



# Renfrewshire Children's Services **Partnership Plan**

2023–2026



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# 1. Throughout Scotland, local authorities and health boards work with community planning partners to ensure services delivered to children, young people and their families are the best they can be.

In Renfrewshire, we do this by listening to our communities to identify what support people need, why they need it, when they need it and how best it can be provided. This work takes place through Renfrewshire's Children's Services Partnership (RCSP) whose members include the council, other public sector organisations, and the third sector. Together, we identify local priorities and plan how we can join up to add value and deliver services to children, young people and their families that make a real difference to their lives.

Our three-year Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan covers the period 2023 - 2026. It sets out our focus for Renfrewshire's children, young people and families and identifies the steps we will take to improve their lives.



## 2. A message to our children and young people from the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership



You deserve the best possible start in life, free from poverty and neglect. You deserve to feel safe, secure, cared for and respected. You deserve to learn, grow, and feel healthy and valued. You deserve to have hopes, aspirations and opportunities to have a bright, happy future.

We are all here to help you. We will support you and your family by supplying the right help at the right time. We will make sure Renfrewshire is the best possible place for you to grow up and help prepare you to take on life's opportunities and challenges.

We will make sure there's always someone ready to step in with help when you need it, and help you grow up healthy in body and in mind. We will help you develop your skills and knowledge to help you explore the world around you.

### 3. Our Vision

## Renfrewshire's children and young people are happy, healthy, safe and thriving.

### About Renfrewshire's children and young people

We're really proud of the contribution our children and young people make to Renfrewshire. We've worked hard to create as many opportunities as possible for their voice to be heard when we design and deliver our services, knowing their insight presents inspiration and challenges us to do better.

Since 2019 Renfrewshire's children and young people have proved their ability to lead, plan, deliver, participate and engage in decision making through the council's Celebrating Renfrewshire Fund. With a dedicated steering group created each year, young people develop leadership and team working skills, and further mentor the following years steering group through peer learning.

In 2020 Renfrewshire Council was the only council to deliver a virtual participatory budgeting programme on the Celebrating Renfrewshire platform. This was considered as good practice with Young Scot writing a case study highlighting our delivery.

A key outcome of the Celebrating Renfrewshire Fund is community empowerment. Building on the success of the participation of schools, it is expected involved young people, and their wider community, will benefit as they continue to use their voice in delivering further community based participatory budgeting exercises or improvements.

Young people leading and securing a solid understanding of the participatory budgeting process creates stronger communities and facilitates an inclusive approach to delivering future participatory budgeting initiatives. For the young people, being included and making decisions to improve their community will become the norm and foster a sense of

ownership and pride in the places they live. By shaping our communities, our children and young people will help create a Renfrewshire that is attractive to live, work and invest in. Our engagement shows our young population is willing and able to identify what's most important to them. This helps the Partnership design services which meet their needs and aspirations. This has been vitally important in the work we've progressed to improve our wellbeing/personal and social education, with youth voices helping to shape the tools we use and how we do it. We know participatory budgeting is a local and national priority, and we continue to strengthen the breadth



and depth of children and young people's contributions in local decision making, ensuring policies and places reflect their needs and interests.

Some of Renfrewshire's children and young people need more support than others to help them achieve a positive start in life. This can be down to challenges faced by an individual, by their family, or their wider community. Some of Renfrewshire's communities are more vulnerable than others. This can mean that some families are more likely to experience

challenge, or the challenges they face are more complex and harder to deal with.

The Covid-19 pandemic made life more difficult for everyone. It affected our health, our relationships, how we felt, and the opportunities we had access to. Now, our communities face further challenge through a cost-of-living crisis, with the cost of heating our homes and buying food and basic provisions increasing. These factors make it even more important that we have a strong focus on how we work together to keep Renfrewshire's children and young people happy, healthy, safe and thriving.

We want Renfrewshire to be a fair place for all our communities, and we understand that tackling local poverty, particularly child poverty, is a key part of this. By helping the families most impacted by poverty, we hope to make it easier for children and young people to achieve their goals and aspirations. We know from our local data that 18% of Renfrewshire's children live in low-income families. In particular, we know that the families who need most support are those in the six priority groups identified by the Scottish Government. More than 8 out of 10 children in relative poverty in Scotland are characterised by at least one of the following:

- **Come from lone-parent families**
- **Live in a household where someone is disabled**
- **Their family has at least three or more children**
- **Their family is minority ethnic**
- **Their family has a child under one year old**
- **Their mother is under 25 years of age**



Work offers a sustainable route out of poverty for many families and has a strong role to place in a balanced approach to tackling child poverty. We recognise economic participation is an important factor impacting on the wellbeing of children and young people. Through our Invest in Renfrewshire initiative, we will ensure parents are supported to access, sustain and progress in employment where it's the right choice for their families.

The pandemic and cost-of living crisis has brought into sharp focus the economic insecurity of many households. Economic uncertainty presents challenges for our local businesses too, with many looking to adapt and respond to an ever-changing market. This will have a corresponding impact on the required knowledge, skills and abilities of our children and young people as they make the transition to work, and the Partnership will take cognisance of emerging economic markers and ensure the young workforce is aligned to sector-specific requirements of planned investment activity.

More and more of Renfrewshire's children and young people are seeking support with their mental health and wellbeing. In 2022 we delivered our Mental Health and Wellbeing Census to our secondary school pupils, receiving over 4300 responses. This revealed that just over a quarter of respondents recorded scores that showed risk of clinical depression. This is more prevalent in females, those in receipt of free school meals and those in our 30% most deprived communities. We understand the link between adverse childhood experiences and the risk this presents to mental health and wellbeing. We also appreciate that the impacts of these events can sometimes carry through to adulthood, and that parents and carers might struggle to cope and respond positively to certain situations or challenges. This reinforces our approach to early intervention, and developing ways to work with children, young people and their families to help them cope before reaching a crisis.

We've taken steps to ensure our health professionals get to know our families and build positive and trusting relationships. Our

Family Nurse Partnership Health Visiting Teams Renfrewshire have fully implemented the National Universal Health Visiting Pathway and Child Health Surveillance, providing families access to early and therapeutic support.

A small number of Renfrewshire's families need extra help to keep children and young people safe, secure and content. These are described as 'specialist services'. The number of children on Renfrewshire's Child Protection Register has decreased since 2017. This is good progress, however Renfrewshire still has a child protection rate (per 1000 population) that's generally higher than that across Scotland, so we know we have more to do in this area.

We're really encouraged that Renfrewshire's children and young people tell us they're making positive lifestyle choices. Our 2022 Health and Wellbeing Service has provided insight into the rates of smoking, vaping, and the consumption of alcohol and illicit substances, showing baseline information on the experience and behaviour of our young people in high schools. This will be updated

and monitored to show changes in trends over time.

We know from the 2019 Hard Edges Scotland report that trauma can be a route into alcohol and/or drug use. The engagement work of the Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drugs Commission shows that alcohol and drugs can be readily available to young people, and for some this can lead to use/ consumption. This can lead to hospital attendances, involvement with the justice system, negative impacts on education and so on. We know there are opportunities to provide better intervention and support to young people around alcohol and drug use, particularly those at key transition stages. We understand that alcohol and drugs can feature in the lives of children and young people who are living with trauma, and we want to make sure we provide early intervention and support to equip young people with the information, skills and coping strategies they need to navigate the challenges that alcohol and drugs can present.



## 4. Our services for children and young people

As partners, we provide three different types of services:



**Universal services** are the ones that are available to every child and young person in Renfrewshire. It includes the health visitor who checks that you're growing and thriving when you're a baby, the nurses who give you your vaccinations and look after your health as you grow, and the nurseries and schools who educate you. It covers things like access to a National Entitlement Card and the benefits it can bring including free bus travel and voluntary proof of age.

**Targeted services** may be useful if you or your family need a bit more help to overcome certain circumstances or challenges, even if just for a short period of time. This might relate to additional help in nursery or school, or advice or support to help you or your family manage an issue that's making life a bit more difficult. It might be our Families First teams, the Mediation Team at our George Street Project helping young people avoid homelessness, the Street Stuff activities and youth work programmes, or the Adult and Family Learning Team helping families make positive changes together through learning.

**Specialist services** are offered to children, young people and families who need help with something that's complex and might require a lot of ongoing support. These services might help to keep you safe, healthy and achieving in a way that suits you and your needs. This might include support from a social worker or receiving care from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

### Renfrewshire's Children Services Partners

Our third sector partners are often the eyes, ears and heart of our communities. The services they offer to our children, young people and families are built on strong, trusted relationships. Their work is often in response to a local need, and their approach is sensitive to the unique character of the community. We want our families to know who, when and how to seek support, and we will make best use of relationships our partners have with their communities to listen and respond to what they are telling us

Each individual agency within the partnership produces its own plans and priorities for the service they provide. Examples of these are the Children's Services Improvement Plan, Education Improvement Plan, the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan, the Community Learning and Development Strategy, the Skills Development Scotland Strategy Map, the Barnardo's Corporate Strategy and the Renfrewshire Sport Strategy. Our annual Local Child Poverty Action Report also provides information about the actions we are taking across Renfrewshire to tackle child poverty and support the Scottish Government's targets to reduce the number of children experiencing the effects of poverty by 2030.



## 5. Child's Rights Approach

The rights and wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart of our plan. Renfrewshire's Partners work together to promote equality and raise awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to make sure children and young people's rights are promoted and reflected in all that we do.

We uphold the principle that decisions and actions must reflect the views of children and young people and be in their best interests. We adopt a rights-based approach when working with young people to provide routes to decision making processes. A strong example of this is the on-going work with Renfrewshire Youth Voice, a local charity supported by our Youth Services, which encourages and supports children and young people to get their voice heard when partners look to design or deliver activity. A key achievement of this group includes its work to co-develop a participatory budgeting model with Renfrewshire Council, which led to the creation of the £150,000 Celebrating Renfrewshire Fund, which resourced projects that have a positive impact on the lives of Renfrewshire's young people.

The voice of children and young people is especially important for families who experience break down. We appreciate how important it is that children and young people are not separated from their parents unless it's in their best interests, but if this does happen, the child or young person's views about where

they should live must be listened to and help inform decisions that affect them. Our statutory services adopt a Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) model to consider a child's wellbeing needs, which means the child or young person's views play a key part in identifying what action(s) best suit their circumstances. Our teams also use imaginative ways to engage our care experienced children in meetings about them, ensuring their voices are always heard and acted upon.

We want to make sure all Renfrewshire's children and young people can lead healthy lives. For some families, a lack of money or access can make it difficult to meet basic needs. In recent years, a multi-million-pound Tackling Poverty Programme has helped provide targeted family support. This has helped families access the financial support they're entitled to, through services such as Healthier Wealthier Children, and has also supported the mental health of our young people through the funded Hearty Lives peer support project and a programme of community-based children's library services. The Tackling Poverty Programme has also provided help with the cost of school and extra-curricular activities and delivered outreach leisure activities and free meals to children and young people who may have otherwise missed out.

This work continues through the Fairer Renfrewshire programme set up in 2022, which aims to tackle inequality and other issues facing local communities in the wake of the Covid pandemic, including the cost-of-living crisis. The programme connects Tackling Poverty, Social Renewal and Alcohol and Drug Change work, connecting groups and organisations with our communities and those with lived experience of poverty to develop and provide targeted support to those that need it most.

For some, attending school can be challenging or anxious experience. In Renfrewshire, we work hard to make sure our children and young people have the right to participate in education and are free to express their views



without fear of discrimination. We've learned a huge amount in our conversations with our young people and have worked with them to design the Personal and Social Education PSHE curriculum in Renfrewshire Schools. This has provided a platform to discuss important issues in a meaningful way. Our school-based counselling programmes and other post-therapeutic supports have also achieved great success in helping young people cope with challenging situations safely. We have also developed learning programmes where children and young people participate in a range of learning activities including supported Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme and the EVOLVE programme, helping this group of learners achieve through alternative means.

Over the course of this plan, priorities will be underpinned by our refreshed Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). GIRFEC is an approach adopted throughout Scotland, and it provides a framework for improving the lives of our children and young people. One of GIRFEC's key principles is that support should be accessible to the right people at the right time.

This will help to ensure all children and young people are safe, healthy achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included (SHANARRI).

In Renfrewshire, we are actively strengthening our GIRFEC approach to ensure it influences all that we do when working with children, young people and their families. Over the course of this plan, the refreshed staged intervention framework will enable education, health, social work and third sector to ensure families that need help are supported appropriately and fairly. We will integrate the refreshed policy and procedure across all agencies, and track progress through enhanced data and insight gathering, including that from children, young people and families. We will complement this with a training programme to make sure those who work with children and young people understand the refreshed framework, policies and procedures.



## 6. What we want to achieve

Based on what is known about the needs of children and young people of Renfrewshire, we have identified four outcomes that partners will work together to deliver.

1. We will ensure our children and young people enjoy good physical and mental health
2. We will ensure our children and young people are safe and loved
3. We will ensure our children and young people have their rights protected and their voices heard
4. We will ensure our children and young people achieve and make positive contributions to their community



Partners are already doing work that contributes to these outcomes and some examples of these are in the following pages. This partnership plan will focus on the actions where working together collaboratively will add value and bring greater benefits for our children, young people and their families.

## 7. How we got here

### Review

1

We looked at what was happening around us to understand national and community priorities and how these link in with our vision children's service planning. This includes work around **The Promise, children's rights GIRFEC, Whole Family Wellbeing and Poverty.**

We thought about the services we currently offer and the benefit and impact they're having on our communities. This helped us strengthen our **collective focus** on the **experience** of Renfrewshire children, young people and families.

2

### Reflect

### Assess

3

We considered evidence, data and insight from our communities to help us understand where we need to **focus our efforts to meet unmet demand** or **redirect support.**

We used this information to identify three **priority aims.** These will sharpen our focus and make sure our **resources and capacity** are directed to areas of **greatest need and potential impact.** We also adapted our **partnership governance** to improve how we make decisions and then act on them

4

### Adapt

### Deliver

5

Our aims will be delivered through a series of **actions,** using the right people to deliver what our children, young people and families need at the right time. This will help us deliver our **vision and outcomes,** and become the basis against which we review our progress.

## 8. What we're already doing

### 8.1. Key partnership activity across Renfrewshire

#### **We will ensure our children and young people enjoy good physical and mental health:**

- Embedding a nurturing approach in schools and working with partners to support the emotional and mental wellbeing of children and young people
- Working with the community and the third sector on the Early Action System Change project to address coercive control in adolescent relationships
- Supporting positive parenting through initiatives such as the Family Nurse Partnership
- Implementing the Universal Health Visiting Pathway, including for antenatal care
- Family support delivered by national and local third sector organisations
- The Weigh to Go team supporting children and families with healthy eating and physical activity
- Delivering Healthier, Wealthier Children project to reduce child poverty
- Street Stuff
- Pizza Reading
- Provision of in-school counselling services for children and young people to support positive mental health and wellbeing
- Active Schools
- Embedding emotional literacy programmes across all education establishments
- Developing our Fairer Renfrewshire programme to ensure support for our low-income families
- Targeted employability support for families that align with our Child Poverty Priority Groups
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award Programme and outdoor learning
- Ensuring Renfrewshire's Mental Health Policy is embedded across all school establishments and with community partners



### **We will ensure our children and young people are safe and loved:**

- Oversight of joint work to keep children safe by Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee
- Joint working on gender-based violence
- ‘Home and Belonging’ multi-agency project for care experienced young people in their first tenancies
- New Personal and Social Education topics on drugs and alcohol
- Early Protective Messages training for practitioners working in Early Years or early stages of primary education
- The work of Renfrewshire Community Safety Partnership
- I Am Me and Keep Safe
- Mentors in Violence Prevention being delivered in schools and being developed for youth and community spaces
- Provision of ThinkUKnow online safety training for practitioners

### **We will ensure our children and young people have their rights protected and voices heard**

- Promoting and developing youth voice opportunities for democracy in action, how young people can take part in decision making and contribute to positive changes in their lives and communities
- Renfrewshire-wide youth survey and community consultation to hear what young people’s views are now and for the future
- Partnership working with Renfrewshire Youth Voice youth charity to promote thematic and community-based youth forums
- Rights Respecting Schools
- Support The Promise Champions to ensure care experienced young people can shape and inform how we keep The Promise in Renfrewshire
- Pupil councils and citizenship groups in our schools
- Renfrewshire Young People’s Sports Panel



**We will ensure our children and young people achieve and make positive contributions to their communities:**

- Encouraging young people to be involved in community planning and have a say on how resources can benefit them and their communities
- Supporting young people's engagement in issues that matter to them such as Renfrewshire's Climate Change Champions and Young and Equally Safe in Renfrewshire
- Recognising the importance of wider achievement awards as a way to value young people's contribution and learning experiences
- Strong performance across literacy and numeracy in national qualifications
- Closing the poverty-related attainment gap
- Joint school and college-based vocational courses
- Employability skills as part of the school curriculum
- Promotion of volunteering
- Team up to Clean Up
- Renfrewshire School of Sport Education
- Youth participatory budgeting work



## 8.2. Building on success

Our last Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan set a strong vision for our children and young people that is still relevant today. We have strengthened relationships with partners, shared our ideas and identified where our strengths and gaps were. This led us to deliver some targeted activity which we can clearly see has made a difference and had a positive impact on our communities.

Our vision and outcomes continue forward into this new plan, the way we deliver must adapt and change in response to the new and evolving challenges being faced by our families. As partners, the tools, skills and time we must address these challenges changes too. We need to be clear on what works and what doesn't, what can be improved and what we need to focus resources on to make the biggest impact. This plan is the result of conversations, consultations and development sessions, reflecting the early intervention and prevention focus for Renfrewshire children, young people and families

We know there will be ongoing demand for partnership work around children and young people's health. Ren10, our multi-agency family service for mental health support is playing a key part in helping those in need access the right level of support at the right time. Key activity has included the development of non-violent resistance approaches, inter-agency training and the creation of digital supports. The network/platform is open and accessible to all in need and helps bridge the gap between universal services that deal broadly with wellbeing and the specialist support for severe mental health conditions. During its first year, the service supported over 1,000 children and young people, including 125 who were care experienced.

This approach has improved the way partners work too and is one of the key lessons we will carry forward in this plan. Ren10 has helped connect teams and services across education, social work, health and the third Sector which has meant the journey and outcome of those

using Ren10 can be better understood. This collaboration has also shown we can work smarter, by focusing on an area of under provision and reduce strain on other services.

We have also made good progress in supporting care experienced children and young people through The Promise in Renfrewshire and driving forward the recommendations of The Independent Care Review. Through the RCSP, we have raised the profile of The Promise with staff from across the Council and partners. We have developed values for Promise Keepers, individuals who will act as champions for The Promise in their organisations to make sure these principles are at the heart of decision making. As part of our commitment to youth voice, we have encouraged young people who are care experienced to take part in a range of arts engagement activities to share their life experiences and aspirations, and we have strengthened the role of the Renfrewshire Promise Champions group to provide a platform for amplifying these views and hopes for change in the future.

It is important we keep this work going in our new plan to fully implement the recommendations of The Independent Care Review. We know some services will benefit from more information and support to help them understand what The Promise means to them, and the difference they can make to the lives of care experienced children and young people in Renfrewshire. To do this, we will draw on our strengths and achievements in building relationships and collaboration to share our message and embed these values across Renfrewshire. This is one of our top three high level aims for 2023 onwards.

Our Tackling Poverty programme has supported families over the last 5 years, and with this work being taken forward by our Fairer Renfrewshire programme, we will continue to listen to families and the organisations that support them to develop partnership initiatives that will make a difference to the lives of our low-income families.



## 9. Our plan for the next three years

### **We will ensure our children and young people enjoy good physical and mental health**

We know from our progress around Ren10 that bridging the gap between universal services which deal broadly with wellbeing and the highly specialist support for severe mental health conditions is important. Our GIRFEC approach drives us to make sure our children, young people and families get appropriate help at times of difficulty which results in better wellbeing and greater resilience. Through Ren10, we realised how beneficial it is for clients to have the services they need linked together to ease their journey. We will apply this learning to develop a new model of whole family wellbeing support, which will let families and those working with them access all the support they need in one place. Our localities focussed approach will provide seamless and holistic support wrapped around individual needs, with our resources aligned to increase our capacity around prevention and early intervention.

We will encourage and support more children and young people to take up forms of regular exercise that interests them, and to eat healthily. We know there is a link between physical health and mental wellbeing, and we want children and young people to understand the importance of this and to develop healthy habits which result in them having fewer health problems in their adult lives. Again, this is one of our top three high level aims for 2023 onwards.

We will support low-income families to ensure they have access to healthy food, whether through meals at school or through activities in community settings. We will help them access the benefits they are entitled to maximise their income, and provide advice around energy, bills, credit and debt to minimise outgoings where possible.

We will build on our work on gender-based violence and coercive control, so that our children and young people understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy in their personal relationships.

Some of our children and young people have needs that mean they will continue to need support as adults. By working with partners on how transitions into adult services are dealt with, we want each young person and their family/carers to feel involved, fully prepared for the change and able to develop as much independence as they can and enjoy the same freedoms as their peers in a safe and supported way.

We understand that young people need access to reliable information to help them make informed life choices, and we will continue to work hard to create trusted local content and link to national helplines and bodies through the Young Scot and other digital information platforms.

### **We will ensure our children and young people are safe and loved**

We know about the impact on wellbeing when a parent or other family member uses alcohol and/or drugs to a harmful level. We will have a new support service for children and young people affected by this, and our personal and social education will have a greater focus on this and other issues which can pose a risk to children and young people. We want children and young people to have the tools and the knowledge to support them to make positive choices about their lives. Our services will continue to adopt trauma-informed approaches, to focus on nurture and to act as responsive and loving corporate parents.

Being safe also means having somewhere safe to call home and feeling safe in the neighbourhood where you live. We will work together to make sure no families are homeless and that your home offers what you need to feel comfortable and secure. We want our communities to be welcoming places for children and young people, with the right kind of housing, green space and play areas, and neighbourhoods people feel safe in. By doing this, children and young people have space to thrive because their basic needs are met.

Keeping children safe from harm will always be a priority for this partnership, and issues of child protection are overseen by the Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee. The partnership will continue to support them to deliver on their priorities. We want all children to have the right help at the earliest possible opportunity when their wellbeing is impacted by a vulnerable adult in their lives, or when the behaviour of another person is causing harm.

### **We want children and young people's rights to be protected and their voices to be heard in society**

The rights of every child are very important to us and shape our approach to how we deliver our services. The RCSP is committed to further effecting the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to ensure our children and young people have the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights they are entitled to.

We made strong progress in delivering against The Promise, a national commitment focused on helping children and families get support at an earlier stage, reducing the number of children and young people who must come into care, and making sure that if children and young people do, that they are treated with love and respect. To do this, we need all our partners to be focused on giving the right support at the right time, not just to children and young people, but to their families too. We want to reduce the number of children and young people who need to come into care, and for families who need a bit of extra help to be supported to provide the best possible home for their children.

Participation and consultation are an important part of the development of this plan and as partners, we want to hear more of children and young people voices when we plan services for them. The new approaches we will put in place will help more children, young people and their families be able to make their views heard and all partners will continue to build on the strong relationships they already have and continue to involve children and young people in decision making and co-designing services.

### **We want our children and young people to be supported to achieve, thrive and make positive contributions to their communities**

We will further develop the work in schools on employability, personal development and leadership skills, including tailored support for children and young people with additional support needs and those that are care experienced. We want all children and young people to go on to a positive destination — employment, training or education — after they leave school.

We know that getting on in life is not just about getting qualifications. One of the things that helps us achieve are the links we make with others throughout life — whether this is through having a role model to guide you, being part of a club or group with shared goals or having access to social and cultural opportunities. We want to help every child and young person in Renfrewshire to have the same access to leisure, social and cultural activities, regardless of their background. We also want children and young people to be active citizens and contribute to their communities in a range of activities that reflect local concerns and priorities.



## 10. High level aims

Renfrewshire Children's Services Partners has identified 11 high level aims that guide our activity over the next three years. The aims complement the plan's 4 outcomes and outline the areas of collaborative work the partnership believes will add value and have the most impact in helping our children and young people be safe, well, heard and achieve. They have been informed by a robust strength and needs analysis, contributions from partners, children, families and communities and evaluation of the partnership's recent achievements and successes. Highlights from our strategic needs and strengths analysis are included in Appendix 2.

The RCSP will continually engage, listen, assess, review, and adapt our approach to the needs of children, young people and families over the course of this plan to reflect what they are telling us and be nimble in our efforts to respond. This will let us prioritise our resources, focus on our communities and ensure our efforts are helping families with the challenges they're experiencing at any given time.

## 11. Priority high level aims

There are areas where insight and opportunity suggest the RCSP can make biggest impact within our current resource and capacity. The RCSP has identified three priority high level aims that will be addressed in year 1 of the plan.

Our aim that **children, young people, and their families can access all support in one place** will be prioritised in response to the Scottish Government's Whole Family Wellbeing funding. Our plans to adopt a community-based, multi-agency approach will provide a holistic model of support that helps us re-direct health and social care spend to preventative, whole-family measures. We have learned a lot from our work around our mental health in our delivery of our Ren10 project, and we'll apply this learning to strengthen our relationships with our partners and improve the journey for children, young people and families who need help.

We know there are challenges that sometimes prevent our children and young people **achieving physically, actively and have the best physical health**. Sometimes cost is a prohibitive factor that means our children and young people miss out on leisure opportunities. This can be made worse if the opportunities that interest our children and young people are not accessible due to where, when, and how they're offered. Others may lack the confidence to seek out and try new things, whilst some may lack the knowledge and awareness to equip them to make positive choices about their lifestyle. We understand now more than ever the importance of being healthy, and that building a community of strong, well and achieving children and young people will build a more resilient Renfrewshire. Over the course of year 1 of this plan, we will review and if necessary, re-design the services our partners offer to make sure they're aligned to what our children and young people will benefit most from.

Prevention and early intervention are a major driver of our work. We know that investing time to meet an individual's needs as early as possible in their journey often stops their challenges becoming more severe. As partners, we're committed to **working together to provide support to children and families at the earliest possible stage, as part of our commitment to The Promise**. In year 1 of this plan, we will further embed the principles of love, nurture and relationships in our work with care experienced young people and their families and carers, and ensure our partners are aware of our collective responsibility and accountability to deliver positive outcomes for our children and young people's lives.

## 12. Governance

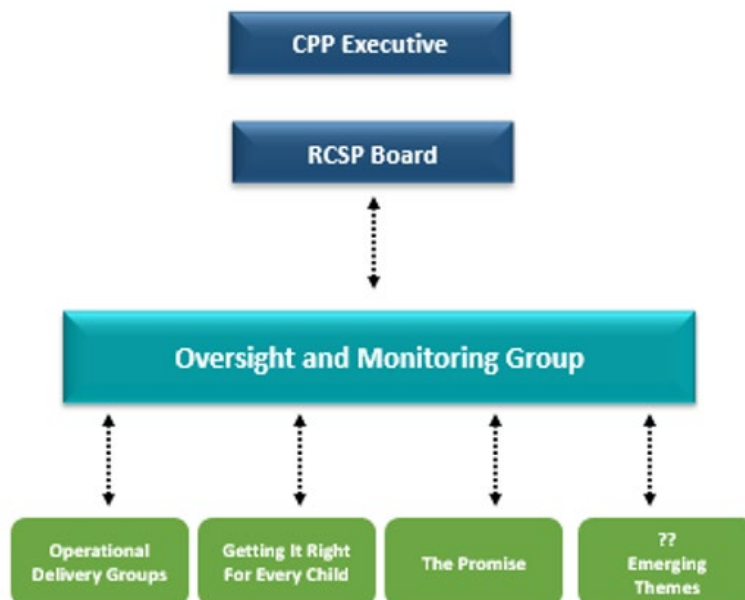
This plan is produced and monitored by the Renfrewshire Children’s Services Partnership Board, a group comprised of senior decision-makers from the public and third sectors who have a role to play in improving the lives of children and young people across the local authority area. The group is chaired by the Director of Children’s Services for Renfrewshire Council and meets four times a year.

The board reports into the Community Planning Partnership Executive. The production of a partnership plan for children’s services is a joint responsibility of each local authority, NHS Board, and the statutory Community Planning Partners, including the Integration Authority. As well as approval from the Community Planning Partnership and the Scottish Government, approval from elected members through the Education and Children’s Services Policy Board (Council) and the Integration Joint Board will be sought.

The RCSP Board is supported by an Oversight and Monitoring Group, which offers a discussion and design space for partners to explore performance, activity, progress and identify solutions to challenges and barriers. All partnership agencies are represented on the group and have a named officer responsible for attending and progressing actions. The Oversight and Monitoring Group is responsible for reporting performance to the RCSP Board and providing information to inform decision making. The group also prepares the annual report and the new plans as required.

Actions contained in our plan will be designed, delivered and reviewed through Operational Delivery Groups. These groups are made up of key stakeholders who have the skills, knowledge, and capacity to work together and deliver on the plan’s key aims.

**An illustration of the Renfrewshire Children’s Services Partnership governance is noted in figure 1.**



**Figure 1 RCSP Governance**

# 13. Appendix 1: High Level Aims

## 13.1. Priority High Level Aims

| Outcome | Number | High level aims  | Actions  | Milestone   | National Performance Framework link |
|---------|--------|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| WELL    | 1      | Children, young people, and their families can access all support in one place | Whole Family Wellbeing / Locality develop approach to provide appropriate family supports and focussing on early intervention, providing opportunities for children, young people, parents and carers to shape the services that impact them | Third sector capacity developed to support identified families  | 1,2,9,11                            |
|         |        |  |  | Services are fit for purpose to meet the need of families   |                                     |
|         |        |  | Further develop Request for Assistance Referral System   | Create request for assistance referral system   |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Migrate supports and interventions to the referral system   |                                     |
|         |        |  | Further develop and align support and interventions parenting by equipping parents and carers with the information, skills and support they need to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people in their care                     | Link Neighbourhood Locality Model and Whole Family Wellbeing Developments   |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Integrate Parenting Strategy and Parental Engagement Strategy within Education  |                                     |
|         |        |  | Develop the Social Front Door - Social work front door expansion from pilot  | Scope parenting support to inform ongoing resourcing  |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Establish referral pathway and align to request for assistance  |                                     |
|         |        |  | Financial Management of Whole Family Wellbeing Fund  | Where safe and appropriate, re-direct families away from statutory services to appropriate and alternative time-limited- supports |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Feedback progress and impact to partners  |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Identify allocation of Whole Family Wellbeing Fund  |                                     |
|         |        |  | Manage funding budget through finance business partner model   |   |                                     |

## 13.1. Priority High Level Aims

| Outcome | Number | High level aims  | Actions  | Milestone   | National Performance Framework link |
|---------|--------|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| WELL    | 2      | Children and young people will be achieving physically, actively and have the best physical health | Provide more opportunities for all young people to participate in sport and physical activity  | Annual physical activity survey to gauge activity levels across Renfrewshire and use the data gathered to provide an activity programme to improve opportunities  | 2,8,9,11                            |
|         |        |  |  | Work directly with targeted children, young people and families within Renfrewshire education establishments and communities to remove the barriers to participation. Groups include inactive pupils/families, pupils with a disability, LGBTQIA+ and care experienced young people |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Support Renfrewshire Community Sports Hub Clubs to provide access for all in every community across Renfrewshire  |                                     |
|         |        |  | Develop a menu of statutory and third sector activities to promote physical activity and wellbeing   | Develop a menu of statutory and third sector activities to promote physical activity and wellbeing  |                                     |
|         |        |  | Reduce climate anxiety Working with our C&YP through the Plan for Net Zero to address the priority issues which affect them and identify solutions to benefit them, their families and wider society and tackle existing and future inequalities to improve outcomes for all | Work with our children and young people through the Plan for Net Zero to:   |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Increase climate awareness  |                                     |
|         |        |  | Ensure safe access to nature and outdoor spaces for all  | Increase outdoor physical activity opportunities and make local spaces safer, healthier and more pleasant places to walk, wheel and cycle in for everyday journeys  |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Identify adaptation measures for key community assets which our C&YP rely on  |                                     |
|         |        |  | Curriculum Physical Education (PE) review and co-design of new curriculum plans, aligned with community opportunities  | Audit current PE curriculum planners and practice across ELC and schools. Identify gaps e.g. outdoor learning/community links, professional learning  |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Look outwards to what's working well elsewhere including research, evidence-based approaches. Engage with key partners and involve teachers, children and young people in audit and development work  |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Develop an action plan to update the PE curriculum planners and pilot in sample schools   |                                     |
|         |        |  |  | Make adjustments based on feedback. Roll out refreshed planners across establishments   |                                     |

## 13.1. Priority High Level Aims

| Outcome | Number | High level aims   | Actions   | Milestone   | National Performance Framework link |
|---------|--------|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| HEARD   | 3      | There must be greater urgency and demonstration of a collective understanding, commitment, and activity in relation to The Promise across the partnership | The Promise Strategic Oversight Group and workstreams ensuring Renfrewshire 'Keeps the Promise' and delivers improved outcomes for individuals who are care experienced, wherever possible keeping children within their families and report on the progress of delivering the Renfrewshire Promise | Deliver the Promise Self-Evaluation Tool  | 1,9                                 |
|         |        |   |   | Embed Promise improvement recommendations in Renfrewshire's schools   |                                     |
|         |        |   |   | Participate and relay information and learning from national Promise Forum, Renfrewshire Champions Board and Care Experienced Young People          |                                     |
|         |        |   | Greater Accountability from all agencies (public, private and third sector) and the private sector in delivering on the promise   | Ensure effective contribution and participation across relevant governance structures   |                                     |
|         |        |   |   | Further develop the Promise Keeper role across all agencies involved in the Promise landscape   |                                     |
|         |        |   | Ensuring greater representation of the Care Experienced Community in all activity concerned in delivering The Promise   | Embed the voice of the care experienced community in Renfrewshire's Promise Plan  |                                     |
|         |        |   |   | Partners and relevant agencies establish means to listen and act on care experienced voices   |                                     |
|         |        |   | All agencies will support their workforce to help their staff understand their role in The Promise and the workforce will feel supported to respond to behaviour in a trauma informed   | Production of Getting it Right for Every Child Language Policy  |                                     |
|         |        |   |   | Trauma informed practice is embedded across the work of organisations that have responsibilities towards care experienced children and young people |                                     |
|         |        |   | Identify collaborative approaches to identify gaps in partnership working across justice, policing and fire and rescue.   | Design workshop to identify collaborative working to address identified gaps in partnership working   |                                     |

## 13.2. Longer-Term High-Level Aims

| Outcome          | Number    | High level aims   | National Performance Framework link |
|------------------|-----------|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Well</b>      | <b>4</b>  | Young people and families/carers involved in Children's Services will have a smooth and positive transition from children to adult services   | 1,9                                 |
| <b>Safe</b>      | <b>5</b>  | Our children and young people will have positive, healthy, and mutually respectful relationships. Targeted interventions on issues that present a risk to children and young people | 1,5,8,9                             |
|                  | <b>6</b>  | All children and young people have access to a safe and well-maintained place to live   | 1,2,6,9,11                          |
|                  | <b>7</b>  | There will be effective multi-agency interventions to support children and young people at risk, including clear referral pathways for those working with vulnerable adults         | 1,9                                 |
| <b>Heard</b>     | <b>8</b>  | We will engage with children and young people in a meaningful way about decisions that affect them.   | 1,9                                 |
|                  | <b>9</b>  | We will empower communities to shape the use of the resources   | 1,2,3,9                             |
|                  | <b>10</b> | All young people will be supported to achieve and sustain positive pathways after leaving school (YP include 16-25)   | 1,4,5,7,9                           |
| <b>Achieving</b> | <b>11</b> | Children and young people will have equity of access to social, cultural, and economic opportunities, regardless of their start in life   | 1,2,3,5,6,7,9,11                    |



### 13.3. National Performance Framework – National Outcomes

| Outcome   | Number | Outcome  | Number | Outcome   | Number |
|---|--------|--|--------|---|--------|
| <p><b>Children and young People</b><br/>We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential</p>          | 1      | <p><b>Communities</b><br/>We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</p> | 2      | <p><b>Culture</b><br/>We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely</p> | 3      |
| <p><b>Economy</b><br/>We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy</p>                    | 4      | <p><b>Education</b><br/>We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society</p>            | 5      | <p><b>Environment</b><br/>We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment</p>                              | 6      |
| <p><b>Fair Work and Business</b><br/>We have thriving and innovating business, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone</p> | 7      | <p><b>Health</b><br/>We are healthy and active</p>   | 8      | <p><b>Human Rights</b><br/>We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination</p>    | 9      |
| <p><b>International</b><br/>We are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally</p>                         | 10     | <p><b>Poverty</b><br/>We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally</p>    | 11     |   |        |

# 14. Appendix 2: Strategic Needs and Strengths Assessment

## 14.1. Partner Feedback

As a partnership we feel it's important to reflect on our work to understand how we can do better in the future. Together, we draw on our data, insight, experiences and relationships to understand what's working, what's not, what's surprising us and where we need to dig a bit deeper to help us plan our approach. Sharing and acting upon this information is one of the key areas where our partnership adds value.

We're confident of where we sit within our community planning approach and how our efforts contribute to Renfrewshire's local improvement outcomes. We know we're part of a coordinated effort to improve the lives of all our residents, and that working with children, young people and their families is a key part to this. Through the Covid pandemic, we demonstrated our ability to work together and adapt responsively to changing demand for services, seeking out new ways to deliver what mattered most to our most vulnerable. Our network of public and third sector organisations work strategically to identify the best route to our children, young people and families. This applies to delivering services, but also the routes to voices to make sure the experience of those we work with is a positive one.

These conversations have revealed to us that the needs of some families are extremely complex. The support we have on offer – though well used - doesn't always fully align to the needs and circumstances of those who seek it, creating a potential gap in supply. Our third sector partners are especially responsive in addressing these gaps where they can, but we appreciate there are issues around the sustainability of this support as resources and capacity are often funding dependent. There is also scope for us to improve our collective understanding of what these gaps in provision look like, and the difference in experience for families in one community compared to another. We're proud that Renfrewshire's network of public and third sector groups is strong and collaborative, but we know we can work together even better to balance and distribute our resource across our communities make the best use of the skills, knowledge and capacity on offer.

**OUR KEY LEARNING FROM THIS IS THE NEED FOR A COORDINATED APPROACH TO DELIVER TIMEOUS SUPPORT THAT'S ACCESSIBLE TO CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES AND ADDRESSES THE CHALLENGES BEING FACED.**



## 14.2. Strategic Needs Assessment

### Key Issues

- Children and young people in our more deprived communities don't achieve as well as those in our less deprived communities
- Children and young people in our more deprived communities report lower levels of wellbeing compared to our less deprived communities
- An increasing number of our families are experiencing in-work poverty owing to low wages and increasing financial pressures
- Alcohol and drugs are prevalent issues in Renfrewshire's communities

### Key Statistics

#### **POVERTY, DEPRIVATION AND INEQUALITIES**

- 24% of residents (42,856) live in a datazone within the 20% most deprived in Scotland, 13% (23,828) and 5% (9,505) live within the 5% most deprived areas. This has reduced since the 2016 rankings, when 27% lived within the 20% most deprived, 15% in the 10% most deprived, and 5% in the 5% most deprived
- the percentage of people earning less than the Living Wage is higher in Renfrewshire (23.6%) than the overall Scottish (16%) and UK (20.4%) rates. In 2021, the male rate in Renfrewshire was 5.9 percentage points lower than the previous year, whereas the female rate was 4.9 percentage points higher
- Children living in low-income families (before housing costs) increased from 11.9% in 2014/15 to 17.5% in 2019/20. In Scotland it reduced from 18.9% to 16.8%
- Child poverty (after housing costs) increased from 19.3% in 2014/15 to 23.1% in 2019/20. In Scotland it increased from 22% to 24%
- Despite these figures, in Renfrewshire the percentage of children in working households was the highest in 2020 it has been over the preceding 10 years, which could indicate a rise in in-work poverty

- Between 16/17 and 20/21, there was a 29% increase in the total number of people supported with food parcels by the Trussells Trust in Renfrewshire. At the same time there was a 48% increase in Scotland. Over the last year, people supported have reduced in both Renfrewshire and Scotland, 11% and 7%, respectively, though increased by 33% in the UK
- The Scottish Government aims that by 2040 no more than 5% of households are in fuel poverty and no more than 1% of all households are in extreme fuel poverty based on an estimated baseline of 23.8% fuel poverty in 2018. In Scotland 24% are in fuel poverty, 12% extreme and in Renfrewshire it's 22% and 9%
- Renfrewshire has the 4th highest gender pay gap in Scotland at 18.6%, which is 8.4 percentage points higher than the Scottish average of 10.2%

#### **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

- The rate of drug-related death in Renfrewshire is regularly above the Scottish rate and has been higher consistently since 2017. In 2020, the Scottish death rate was 327 per million, compared with a rate for Great Britain of 88 per million and an EU rate of 17 per million. The age-standardised rate per 100,000 residents is 29 for Renfrewshire compared with the Scottish average of 22.9
- Alcohol consumption is higher in Renfrewshire overall, and male consumption is higher than female consumption both locally and nationally. However, in Renfrewshire male consumption is slightly lower than Scotland by 0.2 units per week, and female consumption is higher by 1.3 units per week
- In Renfrewshire as of July 2021 there are 587 looked after by the Local Authority, which is 9% lower than the previous year (642), and 11% lower than in 2017. As of 31st July 2021, 92.5% were looked after in the community, which is slightly higher than Scotland (90%), and slightly lower than in 2017 (94%)

- In 20/21, there were 42 looked after school leavers; 23 were looked after at home and 19 were looked after away from home. 86% went on to positive destinations, compared to 88% nationally. This is up from 2016/17 when it was 64% in Renfrewshire and 76% nationally. This compares to the general cohort of young people where 97% went on to positive initial destinations

### HORIZON SCANNING

- Global food prices have hit record highs – the 2022 food price index was over 14% higher than that in 2021
- Inflation rose by 9.2% in the 12 months to December 2022, with this due to increases in electricity, gas and food prices
- In January 2023 the energy price cap set by Ofgem increased by 20% compared to previous levels, with universal support expected to end in April 2023

### Detailed Needs Assessment Data

#### POVERTY, DEPRIVATION AND INEQUALITIES

##### SCOTTISH INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

In Renfrewshire, 24% of residents (42,856) live in a datazone within the 20% most deprived in Scotland, 13% (23,828) in the 10% most deprived and 5% (9,505) live within the 5% most deprived areas. This has reduced since the 2016 rankings, when 27% lived within the 20% most deprived, 15% in the 10% most deprived, and 5% in the 5% most deprived.

The lowest ranking datazone is within Paisley’s Ferguslie area, which is ranked 4, as well as for income and health, 5 for education and 12 for employment. It is within the 5% most deprived for all categories except access. There are 7 datazones within Ferguslie, 5 within the 5% most deprived, and 6 within the 20% most deprived.

##### SIMD AND EDUCATION OUTCOMES

People that live in areas of deprivation tend to have poorer outcomes than those in other areas, which can impact on health, wellbeing, employment and other aspects of life.

The percentage of school leavers that achieve one or more qualifications at level 3 or above in Scotland is 97.9%, and in Renfrewshire is 98.9%, with slight variations depending on deprivation level. In Renfrewshire for example 98.1% of those in the 20% most deprived areas compared to 98.9% in the 20% least deprived. However, the higher the qualification level, the wider this gap becomes. Almost twice the proportion of school leavers from the least deprived areas achieve level 6 or above than the most deprived areas.

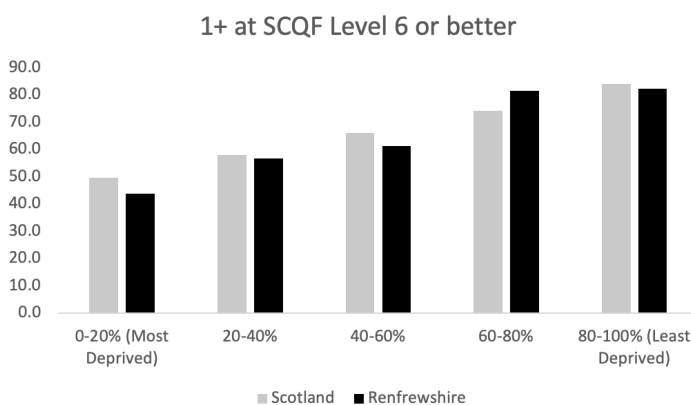


Figure 2: Attainment by SIMD, Scottish Government, 2022

In Scotland, 97.6% of those in the least deprived areas go to positive initial destinations compared to 92.8% of those in the most deprived. Although is not a huge gap, the breakdown shows that those in the most deprived are more likely to go on to further education, training in, employment, voluntary work, and personal skills development than those in the least deprived areas. However, 65.1% of school leavers from the least deprived quintiles go on the higher education, compared to 29.2% of those in the least deprived areas, indicating that poverty is still a huge factor in the ability to go to university.

## INCOME INEQUALITY

### Low Income

According to the ONS Annual Population Survey, 27% of all employment in Scotland is in a ‘lower paid’ occupation, and in Renfrewshire this is 28%.

The national minimum wage is dependent on your age and is set annually by the Government based on recommendations from the Low Pay Commission. In 2016 the highest rate for those over 25 was renamed the ‘National Living Wage’, and in 2021 the threshold was changed so those over 23 were entitled to it. This name change is confusing because of the ‘Living Wage’ which has been set annually by the Living Wage Foundation since 2011. The Government’s National Living Wage is based on median income levels, whereas the Living Wage, or Real Living Wage, is calculated independently based on the amount people need to meet their needs.



**Figure 3: Earning below the real living wage, Annual survey of work and hours estimate, ONS, 2022**

In Renfrewshire the percentage of people earning less than the Living Wage is higher than the overall Scottish and UK rates. Since 2020, this reduced by 0.4% in Renfrewshire and 0.7% in Scotland, and in Scotland the percentage has reduced for males and females. However, in Renfrewshire, the rate reduced significantly for males and increased for females.

## HOUSEHOLD FINANCES

We use our Public Services Panel to ask our communities how they're managing their household finances. In the 2022 survey 11% fewer people said they were managing well compared to 2020/21, with more people reporting they're getting by alright. This indicates the current cost of living crisis is impacting people's finances in Renfrewshire.

|  | Renfrewshire Public Services Panel Winter 2020/21 | Renfrewshire Public Services Panel Spring 2022 |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Managing quite well</b>                             | 57%   | 46%  |
| <b>Getting by alright</b>                              | 32%   | 43%  |
| <b>Doesn't manage well/<br/>Financial difficulties</b> | 11%   | 11%  |

**Table 1: Financial management, Renfrewshire, Public Services Panel, 2022**

## INDICATORS OF CHILD POVERTY

Child poverty is difficult to measure, and it is measured differently at a national level than a local level. The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 contains targets for the percentage of children living in Child poverty after housing costs, but these are only determined at a national level. To measure child poverty at a local authority level we can use proxy indicators, data relating to the drivers of poverty, and local intelligence, such as support with school costs.

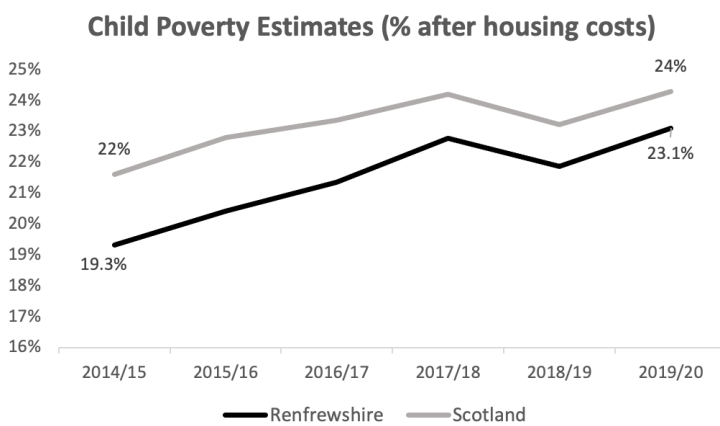
| Target                                     | Interim - 2023 | 2023  |
|--|----------------|-------|
| <b>Relative Poverty</b>                    | < 18%          | < 10% |
| <b>Absolute Poverty</b>                    | < 14%          | < 5%  |
| <b>Low income and material deprivation</b> | < 8%           | < 5%  |
| <b>Persistent Poverty</b>                  | < 8%           | < 5%  |

**Table 2: Scottish Child Poverty Targets**

## CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY

The percentage of children living in low-income families is collected by DWP/HMRC and relates to the proportion of children under the age of 16 living in families either in receipt of out-of-work benefits, or tax credits where their income is less than 60% of the UK median income. This data is helpful to understand families in receipt of social security, however it is measured before housing costs. As shown in the graph below, this percentage was 4.9% higher in Renfrewshire over a 5-year period, when it was 1.4% lower in Scotland during the same period.

The Scottish national targets for child poverty are measured after housing costs, to consider families income after they have paid their housing costs. Child poverty estimates after housing costs are measured by End Child Poverty Coalition, which use the DWP/HMRC data and model an estimate based on local household statistics and local area housing costs data. These estimate that Child Poverty in Renfrewshire is currently lower than the Scottish average, but this is rising at a higher rate.



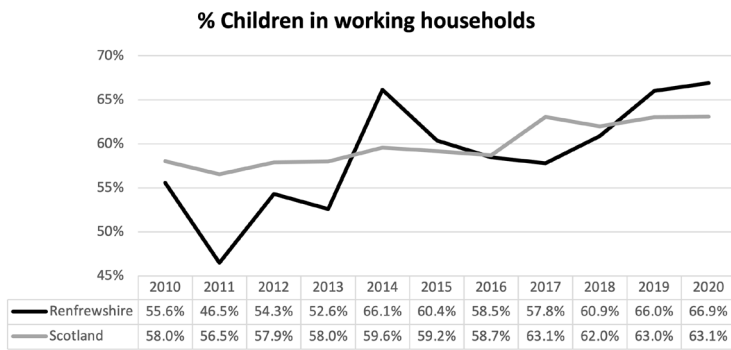
**Figure 4: Child poverty estimates (after housing costs), End Child Poverty Coalition, 2021**

## CONTRIBUTORS OF CHILD POVERTY

The proportions of Children in low-income families in Renfrewshire has now overtaken Scotland as a whole, and child poverty is rising at a faster rate locally than nationally. It is important to look at the drivers of poverty to understand what could be contributing to this.

### EMPLOYMENT

Employment is a key driver of poverty, as income is a main contributor to experiencing poverty. The percentage of children in working households includes all children under 16 living in a household where everyone aged 16-64 is in employment. In Renfrewshire, the percentage of children in working households was the highest in 2020 it has been over the preceding 10 years, which could indicate a rise in in-work poverty. In the UK, the majority of those in low-income household are working families (HBAI, 2020).

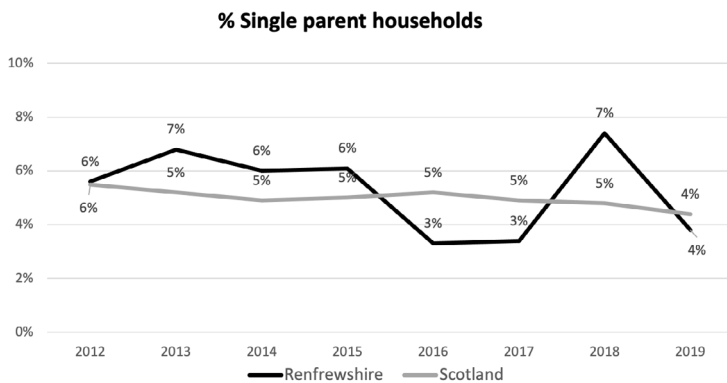


**Figure 5: Children in working households, no one left behind toolkit, 2022**

The Scottish Government has identified priority groups, which are groups sharing specific characteristics who are more likely to experience child poverty. This includes lone parent families, larger families, families with a child under one, families where the mother is under 25 years old, minority ethnic families, and families which include a parent or child with a disability. Some of this data is not available at a local level but almost 90% of all children in Scotland live within these six priority family types.

### PARENTS' DEMOGRAPHICS

Single parent families often have similar housing costs to households with more than one parent, as well as a greater pressure due to childcare needs making them more likely to experience poverty. In Scotland, 39% of children from lone parent families are in relative poverty compared to 24% of all children. In Renfrewshire, the proportion of single-parent households is in line with Scotland, with some fluctuation over the last few years.



**Figure 6: single parent households, no one left behind toolkit**

Single parent households are around 4% of all households in Renfrewshire. In Scotland it is estimated that lone-parent families make up 25% of all families with dependent children, and 92% of lone parents are women. 65% of all lone parents are in paid employment (Public Health Scotland, 2020).

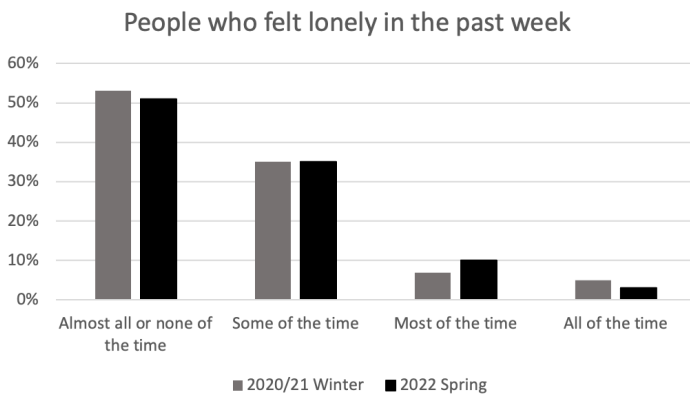
Families where the mother is under the age of 25 is a priority group identified by the Scottish government. This percentage has been decreasing in recent years, as people are having children at an older age. In 2010/11, 35% of Scotland and 34.7% of Renfrewshire first time mothers were under 25, and in 2020/21 this was 23% and 18.4%, respectively. However, this characteristic has potentially the highest likelihood of child poverty. The 3-year average for 2015-18 showed that 56% of all households with a mother under 25 had a child in relative poverty, though sample sizes have been too small in recent years to collect.



## SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS

Isolation and loneliness were already on the Scottish Government’s agenda with a 2018 strategy targeting the issue. The Covid-19 pandemic brought a long stretch of social distancing and decreased contact, as well as periods of isolation with lockdown periods. Older people were already at a greater risk of social isolation and were more vulnerable to an increased risk of severe illness due to covid-19 so were more likely to be shielding, which was a quarantine. Similarly, for those with health conditions or disabilities that may have already limited activity were more likely to be shielding, which could in turn affect carers.

Renfrewshire’s Public Services Panel asked people about isolation and loneliness in both winter 2020/21 and spring 2022. Responses are slightly more positive in 2022, but are still concerning, with 50% reporting being a little or a lot less happy now than before the pandemic, and 56% being a little or a lot more anxious.



**Figure 7: Loneliness, Renfrewshire Public Services Panel, 2022**

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

### Children in Care

Children and Young People that are ‘in care’ are those that are cared for by local authorities. These are young people with additional barriers, such as experience of abuse or neglect at home, involvement in the youth justice system, or unaccompanied minors seeking asylum. In these cases, and many others, the Local Authority and 23 other public bodies including the police, fire service, and health board, are ‘corporate parents’; responsible for caring for and supporting these young people. They can be either looked after in their home with regular contact from social workers, or away from the home either by family or friends, foster, or other residences.

In Renfrewshire as of July 2021 there are 587 in Local Authority care, which is 9% lower than the previous year (642), and 11% lower than in 2017.

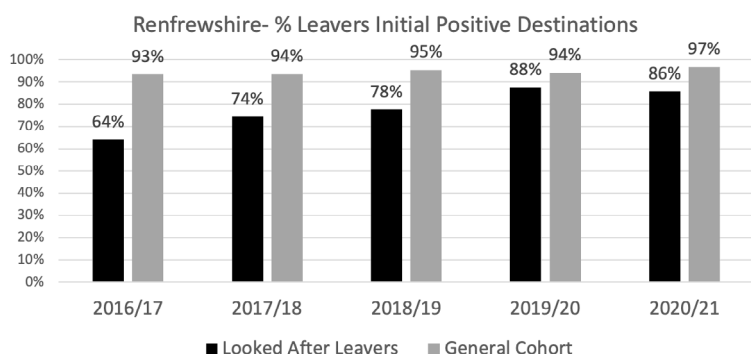
| Local authority area | Children looked after on 31 July 2021 | Children looked after on 31 July 2019 as a percentage of the 0-17 population | Starting to be looked after during 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021 | Ceasing to be looked after during 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021 | Children looked after on 31 July 2017 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Renfrewshire</b>  | <b>587</b>                            | <b>1.7%</b>  | <b>94</b>  | <b>153</b>  | <b>659</b>                            |
| <b>Scotland</b>      | <b>13,255</b>                         | <b>1.3%</b>  | <b>2,738</b>   | <b>3,856</b>  | <b>14,897</b>                         |

## ATTAINMENT

One of the biggest barriers for looked after children is the gap in educational attainment with children who are not looked after. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, attainment figures cannot accurately be compared with previous years.

In 20/21, there were 42 looked after school leavers. Of these, 23 were looked after at home and 19 were looked after away from home. 86% went on to positive destinations, compared to 88% nationally. This is up from 2016/17 when it was 64% in Renfrewshire and 76% nationally.

This compares to the general cohort of young people where 97% went on to positive initial destinations.



**Figure 8: Renfrewshire Leavers Positive Destinations**

## CARE LEAVERS

In 2020/21, 153 young people ceased being looked after in Renfrewshire. Of these, 89 lived at home with their parents, 13 lived in kinship with friends or relatives, 3 had a kinship care order, 21 went on to continuing care, 12 were adopted, and 8 had supported accommodation or their own tenancy.

Young people looked after in foster, kinship or residential care can remain in their current care placement until they turn 21 for Continuing Care. When Continuing Care ends the young person is then eligible for Aftercare support until they turn 26. Aftercare services refer to local authorities' duty to provide advice, guidance, and assistance for young people who, at the point of leaving care, have reached 16 years of age. Corporate Parents have a duty to prepare young people for leaving care and provide support and advice.



## CHILD PROTECTION

In 2021 there were 2,104 children on the Child Protection Register in Scotland, a decrease of 20% from 2020 and the lowest figure since 2002. In Renfrewshire as of July 2021 there are 71 children on the register, which is 28% lower than the previous year (98), and 34% lower than in 2017.

|                     | No. case conferences (initial, pre-birth & transfer in) | No. registrations | Registrations as % pre-birth, initial & transfer in case conferences held | No. deregistrations | No. on Register on 31 July 2021 |
|---------------------|---|-------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Renfrewshire</b> | <b>181</b>  | <b>113</b>        | <b>62%</b>  | <b>140</b>          | <b>71</b>                       |
| <b>Scotland</b>     | <b>4,535</b>  | <b>3,454</b>      | <b>76%</b>  | <b>3,985</b>        | <b>2,104</b>                    |

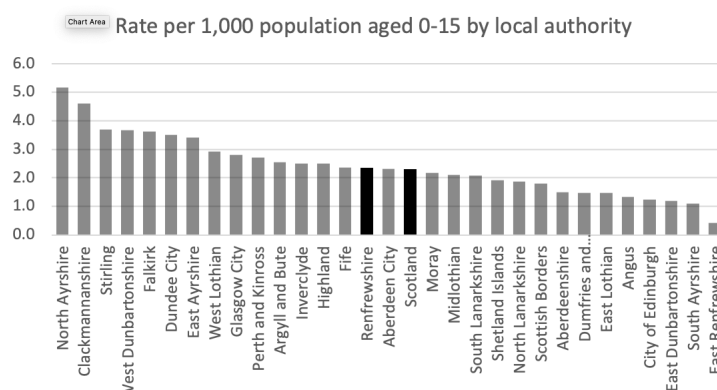
**Table 4: Child Protection data, Children’s social work statistics, Scottish Government, 2022**

The most common concerns identified at the case conferences of children who were on the Child Protection Register in Renfrewshire in 2021, were domestic abuse, parental substance use, parental drug use, and parental mental health issues.

|   | Renfrewshire | Scotland   |
|---|--------------|------------|
| <b>Parental Drug use</b>                | <b>30</b>    | <b>699</b> |
| <b>Parental alcohol use</b>             | <b>15</b>    | <b>501</b> |
| <b>Parental substance use</b>           | <b>36</b>    | <b>932</b> |
| <b>Neglect</b>                          | <b>12</b>    | <b>971</b> |
| <b>Parental mental health issues</b>    | <b>23</b>    | <b>950</b> |
| <b>Non-engaging family</b>              | <b>5</b>     | <b>537</b> |
| <b>Domestic abuse</b>                   | <b>42</b>    | <b>989</b> |
| <b>Domestic abuse</b>                   | <b>11</b>    | <b>154</b> |
| <b>Physical abuse</b>                   | <b>5</b>     | <b>464</b> |
| <b>Emotional abuse</b>                  | <b>8</b>     | <b>796</b> |
| <b>Child placing themselves at risk</b> | <b>*</b>     | <b>80</b>  |
| <b>Child exploitation</b>               | <b>0</b>     | <b>0</b>   |
| <b>Child sexual exploitation</b>        | <b>*</b>     | <b>91</b>  |
| <b>Other</b>                            | <b>12</b>    | <b>410</b> |

**Table 5: Child Protection data, Children’s social work statistics, Scottish Government, 2022**

In 2017, Renfrewshire’s rate per 1,000 population aged 0-15 of the number of children on the register was 3.6, which was the 6th highest in Scotland, the rate of which was 2.8. In 2021 Renfrewshire was 15th highest in Scotland with a rate of 2.4, and more online with the Scottish rate of 2.3.



**Figure 9: Child Protection data, Children’s social work statistics, Scottish Government, 2022**

## LONGER-TERM IMPACTS OF COVID-19

The impacts of the pandemic were felt differently across our communities. Evidence suggests that mental health has been affected with increased levels of anxiety and social isolation related to lockdowns. Although restrictions have been lifted there could be longer term impacts because of being isolated for longer periods of time, such as strained relationships due to lack of contact. This can be particularly prevalent in those that are digitally excluded or live alone, often older people. Women were more likely to have been affected by school and nursery closures which may have impacted their jobs and could have lasting impacts on their careers. Children and young people were also affected by these closures, having to get used to distance learning, and those that had just left school struggled to find employment during lockdown. There are many groups that were particularly affected, outlined in Renfrewshire's Community Impact Assessment carried out in 2021.

As we move into the endemic stage of the virus, there are many lasting impacts on communities to address. The UK Government Office for Science commissioned the British Academy in September 2020 to review the long-term societal impacts of Covid-19. The ongoing project studying the 'Covid Decade' details the impacts on Health and wellbeing; Communities, culture and belonging; and Knowledge, employment, and skills. In doing so, it identified nine areas of long-term societal impact:

1. Increased importance of local communities: community-based voluntary organisations were critical in the ongoing response efforts, and capacity to respond to challenges require sustainment of community networks and engagement.
2. Low and unstable levels of trust in governance: decline in trust in public services impedes the ability to 'mobilise public behaviour for wider social and health benefits.'
3. Widening geographic inequalities: different places have been affected differently and a place-based approach is needed to address these inequalities.
4. Exacerbated structural inequalities: existing inequalities in income, skills, education etc., within different dimensions of gender, race, disability etc. have been exacerbated.
5. Worsened health outcomes and growing health inequalities: existing health inequalities have also been exacerbated.
6. Greater awareness of the importance of mental health: access to support was interrupted which could have long-term impacts.
7. Pressure on revenue streams across the economy: increased pressures on government spending, increased debt, and decreased revenue due to unemployment, failing business, and reduced consumption.
8. Rising unemployment and changing labour markets: increased dependency on social security, which is currently not equipped to effectively support people.
9. Renewed awareness of education and skills: the move to distance learning highlighted socioeconomic inequalities in attainment and digital exclusion.



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Scotland