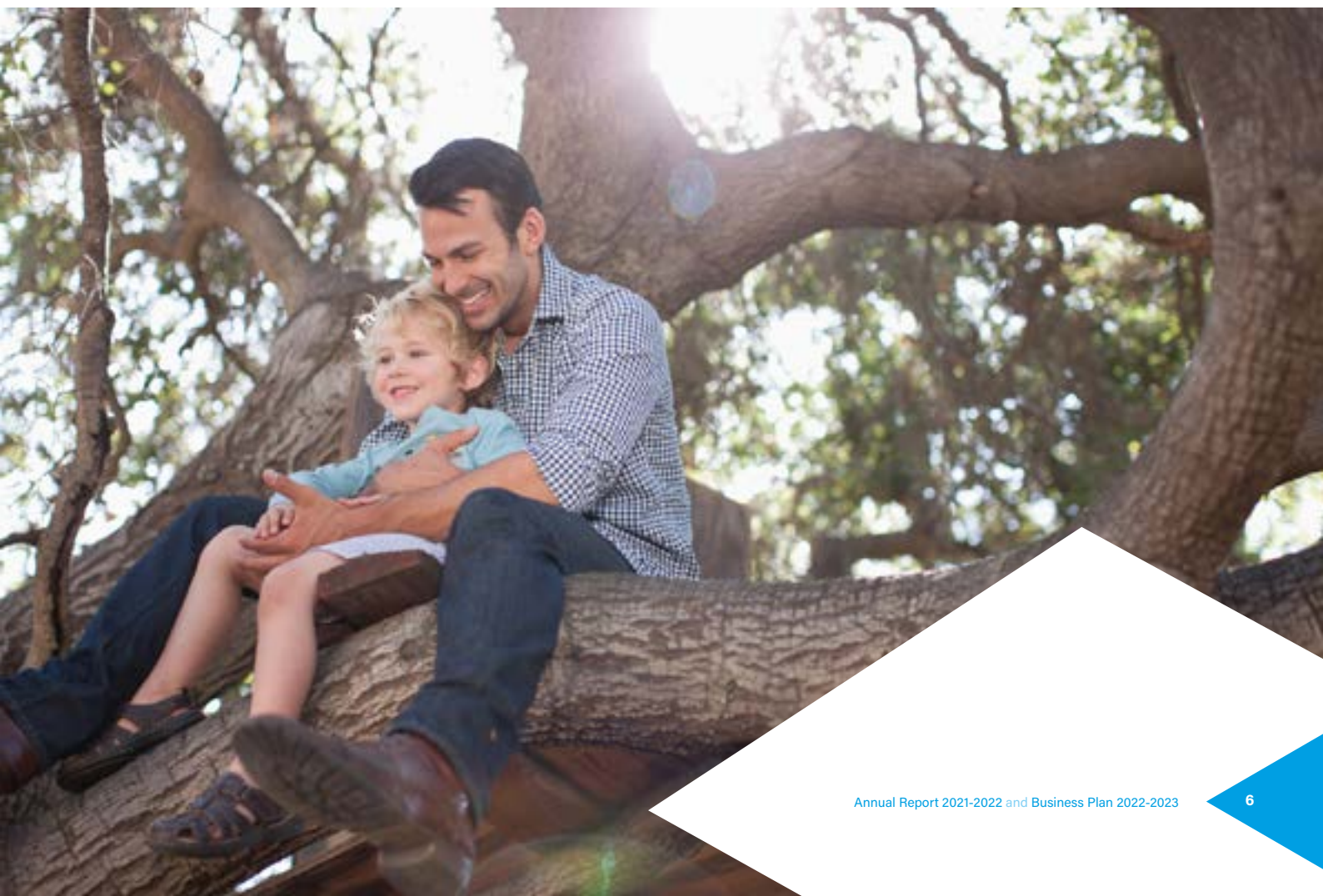
Our Aim for Child Protection

Scotland has an ambition to be the best place in the world to grow up so that children are loved, safe and respected and realise their full potential. As a Child Protection Committee we fully support and work towards achieving this.

Within North Lanarkshire our Child Protection Committee vision is:

“All children and young people in North Lanarkshire have the right to be cared for and protected from abuse and harm in a safe environment in which their rights are respected”

To achieve our aim, we have representatives from all sectors involved in the protection of children and we work collaboratively with our colleagues to achieve our nine high level outcomes. These reflect our vision and values and the core functions of a Child Protection Committee and are outlined in our Business Plan.



Child Protection Improvement Programme

The Child Protection Improvement Programme for Scotland was established by Scottish Government in February 2016 to help deliver the national vision for a child protection system that keeps children safer from abuse and neglect by placing the wellbeing of Scotland's children at the heart of everything it does.

Scottish Government is working with national and local partners including Child Protection Committees to drive improvement across the work streams. This has included the publication of National Child Protection Guidance which launched in September 2021. There is an emphasis on increasing participation and engagement of children, young people and their families which is weaved through the guidance. The improvement plan included the development and implementation of a national minimum data set. North Lanarkshire CPC was an early adopter of this data set. The guidance also details improved approaches to Joint Investigative Interviews of children involved in child protection proceedings. In Lanarkshire we have been part of the national pilot for the Child Interview Model for Joint Investigative interviewing and our JII team received the comprehensive training programme for interviewers of child victims and witnesses. Further details on the national pilot are available here

<https://www.cosla.gov.uk/about-cosla/our-teams/children-and-young-people/joint-investigative-interviews-of-child-victims-and-witnesses>



Other National Drivers

Child Protection activity across North Lanarkshire takes place within a national context which includes the child protection national guidance, GIRFEC, The Promise and incorporation of UNCRC. Our local approach strives to ensure that the protection of children involves early intervention, so that families receive support when it is needed in line with the Promise. The Promise Scotland team is driving forward the work demanded by the findings of the Independent Review of Care to ensure a shift in policy, practice and culture in Scotland to keep the promise to care experienced children and their families that "every child grows up loved, safe and respected, able to realise their full potential!" (Home - The Promise). The business plan of the CPC adopted this structure in the previous annual report and continues to reflect this structure within the business plan of the CPC. Similarly, the current children's services plan in North Lanarkshire is based upon the pillars of the promise.

The child protection national guidance for child protection in Scotland 2021 embodies these approaches and brings them together to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, including unborn babies. Our child protection national guidance in Scotland informs the development of local multi-agency child protection procedures, processes and training to support the care and protection of children across Scotland. The guidance has integrated child protection within the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) continuum, to work towards children receiving the right help at the right time. This aligns with much of the local work in North Lanarkshire. The child protection national guidance has a strengthened focus on children's rights, engagement and collaboration with families, early support provided at the right time. The child protection national guidance recognises the range of issues that impact upon the wellbeing and safety of children such as poverty and housing. The guidance is underpinned by trauma informed practice. ([National guidance for child protection in Scotland 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-for-child-protection-in-scotland-2021/pages/1-10.aspx)).



Context and Structure

The Child Protection Committee sits within the wider context of Public Protection and Children's Services within North Lanarkshire.

Public Protection

The North Lanarkshire Chief Officers Group Public Protection (COGPP) is responsible for ensuring that agencies, individually and collectively, work to protect the communities of North Lanarkshire as effectively as possible.

The roles and responsibilities of the group include:

- **individually and collectively, to demonstrate leadership and accountability in respect of public protection work and its effectiveness on behalf of their agencies**
- **to co-ordinate and oversee strategic developments within the public protection arena**
- **to provide assurance to North Lanarkshire Council, North Lanarkshire Partnership and other relevant strategic partner bodies on the delivery of all aspects of public protection**
- **to keep under review the structures and processes which support public protection to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.**

The group has specific governance responsibilities in relation to the Child and Adult Protection Committees, the Violence Against Women Strategic Group (VAWSG) and the MAPPA Steering Group. The group normally meets on a quarterly basis and is supported by a multi-agency Public Protection Lead Officer group which convenes prior to the meeting to ensure further scrutiny, currency and relevance of the agenda. During the initial weeks of Covid-19 restrictions the Chief Officers Groups across North and South Lanarkshire met on a weekly basis to provide timely and responsive governance during the pandemic. The schedule of meetings gradually reverted to business as usual and in the period covered by this report there were 5 meetings of the North Lanarkshire COGPP.

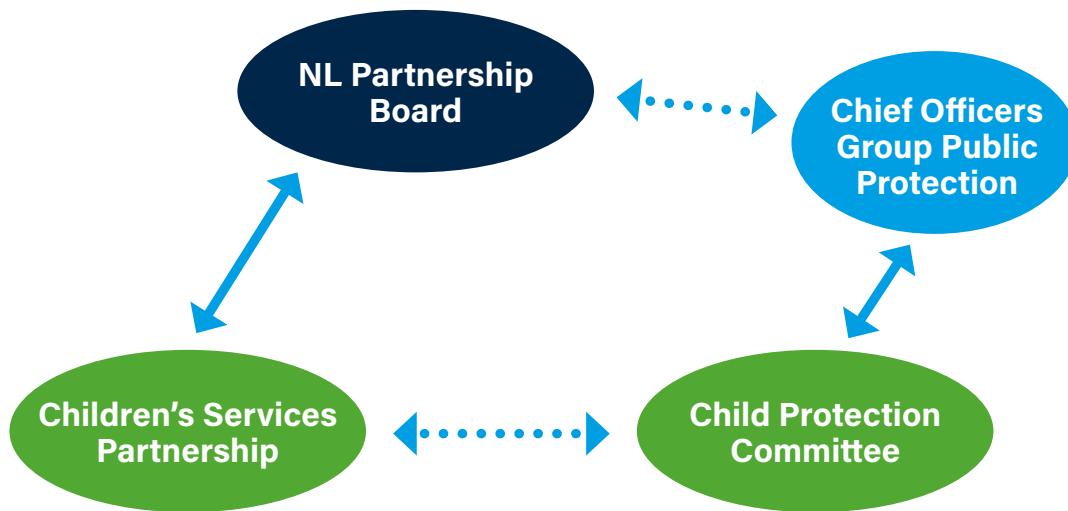
Children's Services

The Child Protection Committee and North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership Board (NLCSPB) provide the strategic leadership for all children's services and have a responsibility for driving improvements. The link to the Community Planning Partnership is through the Children's Services Partnership Board and through cross representation at Chief Officer level.

The Child Protection Committee works closely alongside the North Lanarkshire Children's Services Partnership Board. Several members of the CPC attend NLCSPB meetings and this helps promote our shared work together.



The Governance of the Children's Services Partnership



Our children, young people and families in North Lanarkshire

Population

North Lanarkshire is the 4th largest local authority area in Scotland by population. The latest population figure for North Lanarkshire is from the 2021 and show an estimated population of 341,400. The 0-17 age population breaks down as follows:

Young People	2021 population
Age	Persons
0 – 4	17,192
5 – 11	27,707
12 – 15	16,296
16 – 17	8,145
All Ages 0-17	69,751

Currently the population in North Lanarkshire is predicted to increase by 0.3% between 2018 and 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).

The minority ethnic population of North Lanarkshire is 2.1% of the total population (2011 Census). It should be noted that it is more than ten years since the last census in 2011. The release of the Scottish Census results in 2023 will provide us with a more up to date picture. However, 2022 school records show that 9% (5,100) of school pupils are from an ethnic minority, as well as a further 3% (1,655) who are Polish.

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-council/facts-and-figures/population>

Health

The 2018/2020 data indicates that North Lanarkshire had a rate that was worse than the Scottish average for the following health indicators:

- **Dental health in primary 1 and primary 7**
- **Maternal obesity**
- **Teenage pregnancy**
- **Smoking during pregnancy**
- **Babies exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks**
- **The rates for immunisation uptake of the 5 in 1 and the MMR immunisations are the same or better than the Scottish average**

Further health indicators show:

- **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**
- **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%**
- **There was evidence of a link between deprivation and health status, those in the most deprived SIMD quintile were less likely to have good or very good health (79%) than those in the other quintiles (80 - 85%)**

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-08/North%20Lanarkshire%20Childrens%20Services%20Plan%202021-2023.pdf>

Poverty and Deprivation

North Lanarkshire Council has an overarching Tackling Poverty Strategy 2020-2023, this includes child poverty, which underpins The Plan for North Lanarkshire, our long-term strategic plan for North Lanarkshire with a shared ambition for inclusive growth and prosperity. The CPC in partnership with the ICSP maintains a focus on the impact of poverty on children within North Lanarkshire and how we can work together to reduce this.

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 places a duty on Local Authorities and Health Boards to report on activity they are taking and will take to reduce child poverty.

1 in 4 children in Scotland are living in poverty

68% of children living in poverty in Scotland are in households where someone works

38% of children in lone parent households live in poverty

29% of children with a disabled family member are in poverty

24.8% of children in North Lanarkshire live in poverty (CPAG.org.uk)



Our management information

To help monitor child protection activity and identify trends, the committee reviews child protection statistical information.

In North Lanarkshire we have adopted the National Minimum Dataset for Child Protection and the use of the SOLACE data was also utilised during the pandemic to understand the impact of Covid-19 and the lockdown on children and families and on the ways that services have responded. In August 2021 we returned to our main data recorded in the minimum data set. The national figures published annually by the Scottish Government provide the opportunity to 'benchmark' against other local authority areas across Scotland. These figures in conjunction with local child protection information collected by agencies and services working in North Lanarkshire, form the basis for child protection management information.

National Data and Local Comparison

The following national data is taken from the children's social work statistics published by the Scottish Government on 29th March 2022. This section presents data on children registered on the child protection register from 01st August 2020 until 21st July 2021. This will be referred to as 2021 for ease of reporting.

Key National Findings

Child Protection

- ↓ **20% decrease in the number of children on the child protection register**
- ★ **80% of registrations were for children who had never been registered before**

Looked after Children

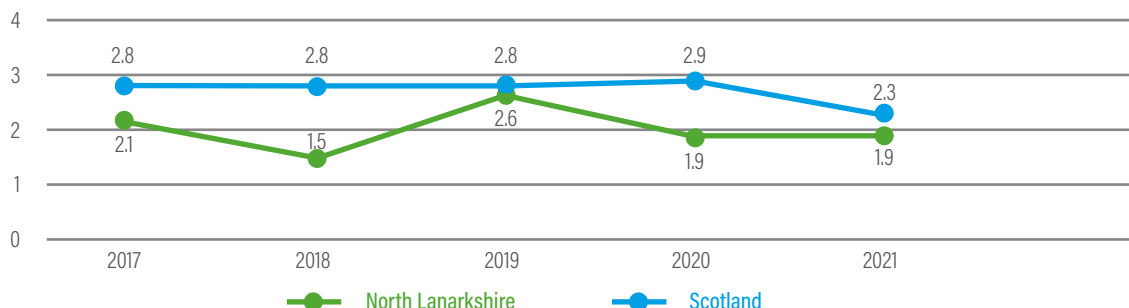
- ↓ **8% decrease in the number of children looked after**

The number of children on the child protection register decreased by 20% from 2020 to 2021. May 2021 saw the lowest number of registrations, while April 2020 saw the

lowest number of de-registrations from the Child Protection Register.

Comparison Data: National Data and North Lanarkshire Data

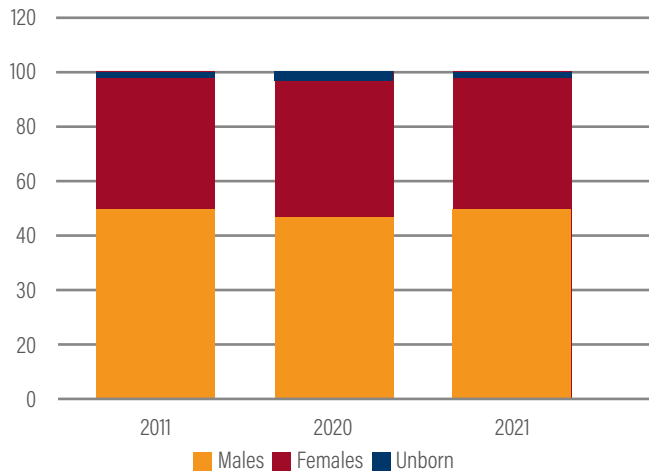
Number of children on the child protection register and rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15



Historically North Lanarkshire figures have been below the national average for children registered on the child protection register. There has been some fluctuation in children registered over the past five years. In 2017, 2019 and most recently in 2021, it looked as though the graphs

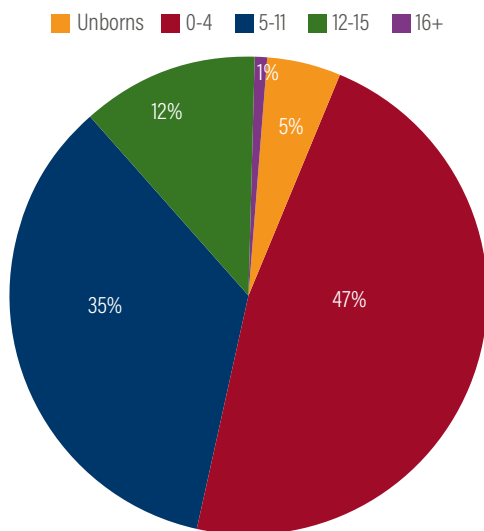
were converging. There have been dips, most noticeably in 2018 and again in 2020. The current national rate (per 1,000 of the population of 0-15 year-olds) is 2.3, whereas the North Lanarkshire's figure has remained at 1.9 for 2020 and 2021.

Scotland : Number of children on the child protection register by gender



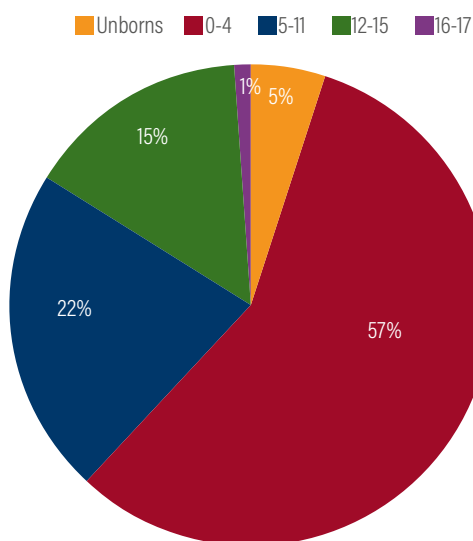
The gender split of children registered on the child protection register has remained consistent as nationally 50% of males were registered on the child protection register in 2021 and 48% of females, whilst 3% of registrations were for unborn children where the gender was not yet known.

Scotland: Age of children registered on the child protection register



Nationally the age split of children on the child protection register has remained consistent from 2020 and is again reflected this year with around half of children on the child protection register aged under five (47%) and half aged 5 or over (48%).

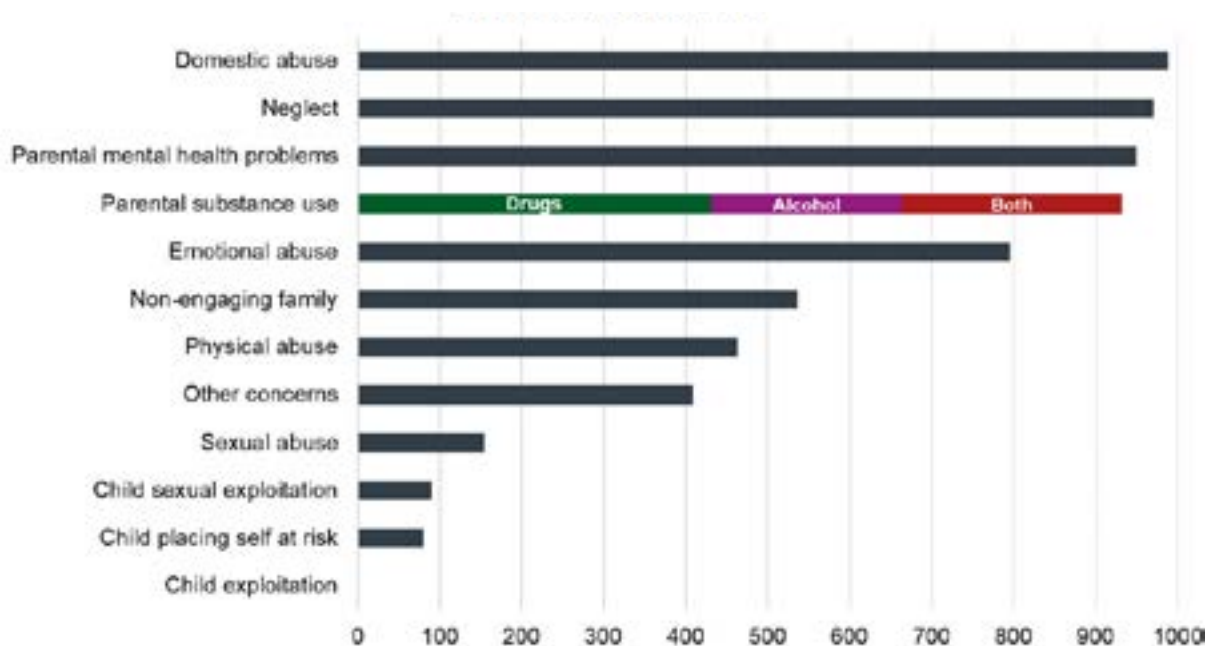
North Lanarkshire: Age of children registered on the child protection register



North Lanarkshire has a higher number of children aged under 5 (57%) registered on the child protection register and a lower number of children aged over five (38%) registered on the child protection register in comparison with the national figures

National Data: Concerns identified for children registered on the Child Protection Register

Chart 5: Concerns identified at Case Conferences of children on the CHild Protection Register, 2021

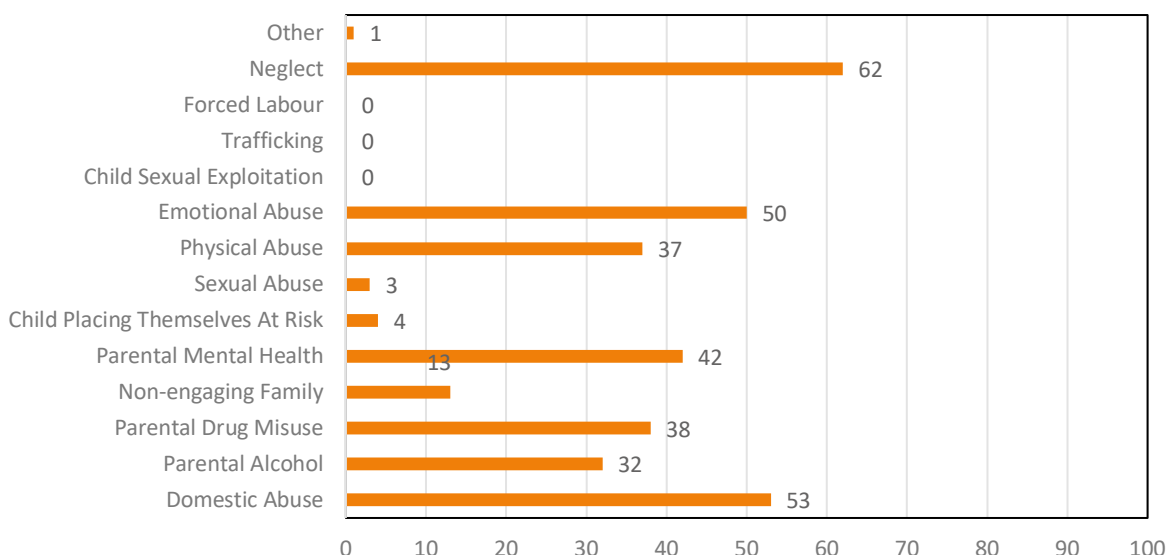


At child protection case conferences, multiple concerns can be recorded (rather than just the main category of concern). This means that the total number of concerns is larger than the total number of registrations. The national

data shows the most common concerns identified were domestic abuse (16%) and neglect (15%) and parental mental health problems (15%). Nationally child neglect is a priority area.

North Lanarkshire Data:

Concerns identified for children on the child protection register



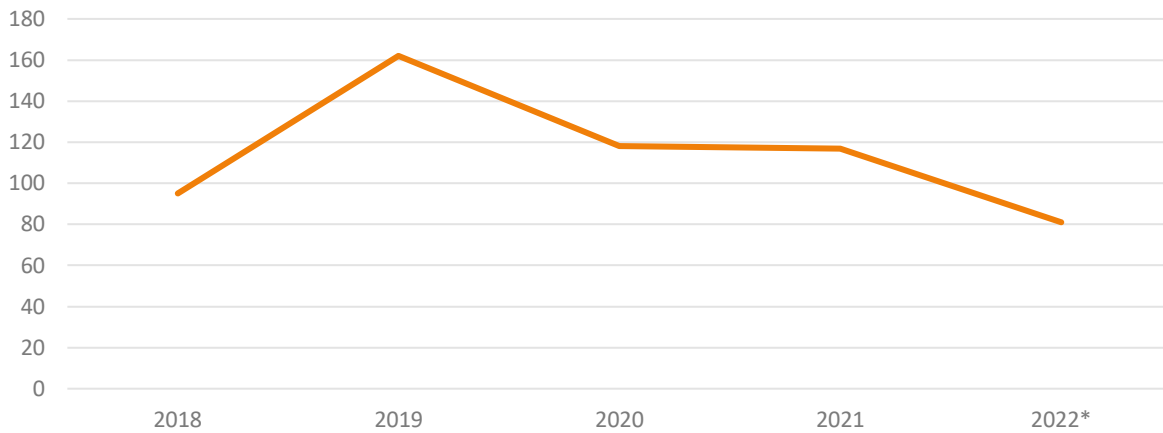
In North Lanarkshire multiple concerns can be recorded (rather than just the main category of registration). This means that the total number of concerns is larger than the total number of registrations. This data shows all concerns identified for all children registered within the year in North Lanarkshire. The most common concerns were neglect,

domestic abuse and emotional abuse. These are in line although not the same as the most common concerns recorded nationally which are neglect, domestic abuse and parental mental health. North Lanarkshire CPC regard neglect as a priority area for improvement action.

North Lanarkshire Detailed Trend Data -2017/18 to 2020/21

*2022 figure is provisional as this is based on our quarterly report.

Number of Children on the Child Protection Register as of 31st July

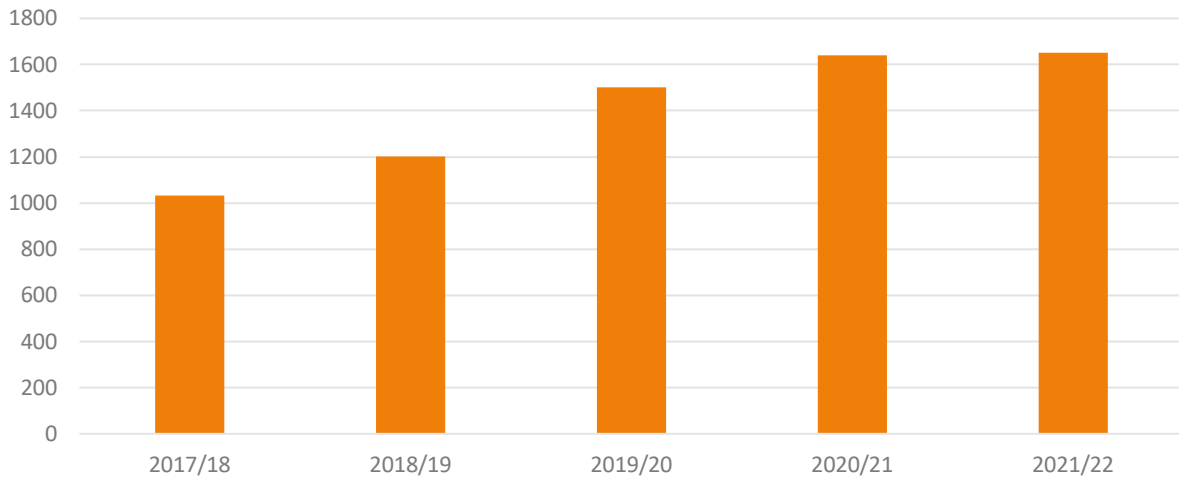


This graph differs from the first graph as this is the total number of children registered. From 2018 to 2019 there was a sharp increase in the number. Since 2019 there has

been a decrease in registrations, with a sharp decrease from 2021 to 2022. There was a decrease in registrations nationally from 2021 -2022.

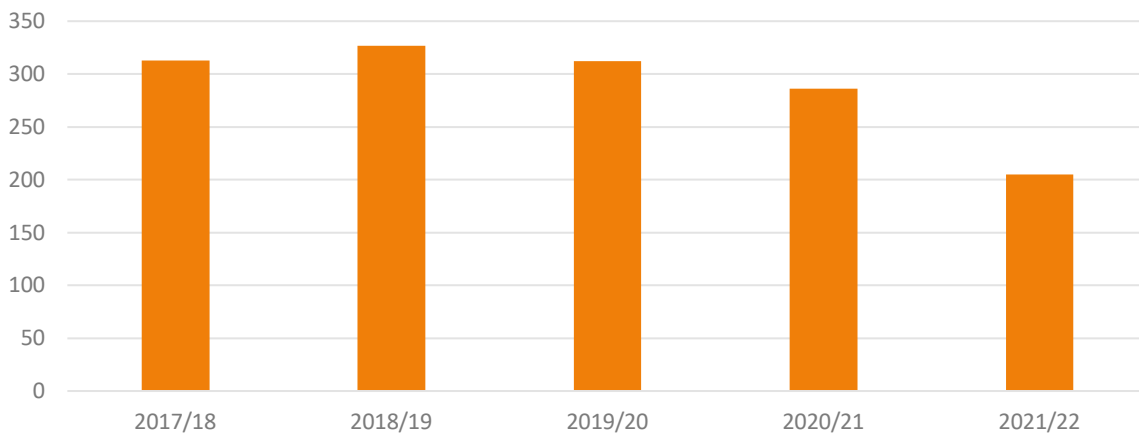


Child Protection Notifications of Concern



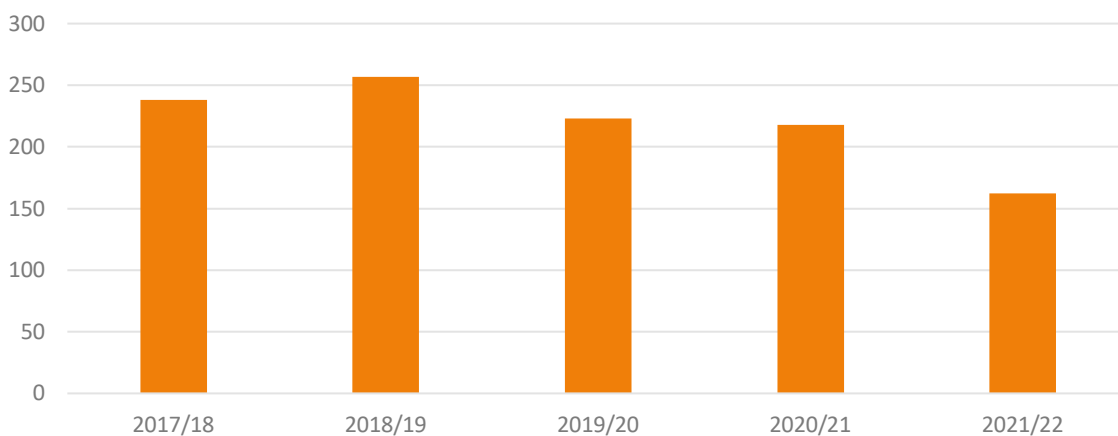
The number of child protection referrals has continued to increase since 2017/2018.

The Number of Children Subject to an Initial Child Protection Case Conference



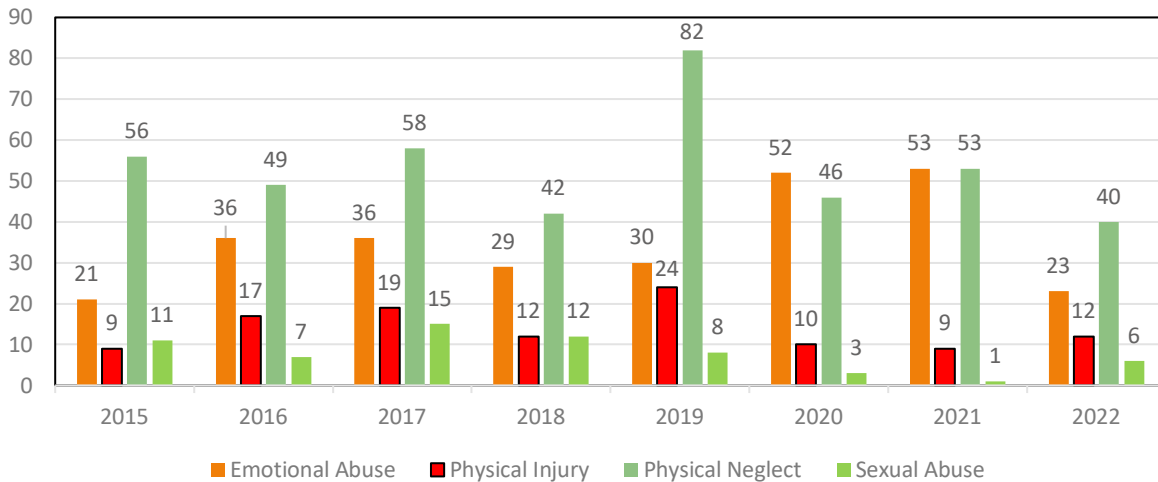
The number of Initial Child Protection Case Conferences held during the year decreased compared to the previous year from 286 in 2020/21 to 205 in 2021/22.

The Number of New Child Protection Registrations in the Period



The number of new Child Protection Registrations decreased from 218 in 2020/2021 to 162 in 2021/2022

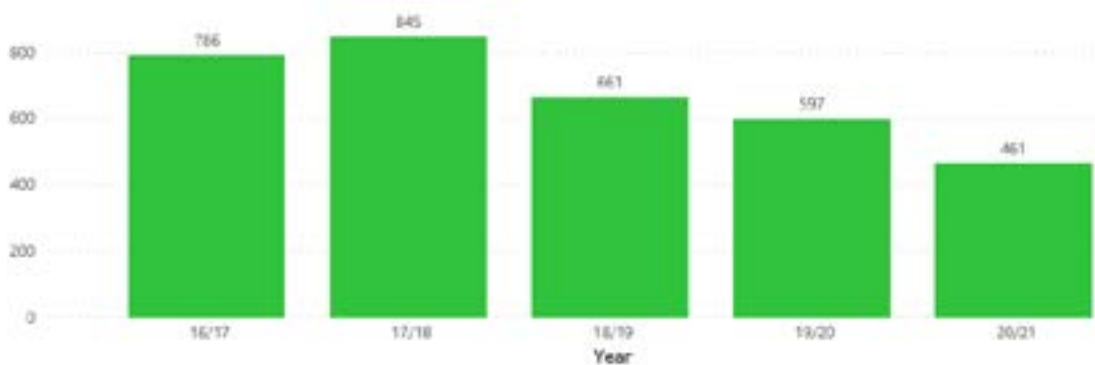
Category of Registration as at 31 July



This data shows individual children registered on the child protection register in North Lanarkshire, in the quarter up until 31st of July. Each child is registered under one category of registration. This trend data shows that the registration categories have remained constant from 2021 to 2022, physical neglect and emotional abuse both

remain the main categories of registration. Sexual abuse registrations increased slightly from 1 registration to 3 registrations for this period in 2021 to 2022. Physical injury registrations for the period have also slightly increased from 9 registrations in 2021 to 12 registrations in 2022.

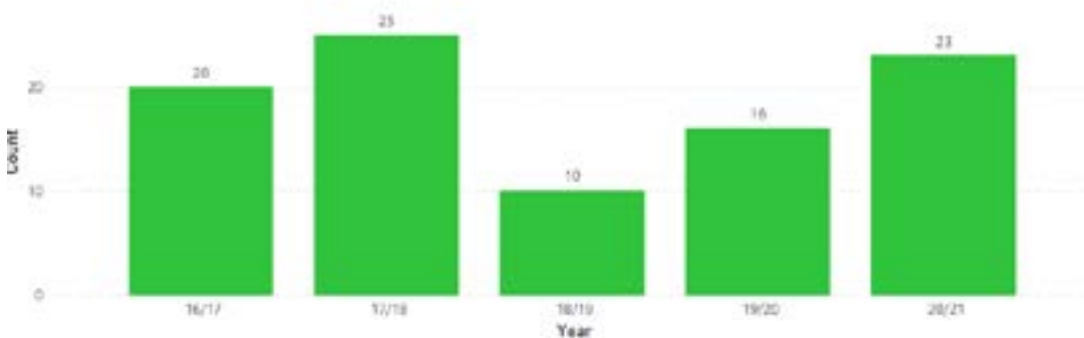
North Lanarkshire Children referred



The number of children referred to the Children's Reporter has declined each year since 2017/18 although quarterly data for 2021/22 shows a slight increase. The number of

children referred from child protection case conferences remains very low.

North Lanarkshire Children referred age 16+



From the SCRA data we are able to analyse that there is a downward trend in the children referred in North Lanarkshire for all age groups with the exception of

children referred aged 16+ years where there has been an upward trend as shown in the graph.

Child Protection Committee Functions

The functions of Child Protection Committees across Scotland were updated in 2018/19 and are now published in 'Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (2019)'. The core functions are grouped as follows:

- Public Information, Engagement and Participation
- Continuous Improvement
 - Policies, Procedures and Guidance
 - Data and Evidence
 - Quality Assurance and Self-Evaluation
 - Conducting Initial and Significant Case Reviews
 - Learning and Development
- Strategic Planning and Connections

Annual reporting is also a function of the Child Protection Committee.

In fulfilling our functions and delivering on our priorities the Child Protection Committee is supported by 9 working groups:

- Policies, Procedures and Protocols Group
- Public Information and Communication Group
- Performance Management Group
- Workforce Learning and Development Group
- Case Review Executive Group
- Child Exploitation Group
- Learning Review Group
- National Guidance Implementation Group
- Continuous Improvement Group

In addition, the following groups deliver on areas of priority for the Child Protection Committee within a wider context.

- Improving Children's Services Group (working across children's services)
- Safe and Together Working Group (joint group with North Lanarkshire Violence Against Women Working Group)
- Contextual Safeguarding Steering Group
- Trauma Informed Practice Steering Group
- GIRFEC Delivery Group

Short life working groups or task groups are created as required. This has included groups focussed on:

- Pan Lanarkshire revision of the guidance for IRDs
- The implementation of Joint investigative interviews across Lanarkshire
- Contextual Safeguarding Audit Group
- Chronologies Working Group
- CPC information for children, young people and their families.

Business Planning

Some elements of the business plan had to change as new priorities emerged due to the impact of the pandemic. Progress has been made on all aspects of the business plan. The sections below focus on actions taken during 2021/22 and the impact of these actions.

Public Information, Engagement and Participation

Children and young people have the right to participate in decisions that affect them. The Child Protection Committee promotes this right when children and families are involved in the child protection process. We are also responsible for working in the wider context of children's services to provide opportunities for the views of children, young people and families to shape child protection developments including policy, procedures and public information.

- North Lanarkshire has continued to roll out an online tool, Mind of My Own, to help practitioners communicate with children and young people in need of care and protection to seek their views. Mind of My Own apps makes the process of children and young people sharing their views easier, quicker and more engaging. One of our North Lanarkshire Social Workers won an award for their use of the app with young people. For more information on mind of my own: www.mindofmyown.org.uk

The Child Protection Committee promotes public awareness, understanding and knowledge of, and confidence in, child protection systems within North Lanarkshire.

Achievements 2021/22

Achievements set out in our business plan objectives for 2021/22 and other activity undertaken in response to emerging priorities.

- Our communications group developed a calendar of public protection activity. This calendar has a focus on the use of social media to promote child protection messages to the general public and to young people.
- Increased use of social media to ensure the general public and young people received child protection messages through various mediums including North Lanarkshire Council media, partners media platforms and via our wider partnership with Motherwell Football Team who share important child protection information with their followers ensuring we reach as wide an audience as possible.
- The frequency of the public protection bulletin edition has been altered in line with the needs of our communities. This was previously delivered on a quarterly basis pre-pandemic however at the height of the pandemic this increased to a weekly edition to ensure staff in public services were able to access the latest information and advice. During the past year it reverted to a monthly edition. This Newsletter is written in collaboration with all pillars of public protection including child protections, adult protection, violence against women and MAPPA.
- The National 'Keeping Kids Safe' Campaign from Child Protection Committees Scotland with a message of vigilance by the general public over the school summer holiday period was promoted through newspapers and social media channels and via North Lanarkshire social media posts.
- Child Protection Committee Scotland webpage is routinely shared via our social media platforms.
- Keeping children safe has been promoted to football fans through our continued partnership with Motherwell Football Club. This has included youth academy shirt sponsorship and pitch side promotion of child protection messages along with social media promotion of safer internet day messaging.

Continuous Improvement

The Child Protection Committee has a pivotal role in the continuous improvement of the protection of children and young people through the delivery of a number of functions. We have a dedicated continuous improvement group that works across the child protection committee and integrated children's services group to ensure all improvement work drives improvement across children's services.

Policies, Procedures and Protocols

The main focus of this work is to achieve clear and robust inter-agency guidance as this is vital to the protection of children and young people.

Achievements 2021/22

Achievements of the Child Protection Committee in relation to the business plan objectives for 2021/22 and other activity undertaken in response to emerging priorities.

- **Missing Persons Project: The National Missing Person's Framework Implementation Project was delivered across North Lanarkshire and ended in March 2021. The project supported activities including: Mapping and reviewing local policies, protocols and practices for missing people and their families across our partnership. The consultancy concluded with a specific recommendation to ensure that policies and practice are in line with good practice, as laid out in The Framework. The recommendation was to establish a Missing Persons Protocol in North Lanarkshire. We were ambitious with our Missing Person's Protocol and decided that we would have an all-encompassing protocol for children, young people and adults and this was developed across both children and adult services. This protocol is now published and embedded across North Lanarkshire.**
- **The Pan Lanarkshire multi-agency guidance on Inter-agency Referral Discussions has been reviewed and the revised guidance launched on 01st of June 2022.**
- **A review of the early years MAST process which provides local multi-agency decision-making structures for unborn babies and children up to 5 years in need of support is completed and there is currently work underway to redesign the support offered to families where there is vulnerability during pregnancy.**

Data and Evidence

The Child Protection Committee maintains an overview of management and performance information regarding the work of services to protect children.

Achievements 2021/22

The following list summarises the achievements of the Child Protection Committee in relation to the business plan objectives for 2021/22 and other activity undertaken in response to emerging priorities.

Following initial work with CELCIS, North Lanarkshire CPC adopted the Minimum Data Set in January 2020. This was in response to the ambition within CPIP to develop a national resource for child protection data, to use for local planning and service development and expand analytical capacity. CELCIS have now refined this data collection tool and we will now implement version 2 during 2022/23.

Quality Assurance and Self-Evaluation

Our CPC conducts regular self-evaluation activity which is central to continuous improvement. The CPC, COGPP and North Lanarkshire Council all conducted self-evaluation or audit activity during 2021/2022. Quality assurance arrangements across all services and at a multi-agency level are essential to provide the CPC with meaningful information.

Self-evaluation and quality assurance activity is undertaken proactively and in response to significant events or emerging issues in order that learning from a range of sources informs priority setting, policy and practice developments.

Achievements 2021/22

Achievements of the Child Protection Committee in relation to the business plan objectives for 2021/22 and other activity undertaken in response to emerging priorities.

- A quality assurance model for Joint Investigative Interviews has been developed in line with the JII pilot and has been implemented in North and South Lanarkshire.
- Work has continued with partners to plan and undertake multi-agency self-evaluation activity based on the Care Inspectorate Quality Improvement Framework. This work began with a development session on leadership with the Public Protection Chief Officers Group and further self-evaluation activity focussed on leadership for CPC members.

Audit

During this period, we have used more focussed audits covering multi-agency police and procedures, IRDs, NOCs and children registered on the CP register.

Audit of Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs): The CPC continued with the multi-agency quality assurance process to monitor the IRD process. This was undertaken by a multi-agency group with representation from Police, Social Work, Health, Education and Child Protection Committee. A standard audit tool is completed for each case to ensure overall ratings of IRDs are consistently evaluated.

Audit of Notifications of Concerns (NOCs): The CPC undertook a focussed audit to review the consistency of NOCs in North Lanarkshire and their progress through to IRD. This was undertaken by file readers from across the partnership.

Audit of multi-agency police and procedures to evaluate if these were in line with the national Child Protection Guidance published in September 2021. This audit was undertaken by a multi-agency group with representation from Police, Social Work, Health, Education, third sector, housing, adult support and protection, violence against women and Child Protection Committee.

Conducting Initial and Significant Case Reviews (now replaced with Learning Reviews)

The CPC, on behalf of the Chief Officers, have responsibility for undertaking Initial Case Reviews (ICRs) where these are requested by a partner agency and reporting / recommending a Significant Case Review (SCRs) when it is agreed that the national criteria are met.

The aim of this activity is:

- To ensure robust mechanisms are in place for the identification, consideration and undertaking of case reviews including evaluation processes for actions resulting from the review. All of the learning achieved through the reviews, is identified and shared across the multi-agency partnership. This includes learning from SCRs, inspection reports and other enquiry reports. SCRs have now been superseded by Learning Reviews.

Achievements 2021/22

The following list summarises the achievements of the Child Protection Committee in relation to the business plan objectives for 2021/22 and other activity undertaken in response to emerging priorities.

- During the year 2021/22 the CPC considered 2 SCR reports that had been continued from 2020/21. One of these reports has now been completed and one SCR remains an interim report that will be concluded during the remainder of 2022. On the basis of comprehensive interim reports, the finding of both reports led to the development of a thematic action plan, directed and governed by our SCR Executive group.
- Action required from SCR learning have been incorporated into the Child Protection sub committee's workplans and business plan.
- We continue to use a public protection streamlined processes for tracking and reporting ICRs and SCRs (now Learning Reviews).
- Consideration has been given to the findings from Significant Case Reviews and Learning Reviews undertaken in other areas of Scotland through our Learning Review Group.
- The CPC have also supported partners with reflective learning work.

Learning and Development

The importance of professional judgement in dealing with the risk and uncertainty of child protection situations means that ensuring a skilled and competent workforce is a core consideration for the Child Protection Committee. Multi-agency training and other learning and development opportunities are an essential component in building common understanding and fostering good working relationships, which are vital to effective child protection. To ensure our workforce receives all relevant training to enable our workforce to support whole families we also have access to training across our public protection pillars.

The aim of this activity is:

- To develop and implement an annual multi-agency workforce learning and development programme. This programme is evaluated, taking account of learning from a range of sources to inform its development.

Achievements 2021/22

The following list summarises the achievements of the Child Protection Committee in relation to the business plan objectives for 2021/22 and other activity undertaken in response to emerging priorities.

- The 2021/22 Workforce Learning and Development Plan was delivered to multi-agency groups of staff according to the published plan with a wide range of training offered. All courses were delivered on a virtual basis within the training programme during 2021/2022. All courses delivered continued to evaluate very positively in terms of pre-course administration, meeting learning objectives, application to practice and the quality of the trainers used. We will move towards a blended delivery method during 2022/23 where possible.
- This year we have added to the range of courses available and have included Contextual Safeguarding Briefing sessions, Child Exploitation training and neglect training.

Strategic Planning and Connections

The CPC works closely with strategic partners, nationally through Child Protection Committees Scotland, regionally through the West of Scotland Child Protection Consortia, the Lead Officers Group and locally with the Children's Services Partnership Board, the Adult Protection Committee, the Violence Against Women Working Group and MAPP. Joint work is undertaken with South Lanarkshire CPC where possible.

The CPC has continued with virtual processes and meeting structures, and this enabled meetings to take place at regular frequency and with strong attendance.

Achievements 2021/22

The following list summarises the achievements of the Child Protection Committee in relation to the business plan objectives for 2021/22 and other activity undertaken in response to emerging priorities.

- During 2021/22 the Child Protection Committee has responded to a number of national and local consultations following discussion with partners.
- The Child Protection Committee webpages hosted on the North Lanarkshire Council website were reviewed and updated and now include a link to the child protection national guidance, published in September 2021. There is also work underway to have information accessible through the North Lanarkshire GIRFEC webpage.
- The Public Protection Chief Officer Group met regularly throughout this period. The CPC submitted reports on activity to each meeting. The group is supported by a Public Protection Lead Officer Group who identify relevant agenda items for the meeting and progress tasks remitted by Chief Officers.
- The Public Protection Chief Officer Group provides a mechanism to maintain and further develop links with the other public protection partnerships in North Lanarkshire including Violence Against Women, Adult Support and Protection and with the Lanarkshire MAPP. unit.
- The CPC Chair is a member of the Children's Service Partnership Group (CSP) and the CPC Co-ordinator is a member of the Improving Children's Services Group, these links ensure we have close working relationships and shared priorities across children's services.
- The CPC Chair and Co-ordinator are active members of the National and Regional Child Protection networks including Child Protection Committee Scotland & West of Scotland Child Protection Consortium. The Chair attends the neglect group and the National JII Group and the Co-ordinator attends the neglect data group and has successfully applied for a place on the community of practice group for the implementation of the national guidance.

Conclusion

The annual report provides an opportunity to reflect on the developments during the period 1st August 2021 to 31st July 2022.

The work of the CPC over the next 12 months will be shaped by the progress during this reporting period and our work will continue to be informed by CPIP, in particular implementing the National Guidance for Child Protection 2021, continuing to take forward the ambitions of the Promise and the findings from local audits, test of change pilots, self-evaluation activity and learning reviews. This work is outlined in the business plan in the following section of this report.



business plan 2022/23

Introduction

The Child Protection Committee vision is that

“All children and young people in North Lanarkshire have the right to be cared for and protected from abuse and harm in a safe environment in which their rights are respected”

The Child Protection Committee has nine high level outcomes which link to our vision and take account of the functions and responsibilities of Child Protection Committees outlined in ‘Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (2019)’.

They also take into account local priorities for the Child Protection Committee identified through self-evaluation, inspection and other review activity, the priorities of the wider Children’s Services Partnership and the national priorities identified in the Child Protection Improvement Programme.



High level outcomes

1. Learning from a range of sources, including research, local quality assurance activity, practice experience, performance information, and significant case reviews informs priority setting, policy and practice developments.
2. Evidence informed changes to policy and practice are introduced, monitored and evaluated, and improve the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at risk of or affected by abuse, neglect or exploitation.
3. Evidence informed, up to date procedures, protocols and guidance are available in relation to core child protection business and related priority issues, these are implemented effectively and impact on practice and outcomes.
4. The North Lanarkshire workforce is competent and confident in their individual, managerial and collective roles to improve the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at risk of or affected by abuse, neglect or exploitation.
5. Relevant, up to date public information is available in a range of accessible and engaging formats to individuals and communities across North Lanarkshire.
6. The views of children and families are taken into account in relation to issues that affect them directly and in policy and practice development.
7. Collaboration and co-operation between the Child Protection Committee and other national and local multi-agency partnerships is effective.
8. National strategy and policy developments inform Child Protection Committee activity.
9. Local leadership of child protection is effective in driving improvements in child protection practice and in improving outcomes for children and young people at risk of or affected by abuse, neglect or exploitation.



Our Activities for 2022/23

This sets out a broad framework which is underpinned by a detailed workplan of the CPC, this workplan is reviewed routinely during CPC meetings. The business plan detailed below outlines the Child Protection Committee's planned activities for the period from 1st August 2022 – 31st July 2023. All the activities have been linked to the high-level outcomes and referenced against the foundations of The Promise.

Public Information, Engagement & Participation (Voice and Family)

In the next 12 months we will	Linked Outcome
Develop further the use of social media and online activity to raise public awareness of child protection issues	5
Support the implementation of the Mind of my Own resource to obtain young persons' views.	6
Support gathering feedback from young people as part of information for families work.	6
Ensure family feedback is gathered as part of test for change activity.	6
Ensure our information for children, young people and families is refreshed and user friendly	5,6
Host our information on our CPC pages and GIRFEC pages	5

Continuous Improvement (Scaffolding, Care and Family)

In the next 12 months we will	Linked Outcome
Policies, Procedures and Guidance	
Review and update our multi-agency policies, procedures and protocols and ensure these align with the national guidance	1,2,3,4
Update group membership and Terms of Reference	1,2,3,4
Implement the revised National Child Protection Guidance and join the national community of practice forum	1,2,3,4
Monitor the impact of the refreshed IRD guidance on our communities through audit activity and data analysis	1,8
Continue to support our pilot young person's safeguarding panel in North Lanarkshire	1,2,8
Data and Evidence	
Link with other CPCs and CPCS to phase in version 2 of the national minimum dataset for Child Protection Committees	1,8
Continue to work towards making best use of the minimum data set, including version 2	1,8

In the next 12 months we will	Linked Outcome
Quality Assurance and Self Evaluation	
Work with ICSG to undertake a self-evaluation of services for children in need of care and protection using the Care Inspectorate quality indicator framework	1,7,9
Agree and undertake a programme of audit and review activity taking into account findings from analysis of local and national management information and other emerging issues. Reporting findings and sharing learning as appropriate.	1,2,4
Support all partners to review policies, procedures and guidance to ensure it is underpinned by the child protection national guidance.	
Conducting Initial and Significant Case Reviews (People, care, family)	
Commission and undertake Learning Reviews as necessary in line with national guidance and local procedures. Report findings and share learning as appropriate.	1,2,4
Review learning from case review activity (including LR activity) to identify key priorities for improvement	1,2,9
Continue to monitoring and implement actions outlined in action plans arising from Learning Reviews and finalise our current interim report	1,2,4
Support partners to undertake Reflective Learning Reviews and present the learning to the CPC	1,2,4
Learning and Development (People and Scaffolding)	
Deliver multi-agency child protection training, develop further e learning modules and continue with our blended approach where appropriate.	4
Plan, deliver, evaluate and review the annual multi-agency workforce learning and development programme to support best practice in our workforce and in child protection activity.	4
Work in Partnership with ICSG to support our workforce to develop an awareness of the approaches that underpin our national child protection guidance both the contextual safeguarding approach and Trauma informed Practice approach	1,2,4
Continue to work in Partnership with the Trauma Informed Practice Steering Group, the Innovate Project and partners to ensure the workforce are able to practice in a trauma informed way.	1,2,4

Strategic Planning & Connections (Scaffolding, care and family)

In the next 12 months we will	Linked Outcome
Develop our work on integrated chronology across children's services. The test of change continues and will report to the GIRFEC Steering Group and CPC.	1,2
Continue to embed and evaluate the implementation of the Safe & Together model to improve outcomes for children affected by domestic abuse	1,2,4,8
Contribute to the ongoing work in relation to Up2U Programme designed to stop domestic abuse.	1,2
Review and ensure the strategic objectives of the Scottish Government and the North Lanarkshire CSP are reflected in our vision, values and aims.	8,9

Appendix 1

Governance and Reporting

North Lanarkshire Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce, implement and monitor the Single Outcome Agreement • Report annually to the Scottish Government. • Receive biannual reports from the Children's Services Partnership.
Chief Officers Public Protection Group (COG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the strategic overview for public protection, including child protection. • Individually and collectively provide leadership and accountability for public protection. • Receive quarterly reports from the Child Protection Committee and Children's Services Partnership (CSP). • Agree the Child Protection Committee Annual Report and Business Plan and the Children's Services Report and Annual Action Plan
Children's Services Partnership (CSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide governance across all elements of the Children's Services Plan. • Report biannually to North Lanarkshire Partnership. • Report to the COG. • Receive quarterly reports from the Improving Children's Services Group. • Report to and share minutes with the NLC Policy and Resources Committee.
Child Protection Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement child protection policy and strategy across and between agencies/services. • Deliver on Key Functions grouped as follows: public information, continuous improvement and strategic planning. • Report on a quarterly basis to the COG • Produce an annual report and business plan
Improving Children's Services Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce, implement and monitor the Children's Services Annual Action Plan. • Develop and implement an effective performance framework. • Collate information for the Children's Services Improvement Tool. • Receive quarterly reports from themed groups and locality planning groups. • Produce quarterly reports for the Children's Services Partnership and wider communication.
Themed Sub Groups and Locality Planning Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to planning, monitoring and evaluation. • Produce and update priorities and plans. • Produce quarterly reports to the Improving Children's Services Group. • Deliver on the actions in the ICSP. • Collect information for the Children's Services Improvement Tool and use this to prompt discussion and scrutiny.

Appendix 2

North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee Membership - as at 31st July 2022

Title	Organisation
Independent Chair	North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee
Co-ordinator Child Protection	North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee
Detective Superintendent	Police, Specialist Crime Division
Head of Service Public Protection	NHS Lanarkshire
Head of Children Families and Justice Social Work Services	Health & Social Care North Lanarkshire
Medical Director	NHS Lanarkshire
Manager, Children & Families	Education & Families
Locality Reporter Manager North Lanarkshire	Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Education Officer	North Lanarkshire Council, Education & Families
Development Officer	North Lanarkshire Council, Education & Families
Service Co-ordinator (Domestic Abuse)	North Lanarkshire Council, Education & Families
Business Solutions Manager	North Lanarkshire Council, Enterprise & Housing Resources
Development Officer (North)	Lanarkshire Alcohol & Drug Action Team (ADAT)
Head of Democratic and Legal Services	North Lanarkshire Council, Corporate Services
Area Convenor	North Lanarkshire Children's Panel
Principal Psychologist	North Lanarkshire Council, Education & Families
Agreed representative	On behalf of Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL)
Admin Assistant	North Lanarkshire Child Protection Committee

