



Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan

2021/22–2023/24



Message to our children and young people from the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership...

This document sets out how our partnership will achieve this for the children and young people of Renfrewshire.



2 // Our Vision

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

About Renfrewshire's children and young people

Renfrewshire's children and young people benefit from services which aim to improve their wellbeing and provide the best start in life. These mitigate the negative impact of social inequalities and adversities which can contribute to increased risk factors for our communities.

Prior to the pandemic, there were already a number of studies, including Renfrewshire's own ChildrenCount survey, which indicated that increasing numbers of children and young people were experiencing mental health challenges. ChildrenCount highlighted significant numbers reporting symptoms of anxiety and depression which could indicate they would meet a clinical threshold for treatment from a GP or other health service. More recent work conducted by Barnardos locally found that children and young people wanted mental health support that treated them as an individual, that put value on lived experience and that offered different types of support, including peer workers. Work undertaken by Renfrewshire Council has also indicated that children and young people are frustrated by waiting times and noted that existing services had high thresholds meaning services weren't available until a person reached crisis point.

The Covid-19 pandemic has underlined the importance of physical and mental health for children, young people and their families. [Evidence](#) collated and presented by the Scottish Government suggests the pandemic has exacerbated existing risk factors linked to our vulnerable communities. Children and young people from poorer backgrounds demonstrated less active engagement with teachers and services during lockdown whilst young people in lower socio-economic groups reported higher levels of psychological distress than their peers. Local engagement with parents and

carers during the period of school and nursery closures highlighted concerns surrounding disengagement, poor motivation and social inhibition. These difficulties were in some cases compounded by a reduction in other services available.



Lockdowns and associated restrictions have particularly impacted people and families on low incomes and in insecure, part time employment. Reduced and intermittent household income has led to higher instances of food insecurity and fuel poverty, and an increased demand for community-based supports. Between March 2020 and November 2020, the number of people in receipt of Universal Credit in Renfrewshire increased by 92%, whilst applications for crisis grants were 30% higher in November 2020 than in November 2019. These factors demonstrate that many families are struggling to maintain lifestyles which contribute positively to physical and mental wellbeing.

The Partnership is responsible for a range of universal, targeted and specialist services which promote the safety and security of children, young people and their families.

Implementation of the national Universal Health Visiting Pathway has helped health professionals build relationships with families and provide tailored supports and interventions underpinned by prevention and early intervention. However, there remains scope to minimise the deprivation-based variances which impact initiatives such as the childhood immunisation programme and correlate with childhood developmental concerns.

A minority of Renfrewshire's children and their families require specialist services to maintain structure and security. The number of children on Renfrewshire's Child Protection Register has decreased since 2017 although the child protection rate (per 1000 population) has generally remained higher than that across Scotland. A targeted strategic approach has resulted in the number of looked after children in Renfrewshire falling since 2017, with a larger proportion looked after in the community.

Good progress has been made in recent years to empower young people to make safer lifestyle choices. Data shows early initiation on substance misuse amongst Renfrewshire's secondary pupils has fallen substantially, from 48% in 2011 to 29% in 2017 (Dartington ChildrenCount Study). This echoes national trends which show declining rates of smoking and the consumption of alcohol and illicit substances in secondary-age children (Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey, 2018).

The 2019 Hard Edges Scotland report highlights the significance of trauma as a route into alcohol and/or drug use. The engagement work of the Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drugs Commission underlines that alcohol and drugs can be readily available to young people, with this developing into consumption and associated issues for a significant minority. This in turn can lead to hospital attendances, involvement with the justice system, negative impacts on education and so on. There are opportunities to enhance timeous intervention and support to young people particularly those at key transition stages. This will equip our young people to make positive choices about their peer group and their decision-making around offers of alcohol and substances.

Renfrewshire's children and young people make an invaluable contribution to positively shape our communities and create a place that is attractive to live, work and invest in. Local research has shown our young population is willing and able to identify what's most important to them and to collaborate with the Partnership to design services which meet their needs and aspirations. This has been vitally important in the emerging re-design of health and wellbeing/personal and social education, with learner insight and pupil voices helping to shape resources and delivery.



Our children and young people have also demonstrated their ability to contribute to Renfrewshire's participatory budgeting (PB) process, with £125,000 distributed to local projects as part of the 2020 'Celebrating Renfrewshire' project. With local and national governments reaffirming their commitment to the 1% PB target, there is an opportunity to strengthen the breadth and depth of children and young people's contributions in local decision making, ensuring policies and places reflect the interests of all facets of our communities.

Tackling poverty is critical to minimising the differences in achievement, attainment and educational engagement in our communities. Local data suggests 16.9% of Renfrewshire's children live in relatively low-income families. A significant proportion of people supported into employment through Renfrewshire's Invest in Renfrewshire initiative are part of households

with dependent children, and so the work of the partnership needs to consider economic participation as another factor impacting on the wellbeing of children and young people.

The pandemic has brought into sharp focus the economic insecurity and vulnerability of many households and will continue to have an effect on the local economy as focus shifts to recovery in the medium and long term, with the potential for decline in some industries and growth in others. 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.

Learning from the Covid-19 pandemic has revealed differences in the receptiveness, confidence and competence of children and young people in using remote and digital resources, with these differences correlating with deprivation levels across our communities. These findings will guide Renfrewshire's three-year digital plan to develop and maintain quality online learning provision that will improve the learning journey.



Our services for children and young people

As partners, we provide three different types of service — universal, targeted and specialist.

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 and GPs who give you your vaccinations and look after your health as you grow, and the nurseries and schools who educate you.

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 perhaps 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 or the Street Stuff activities available in some of our communities.

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).

Each individual agency within the partnership produces its own plans and priorities for the service they provide. Examples of these are the 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. You can find links to our single agency plans at the back of this report ([Appendix 3](#)).

Over the last year, all partners have had to work differently in order to respond to the pandemic and the changing needs of the community. Our services continued to operate but the way in which they were delivered had to change. Critical front-line services such as social work or essential medical care carried on and had to work around the restrictions. Other services moved online where they could. Schools switched from the classroom to home learning and back again, twice in the last year. Skills Development Scotland adapted the programmes they have for school leavers and parents so that they could be done as webinars or through helplines. Active Schools provided Play at Home packs and delivered online challenges and sports coaching through social media and YouTube, as well as offering extra sport and physical activity sessions once schools returned.



4 // Participation

The work of Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership is underpinned by a children's rights approach which takes account of the views, needs and experiences of children, young people, families and communities across Renfrewshire. Our long-term priorities have been informed by the collection of local data and analysis of national data, as well as from qualitative information gathered from a range of agencies. Although undertaken in 2017, our large scale ChildrenCount Wellbeing survey (which involved over 10,000 children and young people aged 8 to 18) generated findings which remain relevant to our needs assessment and service design activity.

The Early Action System Change Project worked directly with children and young people to design, test and implement solutions to dealing with coercive control in adolescent relationships.

A further example is the [Your Voice, Your Way project](#) which is working collaboratively with young people, staff and carers to create new ways for young people to provide feedback to Children's Services. This has led to the development of a Meaningful Conversations Framework which is currently being tested with children, young people and frontline staff.

Renfrewshire Champions Board — our forum for care experienced young people — continues to consult widely with care experienced young people and meets regularly with senior officers to highlight issues and to inform children's services planning and service delivery.

The council's Children's Services team undertook an equity audit in 2020, asking children and young people how they had been affected by Covid-19. This has helped to inform the recovery work undertaken in schools including the strengthened focus on wellbeing.

Renfrewshire Youth Commission engages with young people across Renfrewshire and, in particular, has informed the review of the PSHE curriculum in Renfrewshire Schools. This work

will continue with funding provided through Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drugs Commission to ensure that young people's views are reflected in the curriculum in relation to alcohol and drugs education.

The Family Nurse Partnership team gather continuous feedback to ensure they are providing a person-centred approach for each family, and also encourages participants in the programme to be involved in staff recruitment.

In 2021, we have established the Renfrewshire Young People's Sports Panel for 16 to 25 year olds. This group has a voice in helping shape school and community sport and the group has also nominated a representative to the national Young People's Sports Panel.



5 // What we want to achieve

Based on what is known about the needs of children and young people of Renfrewshire, and about the impact of Covid-19, Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership has agreed four outcomes that it will work together to deliver.

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

We will ensure our children and young people are safe and loved.



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

We will ensure our children and young people achieve and make positive contributions to their community.

Each partner is already doing work that contributes to these outcomes and some examples of these are set out below, and are covered in detail on the plans listed in [\(Appendix 3\)](#). This partnership plan will focus on the actions where working together can bring greater benefits.

6 // What we're already doing: *some examples*

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
- » 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

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 rolled out in our secondary schools
- » Provision of ThinkUKnow online safety training for practitioners

We will ensure our children and young people's have their rights protected and their voices heard.

- » Renfrewshire Youth Voice
- » Rights Respecting Schools
- » Champions Board
- » 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.

- » 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

7 // Our plan for the next three years

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

We will be bridging the gap between universal services which deal broadly with wellbeing and the highly specialist support for severe mental health conditions, so that children and their families get appropriate help at times of difficulty which results in better wellbeing and greater resilience. We will build on the work we have already done 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.

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.

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 moves 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 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 is a good place to live. 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, if the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child becomes part of Scots law, then all partners will make sure that the principles are always followed.

We have already started work on delivering **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 have to come into care, and making sure that if children and young people do come into care, 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 be taken 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 increase the extent to which children and young people have a say in services which are for them. The new approaches we will put in place will help more children and young people to make their voices heard and will ensure partners involve children and young people in the decisions which affect them. The pandemic made the consultation challenging and as a result we were not always able to consult as fully as we would have wanted to. Therefore, it is the intention of the partnership to develop more opportunities for children and young people to have their say on the priorities in this plan throughout the next three years, and annual reviews of the plan will reflect the voice of children and young people.

Our next round of participatory budgeting will be another opportunity for children and young people to decide how £150,000 of council funds should best be spent to support the needs of them and their communities.

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. 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 through 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 know that these types of opportunities make a difference in later life.



8 // Governance

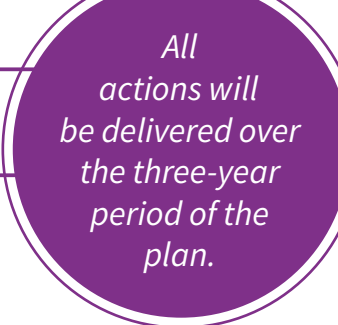
This plan is produced and monitored by the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Board, a group comprised of senior decision-makers from the public and third sectors who have a role to play in improving the lives of children and young people across the local authority area. The group is chaired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

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.

9 // Monitoring & Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation sub-group has been established, and this group meets quarterly to prepare a progress report for each meeting of the Partnership Board. Whilst not all measures of success are suited to quarterly reporting, each partner agency should be able to provide a narrative each quarter on progress made against actions for which they are a lead agency. All partnership agencies are represented on the sub-group and have a named officer responsible for providing information to the sub-group. The sub-group identifies trends or gaps which can be brought to the attention of the Partnership Board. The group also prepares the annual report and the new plans as required.





Outcome

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

ACTION	WHICH PARTNERS WILL DELIVER THIS?	WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL IT MAKE?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?
We will launch a multi-agency, community-based family support service. (The Bridge)	Renfrewshire Council — Children’s Services; Renfrewshire HSCP; Barnardos.	Children and young people will get appropriate and timely support which will result in better mental wellbeing for them and their families.	Measures are in development by the Operational Board leading on delivery of the new service.
We will undertake a range of work focused on helping children and young people have positive, healthy and mutually respectful relationships, including continuation of Mentors Against Violence, a new LAC Sexual Health Policy and further work on coercive control in adolescent relationships.	Renfrewshire HSCP; Police Scotland; Renfrewshire Council — Children’s Services; Renfrewshire Children’s & Young People Health Group.	Children and young people will understand how to keep themselves safe within personal relationships.	No of young people accessing MVP training Teenage pregnancy rates Qualitative and quantitative information on experiences of children and young people
We will take a multi-agency approach to promoting physical activity to support good physical and mental health.	Renfrewshire HSCP; Renfrewshire Leisure	Children and young people will have fewer physical health problems and will adopt healthy habits. They will understand the link between good physical health and positive mental wellbeing.	% of children getting minimum recommended weekly exercise % of children who are overweight or obese at key stages Increase in uptake of physical activity Improved access to sports and exercise (barriers removed)
We will ensure early engagement with young people and families/carers involved in Children’s Services to ensure a smooth and timely transition is made from children’s services to adult services.	Renfrewshire Council Children’s Services; Renfrewshire HSCP	Children and young people, and their families, will feel involved, empowered, supported and prepared for the move into adult services and greater independence.	Qualitative information at the individual level — experience of transition, impact on wellbeing, etc.

Outcome

We will ensure our children and young people are safe and loved.

ACTION	WHICH PARTNERS WILL DELIVER THIS?	WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL IT MAKE?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?
<p>We will enhance our personal and social education work in our learning establishments and communities to create targeted interventions on issues that present a risk to children and young people.</p>	<p>Renfrewshire Council; Renfrewshire HSCP; Third sector</p>	<p>Children and young people will have the tools and knowledge to support them to make positive choices about their lives.</p>	<p>RCPC Minimum dataset and spotlight reports.</p> <p>Feedback from CYP on PSE sessions.</p> <p>Figures from Scottish Fire & Rescue on CYP engagement.</p> <p>Qualitative data on feelings about safety and love.</p>
<p>All CYP have access to a safe and well- maintained place to live.</p>	<p>Renfrewshire Council Communities and Housing; Third sector.</p>	<p>Children and young people are able to thrive because their basic needs are met.</p>	<p>No of families presenting as homeless.</p>
<p>We will ensure effective multi-agency interventions to support children and young people at risk, including clear referral pathways for those working with vulnerable adults.</p>	<p>Renfrewshire Council (all services); Renfrewshire HSCP; Police Scotland.</p>	<p>Children and young people get help and support at an earlier stage when their wellbeing is being impacted by a vulnerable adult in their lives.</p>	<p>Referrals from services working with adults.</p> <p>Qualitative information on earlier intervention.</p>

Outcome

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

ACTION	WHICH PARTNERS WILL DELIVER THIS?	WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL IT MAKE?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?
<p>All agencies will work together to provide support to children and families at the earliest possible stage, as part of our commitment to The Promise.</p>	<p>All partners</p>	<p>Fewer children come into care or need high tariff services from partner agencies. Families are supported to provide the best possible home. Children are actively listened to and meaningfully involved in decisions that affect them. There is a culture of trust and respect between children and young people and the services who support them.</p>	<p>Reduction in number of children coming into contact with higher tariff services.</p> <p>Reduction in number of LAC.</p>
<p>We will develop toolkits for professionals to ensure that they engage with children and young people in a meaningful way about the decisions that affect them.</p>	<p>All partners</p>	<p>The voices of children and young people are heard, they are included in decisions which affect them, and their rights are respected.</p>	<p>% of staff trained.</p> <p>No of children and young people able to access advocacy services.</p> <p>Feedback from children and young people.</p>
<p>We will roll out another round of participatory budgeting targeted at children and young people.</p>	<p>Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership.</p>	<p>Children and young people are listened to and are included in decisions about services which affect them.</p>	<p>Funds disbursed through participatory budgeting.</p>

Outcome

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

ACTION	WHICH PARTNERS WILL DELIVER THIS?	WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL IT MAKE?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?
<p>We will support vulnerable young people to achieve and sustain positive pathways after leaving school.</p>	<p>Skills Development Scotland; Renfrewshire Council; local Employability Partners.</p>	<p>All young people are supported to achieve and sustain positive destinations.</p>	<p>Annual participation measure statistics. Initial Leaver Destination statistics.</p>
<p>We will support children and young people to have equity of access to, and the chance to avail themselves of, social, cultural and economic opportunities, regardless of their start in life.</p>	<p>All partners.</p>	<p>All children and young people enjoy a wide range of experiences as they grow up, enhancing their wellbeing and supporting them to become well-rounded, confident adults. These wider opportunities and experiences have been shown to have intangible benefits in terms of making social connections, tackling social exclusion and building trust.</p>	<p>Qualitative data that's sensitive to individual's journey – what difference has 'x' had on 'y'?</p>



APPENDIX 3:

SINGLE AGENCY PLANS & OTHER RELEVANT MULTI-AGENCY PLANS

PLANS AVAILABLE ONLINE	PLANS AND DOCUMENTS EMBEDDED HERE
<p>Engage Renfrewshire Annual Report and Business Plan</p> <p>Final Report of Renfrewshire’s Alcohol and Drugs Commission</p> <p>Renfrewshire Community Plan 2017-2027</p> <p>Renfrewshire Council Children’s Services Service Delivery Plan 2021-2022</p> <p>Renfrewshire Education Improvement Plan 2021-2022</p> <p>Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2019-2022</p> <p>Skills Development Scotland Strategic Plan 2019-2022</p>	<p> Renfrewshire Better Hearings Plan May 2021</p> <p> Scottish Fire and Rescue Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023</p>