



Clackmannanshire Children's Services Plan 2021-2024

Keeping our Promise

Annual Report 2023/2024



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Introduction



As the Chair of Clackmannanshire's Children & Young People Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the period April 2023 to March 2024. This is our third and final annual report detailing the progress achieved to deliver on the five priority outcomes and shared aspirations we collectively set ourselves in our integrated Children's Services Plan 'Keeping our Promise' 2021-2024 to make a meaningful and positive difference to improving the lives and wellbeing of infants, children, young people and their families in Clackmannanshire. The Partnership, as a collective has delivered well on these priorities as a result of targeted activities and work which are aligned with the core ambitions of the National Performance Framework Outcomes for children and young people so that they grow up loved, safe and respected and can realise their full potential.

Our five Priority Outcomes:

- *Children and young people are safe from harm*
- *Children and young people have the best possible life experience and opportunities*
- *Children and young people understand their rights and are engaged and involved in decision making*
- *Children, young people and families can access the right services based on their needs*
- *The health and wellbeing of children and young people is improved and inequalities are reduced*



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

The Clackmannanshire Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) brings together all those organisations that have a part to play in improving outcomes for children, young people and families. The work and activity of the CYPSP has significant cross-over and alignment with our other local strategic partnerships and plans, where collectively there is a shared, joined up focus on improving infants, children, young people, families' and communities wider wellbeing. These alliances include our Child Protection Committee, Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership, Community Justice Partnership, Tackling Poverty Partnership, Alcohol and Drug Partnership, Local Employability Partnership and the Family Wellbeing Partnership where effective partnership working, united through our collective aims and aspirations are helping deliver the best possible outcomes and provide a better quality of life for everyone in Clackmannanshire. These partnerships all sit under and report to the Clackmannanshire Community Planning Partnership, The Alliance. The Children's Services Plan aligns directly with Clackmannanshire's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2017/2027 which sets the vision of the Clackmannanshire Alliance, including our long term aspirations that *Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life.*

A central theme of the LOIP is a combined local commitment to tackling the inequalities that exists in Clackmannanshire as a result of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage. Tackling child poverty and reducing inequalities through early intervention and prevention are shared priorities across all our strategic partnership plans and integrated work and is at the heart of everything we do.

Our annual report highlights our progress and achievements across Children's Services Planning towards implementing at a local level, important national policy initiatives including the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) refresh, the new national child protection guidance, the Scottish Child Investigative Interview model, UNCRC implementation and delivering on Keeping the Promise for our care experienced children, young people and their families through our Promise Plan 2023-2026. The report also highlights the innovative approaches being delivered through our Whole Family Wellbeing Fund that is impacting positively on how families in Clackmannanshire access preventative, holistic support that is wrapped around their needs, provided when they need it and for as long as they need it. This includes the work of the Family Wellbeing Partnership, a collaboration between Clackmannanshire Council, the Scottish Government and The Hunter Foundation, focused on innovative approaches to tackle poverty and inequalities through person-centred and enabling models of support, creating a community where everyone has a chance to flourish and thrive.

Through effective partnership working and investment in the right high-quality support at the right time, we have continued to persist with our collaborative efforts to work to reduce inequalities and improve better outcomes for our children, young people, families and communities. This is being achieved by ensuring that we are Getting it right for every infant, child and young person; our focus on holistic Whole Family Wellbeing and Support; our commitment to Keeping our Promise to our care experienced children and young people; underpinned by a rights-based approach that puts the rights of the child at the heart of all that we do. Our shared priorities to tackling child poverty remain a consistent focus across integrated children's services planning and Alliance partnerships. Whilst collective progress is being made at a local level there is much more we need to do if we are to succeed in delivering on the aspirations set out in Best Start, Bright Futures, the national child poverty delivery plan 2022-26. In addition, the NHS Forth Valley's Children and Families Programme Board in place to drive forward service improvements within the NHS includes work on the development of a new child health strategy.

As we move forward with a revised integrated Clackmannanshire Children's Services Plan for 2024-2027 we will continue to build on the successes and achievements made as a partnership thus far while recognising the challenges and priority areas where we need to do more if we are to take forward ambitious strides towards ensuring that every infant, child and young person in Clackmannanshire gets the best start in life, grows up loved, safe and respected and has the right opportunities to fulfil their potential.

Sharon Robertson

Chair of Clackmannanshire Children & Young People Strategic Planning Partnership



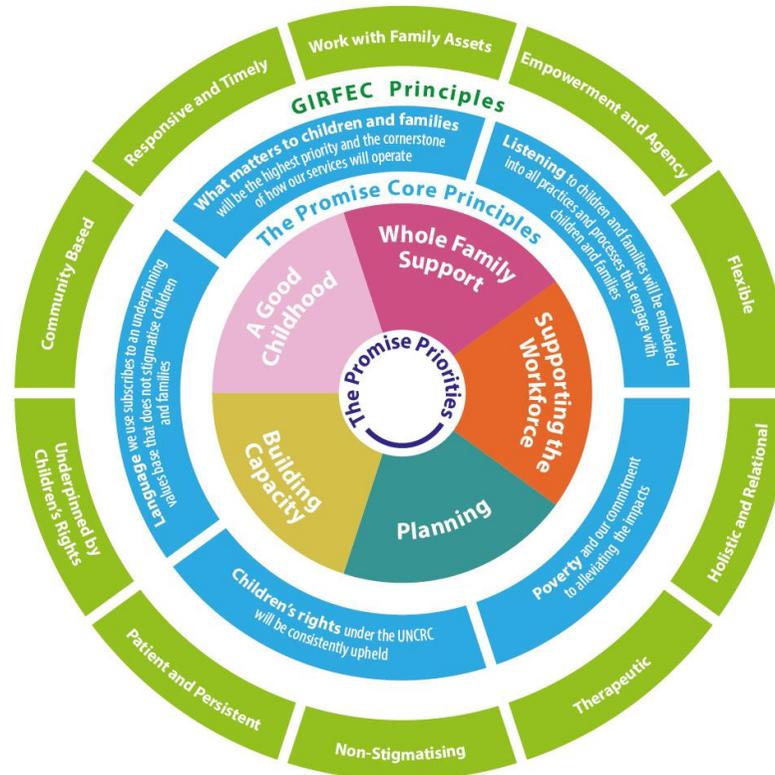
Our Approach - Keeping our Promise

#Keep The Promise

Our Promise Priorities
 A Good Childhood
 Whole Family Support
 Supporting the Workforce
 Planning
 Building Capacity

Our Vision:

We want Clackmannanshire to be a great place for children and young people to grow up. We will do this by ensuring they have the best opportunities and life chances; experience a safe and happy childhood; develop positive wellbeing and can access high quality learning and development opportunities



Our Outcomes:

- Children and young people are safe from harm
- Children and young people have the best possible life experience and opportunities
- Children and young people understand their rights and are engaged and involved in decision making
- Children, young people and families can access the right services based on their needs
- The health and wellbeing of children and young people is improved and inequalities are reduced



Clackmannanshire Profile: Children and Young People 2023/24

31.7% of pupils live in our most deprived areas [Q1] and 14.2% live in our least deprived areas [Q5].

6.8 [per 1,000 children aged 8-15] Referred to Children's Reporter for Offences, slightly above the Scottish rate of **5.7** [per 1,000 children aged 8-15]

225 children looked after on 31 July 2023 compared to July 2022 where there were 257 children looked after; a **reduction** of **12.5%**.

127 [per 10,000 population] incidents of domestic abuse in 2022/23 **higher** than the Scottish rate of 114 [per 10,000 per population] however is an **11.4% reduction** on 2021/22 figure of 146 [per 10,000 population]

22.4 [per 1,000 children 0-17 years] are looked after by the local authority, **higher** than the Scottish rate of **12.9** [per 1,000 children 0-17 years]

21% of all ELC registrations were assessed as having Additional Support Needs with 9% having language, speech and communication issues; both **higher** than the Scottish average of **18%** with ASN and **8%** with speech & language issues.

64% of care-experienced children are looked after at home or in kinship placement, **higher** than the Scottish figure of **55%**.

27.6% Most Income Deprived Quintile (aged 0-25) **higher** than the Scottish figure of **19.6%**

21.4% of children registered for Free School Meals **higher** than the Scottish figure of **17.5%**

13% increase of children in temporary accommodation than the previous year [45 children] and higher than the Scottish average of 9%

94.7% of care experienced children and young people are looked after in the community, **higher** than the Scotland percentage of **89.2%**

1.7 [per 1,000 children (0-15 years population) on the Child Protection Register, **lower** than the Scottish average rate of **2.3**. per 1,000 children (0-15 years).

29.2% of children are living in poverty, **higher** than the Scottish figure of **21.8%**

94.9% School Leavers entered a positive destination; a fall from 96.5% the previous year and **lower** than the Scottish figure of **95.9%**

84.8% babies had a Healthy Birth Weight (3-year aggregate) **higher** than the Scottish figure of **84.6%**

68.4% Child Dental Health in Primary 1 (no obvious decay at basic inspection), **lower** than the Scottish figure of **73.8%**

2.3 [rate Teenage Pregnancies aged under 16 years of age [3 year average rate per 1,000 females aged 13-15] **same** as the Scottish rate of **2.3**.

36.7 [rate Teenage Pregnancies - Aged Under 20 Years [3-year aggregate, per 1,000 females aged 15-19] **higher** than the Scottish rate of **25.0** [per 1,000 females aged 15-19]

80.3% Children with 'No Developmental Concerns' (at 27-30 month health review), **lower** than the Scottish figure of **83.1%**

94.5% Immunisation Uptake at 24 Months - MMR (3-year aggregate) **higher** than Scottish figure of **94.4%**

22% Babies Exclusively Breastfed at 6-8 Weeks (3-year aggregate, **lower** than the Scottish figure of **32%**

The following sections provides a summary of our key successes and progress achieved during 2023-2024 to deliver on our commitments in our 2021-24 Integrated Children's Services Plan which are aligned to the 5 Promise priorities: A Good Childhood; Whole Family Support; Supporting the Workforce; Planning; and Building Capacity. In particular, we highlight the collective local approaches and activities that support early help and prevention focussed services and initiatives, supported through strong partnership working to safeguard, support and enhance infants, children, young people and families' wellbeing and outcomes.



Priority Outcome: Children and young people in Clackmannanshire are Safe from Harm

A shared strategic aim of Clackmannanshire's Child Protection Committee and our Children's Services Planning Partnership is that children are kept safe from harm by agencies working proactively together to deliver effective trauma-responsive services that reduce risks and maximise opportunities for early intervention, prevention and sustainable change. A key priority is keeping our children and young people safe through providing trauma-informed services that help reduce the incidence and impact of adverse childhood experiences and trauma. This includes keeping children and young people safe from on-line harm.

On-line safety

Improving children and young people's capacity for personal safety and building their resilience that reduces their vulnerability and susceptibility to on-line risk exposure and harms remains an important priority to keep our children safe and secure as they grow up in a digital world. Digital wellbeing programmes and Internet safety events, delivered in our primary and secondary schools, are having a positive impact in raising pupils' awareness and confidence around staying safe online and are well established. These activities are supported by school based community police officers who work closely with education teams at our three secondary schools, to deliver safety inputs at assemblies. This has included online safety inputs provided to parents and carers to ensure they are monitoring their child's internet usage, what to look out for and how to keep them safe whilst online.

School staff and pupils attended sessions on internet safety organised as part of 16 days of action and staff attended awareness raising events organised by South West Grid for Learning. Staff, pupils, parents/carers benefit from access to a range of safeguarding programmes and support including ThinkUKnow, Be Internet Legends (Google for Education), Report Remote (Internet Watch Foundation), Respect Me (Anti Bullying inc. online), 360 Safe online for schools (South West Grid for Learning) and awareness of the Cyber First programme (National Cyber Security Agency) to the three secondary schools on courses designed to introduce 11-17 year olds to the world of cyber security.

Speak Up Stay Safe by NSPCC Scotland is an educational programme which aims to help primary school age children to understand abuse and how to ask for help. This has been delivered in most of our primary schools with remaining primaries signed up to take part in the programme. NSPCC Scotland also delivered their accredited online safety programme to all our local foster carers and staff at Woodside children's house.

Police Scotland partners continue to receive reports of 'Sextortion' scams within the division and locally in Clackmannanshire. Sextortion is where a suspect contacts a victim online, engages in sexual conversation and encourages the victim to send a sexual image or video and demand money or the image or video will be shared with the victim's family and friends. In response, Police Scotland and Forth Valley Division commenced an awareness campaign to highlight this scam, on social media, distributing posters and leaflets and School Based Officers provided inputs on internet safety at our 3 secondary schools. As part of the ongoing work our local Police Scotland partners have presented to our Child and Adult Protection committees across Forth Valley highlighting this crime.

Across Clackmannanshire half of children and young people reported always feeling safe in the area they live in which is lower than the average of 55.2%. Notably only 57.5% of children and young people think the area they live in is good, much lower than the average of 65.5%.

A new Forth Valley wide working group, involving members from across the three local authority area Child Protection Committees is being set up which will look at how collectively partners can best understand and better respond to the evolving range of risks and harms faced by children and young people of sextortion and develop harm mitigation strategies and preventative approaches to help keep them safe in a digital and physical environment. The aim of the group will be raising awareness through education, encouraging those who have become victims to report to the Police or someone they trust and ensuring they get the required support. Police Scotland partners are also working with partners in Scottish Government and the National Crime Agency to create a campaign and improve our collective response across the UK. The campaign will launch later this year.

Forth Valley partners have adopted a Contextual Safeguarding approach to extra-familial harm through multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation meetings. The new Forth Valley Missing person Protocol and the operational and review groups that are soon to commence will have a contextual safeguarding approach to children who have been subject of missing person episodes.

Digital Crisis Intervention Service

We continue to embed evidence based trauma -informed services for children and young people at risk of suicide. Our digital crisis intervention service and targeted communication and marketing activities is ensuring awareness of supports available and helping children, young people and their families to receive in-the-moment support when it is needed to prevent risk of harms escalating. The 'Text Clacks' service delivered in partnership with *Shout* has been available in Clackmannanshire since 1st April 2021. Usage of the service continues to increase. Our 2023 figures showed a 22% increase in the number of conversations happening on the platform, a 65% increase in the number of individuals using the platform, and 91% of users accessing the platform more than once. There have been no 'Active Rescues' (when risk is judged to be immediate and significant, requiring the involvement of emergency services), despite the majority of conversations being in relation to suicide and/or self-harm. This indicates the effectiveness of the service in de-escalating risk 'in the moment' and highlights the important role the service plays in ongoing suicide prevention. The most up-to-date suicide figures for Clackmannanshire (2022) remained static from the year before with 7 deaths by probable suicide. However, we continue to see a trend within the data for Clackmannanshire of a higher average age of probable suicide compared to the rest of Forth Valley, with an average age of 45.6yrs (range 34-77).

A Suicide Prevention Group across Stirling and Clackmannanshire is working on Self-Harm and Suicide Guidance for schools. This work sits within the Mental Health and Wellbeing in Clacks Transformation Project which aims to develop a whole-systems approach to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families within Clackmannanshire, to better promote prevention and early intervention within local communities.

Interagency Referral Discussion process

Our Interagency Referral Discussion process is fully operational and embedded across Forth Valley providing police, social work, health and education. This process supports a shared platform for staff to share information and make informed joint decisions about actions necessary if a child or a young person is at risk of significant harm. Information is shared in a timely manner, safety plans implemented and recorded and there is a clear shared record of necessary actions to ensure the right services are engaged. IRD audits are held on a monthly basis and reflect the high quality of decision making and safeguarding that is being implemented in respect of protecting our most vulnerable children. Our multi-agency audit in February 2024 showed our IRD process was very good with only some minor learning points for partners. Plans are ongoing to introduce a standardised assessment tool across Forth Valley to ensure consistency of evaluation and appropriate feedback is provided to participants. 153 IRDs were undertaken compared to 203 in 22/23.

Forth Valley Child Interview Team (SCIM)

The Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) approach for joint investigative interviews with our Forth Valley partners came into effect in February 2024. This trauma-informed, best practice model is helping to improve the quality of the investigative process for children and young people who are at risk of harm. The approach ensures that all interviews take place in a safe, child friendly, age appropriate way and that all children and their families receive the practical and emotional support they require to recover. The dedicated SCIM team consisting of Police Scotland and social work staff are all in post, trained and fully operational and undertake all Joint Investigative Interviews across Forth Valley. Staff feel confident and prepared when interviewing children and that their training and skills allow them to obtain and understand the views of the child in a far more sensitive manner. Feedback on SCIM implementation has been very positive, as identified from the 4 weekly multi-agency audits, where the Joint Investigative Interviews completed by the Forth Valley SCIM team were assessed as being trauma informed, child centred and UNCRC compliant.

Bairns' Hoose development

The Forth Valley Bairns' Hoose Strategic Group (a partnership with Police Scotland, NHS Forth Valley and the three Forth Valley local authorities) is at the early stage of development of creating a Bairns' Hoose model; a transformational, whole-system approach to delivering child protection, justice, and health support and services to child victims and witnesses of abuse and harm that ensures access to holistic, wrap-around, trauma-informed recovery, support and justice. In the absence of a standalone Forth Valley Bairns' Hoose, the Forth Valley SCIM Team have been utilising 'The Meadows' in Larbert which brings together a number of services which provide support for people who have experienced trauma and provides children and young people a comfortable, safe and supportive space to carry out joint investigative interviews and medical examination if required. A Bairn's Hoose implementation subgroup has been established to progress this project with oversight by the Forth Valley Bairns' Hoose Strategic Group.

Support for Missing Persons Investigations

A new scheme was introduced by Police Scotland known as the Philomena Protocol aimed at ensuring officers can trace children and young people reported missing in a timelier fashion. The protocol is primarily targeted towards children and young people living in care facilities and with foster carers. It encourages staff, families, and friends to compile a standardised form of useful information which could be used in the event of a young person going missing. The local Community Policing Team has a good working relationship with the staff at the children's care home in Clackmannanshire, who has adopted this protocol. This greatly assists police if or when a young person is reported missing, or were at risk of going missing, that they receive support from the most appropriate agency. Forth Valley wide, this process commenced in January 2024, strengthening an improved collaborative approach to those most vulnerable and in need of support, reducing risk and harm to children and young people.

Respect Programme

The Respect Programme is a partnership approach designed to ensure a more appropriate and trauma-informed approach to children and young people in residential care who go missing and strengthen police, education, social work and care staff interactions with children and young people in these settings, with a view to improving relationships, reducing missing episodes and delivering better outcomes for children. It seeks to align any police response with that which would be expected for a child or young person in a more 'traditional' family home, reducing formal contact between police officers and care experienced children and young people, and ensure that instances of minor crime or "not at home" periods are dealt with in the most appropriate way by care staff. Respect Programme Training on the principles took place in March 2024 with Clacks Community Officers and Woodside children's house staff and was well received. Guidance for Forth Valley has been developed and an agreed implementation date to roll out this

transformative piece of work is expected in the coming months. Community Officers visit Woodside on a weekly basis providing advice and support to staff and young people with the principles of the approach already becoming embedded. The regular communication and good relationships that exist between community officers and staff and young people at Woodside has had an additional benefit to ensure that concerns about young people's safety or behaviour within the community is identified at an earlier stage to ensure that young people can receive timely support and guidance.

Neglect toolkit

We continue to strengthen our approaches to tackling and mitigating the effects of childhood neglect through implementation of the Neglect Toolkit across partner agencies. In Clackmannanshire our child protection data continues to show that babies and children under five years are the highest demographic for child protection registrations as a result of neglect. Our Neglect toolkit training is well embedded into our child protection training calendar and the Clacks CPC Quality Assurance and Performance subgroup monitor those children appearing on the child protection register where neglect has been an impact factor. The fact neglect is being identified confirms that the Neglect Toolkit is being applied however this will continually be monitored in our multi-agency audits. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 30 multi-agency practitioners attended the Neglect Toolkit training.

Moving forward Independent Reviewing Officers who chair child protection planning and review meetings will monitor the use of the Neglect Toolkit to identify if there are any further training needs for staff. Third sector partners including Homestart Clackmannanshire have carried out the Neglect Toolkit jointly with wider agencies, to support the process and action plan whilst Action for Children practitioners at Clacks Family Support Services all received training in the use of the Neglect Toolkit which they apply in their work with families to address the impact of childhood neglect.

Three participant feedback boxes, each containing a quote and a logo for the Child Protection Committee Clackmannanshire. The quotes are:

- Delivery and ability to walk through an example using the neglect assessment tool was an excellent way to be introduced to this useful working tool*
- I enjoyed the case study discussion format and this has given me the knowledge and confidence when working with a potential neglect case in the future.*
- The case study discussion format was my favourite aspect as it was exactly the kind of case I would come across in my work so it was very relevant and has given me knowledge and confidence to respond to case, with help of neglect toolkit,*

Each box also includes the text "Participant feedback" and the logo of the Child Protection Committee Clackmannanshire.

We continue to strengthen and expand opportunities for learning and development and building capacity through our comprehensive multi agency public protection training calendar. During 2023/24, 434 staff across the children's planning partnership benefitted from accessing training opportunities to improve the impact of their practice and improve the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and families. Our multi-agency Public Protection Learning & Practice Development Workforce Strategy 2024-25 supports our commitment to workforce planning, training and development for staff across the partnership, including e-modules on Clacks Academy and the NHS Forth Valley Learning Platform.

Our Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) is well aligned with the work of the Children's Strategic Planning Partnership to support local improvement activity and joined up approaches to early interventions for children and young people experiencing problems with drugs and alcohol and children and young people who are affected by a parent or carer's substance use through holistic whole family approaches and family inclusive practice.

Effective support for children and families affected by substance use

In 2023-24 ADP partners agreed to increase investment in the Family Support Service, run by Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs. This investment is aligned to deliver against the strategic objectives of the Scottish Government Whole Family Framework, through increased support for family members and advocacy capacity to support the implementation of Family Inclusive Practice across our whole system. The ADP further supported the strategic development of CORRA Foundation-funded projects by Circle, with the innovative family recovery outreach service in Clackmannanshire as well as funding the operational delivery within the Barnardo's service for young people affected by substance use. This is now complemented by a young person's nurse within the Substance Use Service who is co-located in the services outlined to support direct interventions for young people known to be at risk from substance use. ADP partners also support delivery of Transform Forth Valley's Time 4 Us service for young people affected by others' substance use. These initiatives align closely with our Children's Services partnership's strategic planning activity and work, where there is effective joint collaboration to develop plans and interventions that support children and young people's health and wellbeing and reduce youth engagement with substances such as alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

ADP partners also support prevention activity through the HSCP Health Improvement Team, including campaigning in schools in alignment with the pioneering Icelandic Planet Youth initiative, a collaborative, evidence-based approach to maximise opportunities for early intervention to promote sustainable reduction in risk taking behaviour and improve young people's health, wellbeing and relationships. Clackmannanshire is one of six pilot local authority areas in Scotland participating in the Planet Youth initiative.

Planet Youth Initiative



Introduced to all secondary schools in September 2021 with support from the Winning Scotland Foundation and 'Planet Youth Scotland', Planet Youth has been taking place in communities around the three secondary schools – Alloa, Lornshill and Alva academies. The second round of the Planet Youth survey was conducted in October 2023 across the three schools, involving S3 and S4 pupils, providing valuable comparative data. The survey focused on a wide variety of wellbeing indicators to allow risk and protective factors to be identified and covered areas such as substance use and emotional wellbeing, relationships between young people and their peers, their families, school and the wider community and leisure. Future initiatives will focus on early upstream prevention across multiple domains that impact child, young people and their families' lives, including family, school, community, leisure time and peer groups. Planning and actions around Planet Youth are supported through the Clackmannanshire Planet Youth Coalition Group, which has wide membership including Council, Third Sector and NHS partners. Two Planet Youth Officers, funded by Winning Scotland have been appointed to support and implement this initiative in schools and communities.

Local data has informed school level actions and the coalition action plan, bringing together a range of stakeholders. For example, ADP colleagues carried out exploratory workshops in one school and there are plans to involve other schools and the wider community. Analysis of the Planet Youth surveys 2021 to 2023 has highlighted progress being made in recent years, for example, work being done to support mental health and wellbeing.

Key messages from the 2023 Survey:

Strengths/ protective factors

- **Parental Monitoring and Support:** Over 80% of adolescents report that parental monitoring applies well or very well to them, and 91% say they receive parental support easily.
- **Sense of Safety:** 92% feel safe at home, 58% feel safe at school, and 57% in their neighbourhood.
- **Community Engagement:** 62% participate in out-of-school activities supervised by adults, indicating strong community involvement.
- **Positive Peer Influence:** 75% report that most or almost all of their friends engage in positive behaviours.

Areas for Development

- **Substance Use:** 58% have consumed alcohol in their lifetime, 13% use e-cigarettes daily, and 20% report that a family member obtains alcohol for them.
- **Bullying and Discrimination:** 52% have been bullied, and between 17-22% have witnessed discrimination driven violence, indicating a need for inclusivity programs (variability between race, sexuality, where they live and learning difficulties). Only 17% of pupils believed that pupils at school were nice to each other.
- **Mental Health:** 59% rate their mental health less than 'good', and 59% expressing that they certainly feel useless sometimes. 34% have had thoughts of self harm, with 8% attempting suicide in the last 6 months, highlighting a need for enhanced mental health support.
- **Academic Attitudes:** 20% find schoolwork pointless, and 24% have high absenteeism through choice, suggesting a need for improved academic engagement and support initiatives.

School Based Police Officers

Clackmannanshire's School Based (Police) Officers (SBOs) provided inputs at Junior Health week, which included the dangers of alcohol, smoking, drugs and vaping, all directly linked with youth related open space disorder. In addition, the SBOs are involved in Personal and Social Education inputs at the secondary schools and provide additional safety information about drugs and alcohol. Our SBOs delivered inputs on the impact of anti-social behaviour across our three secondary schools, particularly the months leading up to the school holidays in Easter and Summer, by holding pupil engagement sessions, covering one school period a week. The aim of the inputs was to provide awareness on the impact disorder has on our communities, not only on the infrastructure, but more importantly, on the quality of lives for our residents. The SBOs further highlighted the impact the offending has on those responsible, the repercussions and the longer-term impact of offending on life choices, career progression and community acceptance.

The One Punch Campaign was also delivered to raise awareness of the impacts of violent behaviour, how this impacts the community and how it can go wrong very quickly. Drug and alcohol inputs were also delivered weekly to our secondary school pupils, and after securing funding the SBOs were able to purchase £3000 worth of education aids to raise awareness and gain greater participation and interaction with pupils, highlighting emerging trends, particularly relating to vaping and psychoactive substances. These inputs were delivered to all secondary school year groups.

Youth Justice Redesign

Supported by the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) we are progressing the development of a whole system approach for young people who are involved or on the cusp of involvement with youth or adult justice services, aimed at building rights-respecting services that put children

and young people at the heart of reimagining justice. This approach reflects the core components of the UNCRC and aligns with the outcomes of The Promise. The review and redesign of Clackmannanshire Council's Youth Justice services in partnership with CYCJ is well underway and will ensure pathways through the justice process will be more young person centred, providing responsive and appropriate services to young people who come into conflict with the law. There have been 3 engagement/consultation sessions involving strategic managers and operational staff from across the partnership and the final consultation session is planned with children, young people and their families who have lived experience of coming into conflict with the law. A focus on the redesign is the importance of shared language and approach. Training on utilising the Outcome Star, an evidence based tool for measuring and supporting change when working with individuals, has been delivered. The redesign firmly aligns with Clackmannanshire Council's Community Justice Plan and with the Community Justice Scotland's Aims and Objectives. Findings from Clackmannanshire's Community Justice Partnership Strategic Needs and Strengths Assessment 2022/23 informed our redesign.

Our Justice Services continue to take an active role in supporting Children's Services with youth justice activity during this period of transformation and redesign. Co-working and mentoring opportunities are being utilised to support new members of staff and accredited training in approved risk assessment tools has been accessed alongside training in areas such as the Safe and Together model. A further social worker has been recruited within Children's Services to act as lead professional for young people in conflict with the law, building resilience and capacity within the workforce.

Early and Effective Intervention

The Children's Services Early Help team in collaboration with Barndados, have been successful in their approach to Early and Effective Intervention (EEI); a multi-agency approach which incorporates the values and principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) for young people who come into conflict with the law. This joint alliance has been highly effective in reducing the level of re-offending for young people through the EEI process and reducing the number of young people referred to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration on offence grounds. The EEI approach fully supports the re-imagining youth justice work in partnership with the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) that ensures that children/young people receive the right support at the right time that is trauma informed, UNCRC compliant and rights-based.

Our local Community Policing Team work alongside partners and community groups to find long term solutions to prevent and deter disorder for the benefit of local communities. The Community Policing Team are actively involved in youth clubs and support community groups in each town/village, which have been created to support families in need and to deter and divert youths away from disorder. By securing funding to assist local initiatives and taking an active role in these groups, the team assist by raising awareness on safer choices, impact of crime and provide suitable, worthwhile activities and learning for our young people. In May 2023, in collaboration with Clackmannanshire's School Based Officers, the Community Policing Team assisted the roll out of Health Week at Alva Academy. During 2023/24 a new Anti-social Behaviour Strategy for Clackmannanshire was developed, informed by the views and feedback from children, young people, families and communities.

SFRS prevention to reduce risk of harms

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in Clackmannanshire is working in partnership with partners to reduce the risk of harm to our communities, and engaging with children and young people, assisting to keep them safe from harm. Various safety inputs have been delivered to the local primary and secondary schools, including Anti-Social Behaviour sessions, Water Safety, Winter Ice Safety, Road Safety Awareness Assemblies, Safe Drive Stay Alive to secondary pupils in 5th year, Virtual Reality Road Safety input to secondary school leavers, and Fire Safety sessions for Bonfire/Firework season. Young people under 18 years involved in fire setting incidents are offered Firesetters Intervention and Education in conjunction with education and police partners. The Virtual Head Teacher and Clacks Works Pre-16 worker delivered a week long experience programme with SFRS in March 2024 (Fire Skills

Leadership Academy) involving young people who were not attending school. This allowed 5 local young people to experience the responsibilities, teamwork and life skills required by the SFRS.

Improving outcomes for women, children and young people affected by Domestic Abuse

Across Clackmannanshire the number of domestic abuse incidents recorded in 2022/23 was **656**, a decrease of **11.4%** compared to 755 in 2021/22.

Domestic abuse incidents that resulted in a crime or offence being recorded were **38%** in 2022/23 compared to 37% in 2021/22, slightly lower than the Scottish average of 39%.

Domestic abuse incidents detection rate fell from 79.2% in 2021/22 to 66.5% in 2022/23, a decrease of 12.7%.

Collaborative investment and effective partnership working is maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people affected by domestic abuse and to ensure that they are identified early and receive the trauma responsive support they need, at the time they need it. During 2023/24, the Council approved £115k of funding to recruit a full-time Violence Against Women and Girls Coordinator for a 2 year period. This person commenced in post in March 2024 and has a key role in supporting community planning partners to drive forward Clackmannanshire's local Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

Safe & Together training continues to be delivered as part of Clackmannanshire's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and is well established. This approach aligns with the Scottish Governments Equally Safe Strategy and provides the foundation on which we deliver training, services and interventions, keeping women and children safe whilst holding perpetrators accountable. The model provides our staff with the necessary competences and skills in responding to the issue of domestic abuse, supporting child well-being and keeping children safe. In Clackmannanshire, domestic abuse continues to be one of the most common concerns identified at child protection planning meetings and for children registered on the child protection register.

During 2023/24, all our Head Teachers from the 18 Primary Schools and the 3 Academies attended a bespoke Safe & Together briefing to help with our systems change and cultural shift in regards to domestic abuse. In addition 16 staff across Clackmannanshire Community Partnership attended the Safe & Together 4-day Core Practice Training and 4 attended the Safe & Together 2 Briefing. Using this approach has supported staff to identify multiple pathways of harm and support survivors who experience coercive control. This recognised strategy has also allowed us to develop our early preventative supports for those affected by domestic abuse such as supporting STRIVE, our multi-agency early response approach to reduce risk and increase opportunities for prevention and early intervention. This non statutory support consists of a Women's Worker and Perpetrator worker through partnership investment from our Justice Service and Housing Services funding this. A men's self-referral call line has also been introduced as well as access to a non Court Mandated Caledonian Programme. These earlier interventions have led to 30 survivors of domestic abuse being contacted and provided with varying levels of support in the first year of introduction. These interventions have been provided in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council justice, children's and housing services, Police Scotland partners and the Community Justice Partnership and Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership.

Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS), known as Clare's Law, gives people the right to ask about the background of their partner, and allows concerned relatives and friends, the right to ask about someone's partner. DSDAS gives Police Scotland the power to tell people that they may be at risk where they have information that a person may be at harm of domestic abuse by their partner. Police partners works closely with our

social workers to deliver any information to those requesting information to ensure a trauma informed approach, resulting in women being able to make informed decisions based on a perpetrator's pattern of behaviour, even if they have not been a victim themselves yet. An online form has been launched on the Police Scotland website to gain anonymous feedback from people who have reported crimes of domestic abuse, rape, or other sexual crime. Local policing divisions receive relevant feedback forms for review which provides an opportunity to highlight and share best practice as well as identifying potential areas for improvement.

Women's Aid have continued to provide support to establishments through their education and prevention programme and expanding their workshops to ensure that they continue to deliver age-appropriate, evidence-based interventions to raise children, teachers and parents' understanding and awareness of gender based violence, positive, healthy relationships and consent.

Our multi-agency Public Protection Learning & Practice Development Workforce Strategy 2024-25 supports our commitment to increase staffs skills and knowledge across the workforce to support women and children affected by domestic abuse. This includes our established Safe & Together Briefings, Coercive Control & Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act, MARAC, Under Pressure, Responding to a Disclosure of Rape & Sexual Assault and Responding to the Impact of Trauma for Children and Young People living with Domestic Abuse.

For the first time in 5 years Clackmannanshire has seen a reduction in terms of domestically abusive incidents reported to Police. Statistically we have been in the top percentile of reported incidents but have recently moved from 4th in Scotland to 9th [127 rate per 10,000 population in 2022/23 from 146 rate per 10,000 population 2021/22]. This compares to the Scottish rate of 114 per 10,000 per population. Whilst this reduction is welcomed, our ongoing work with all partners, including those with lived experience, remain key to deliver earlier interventions and prevention and increase reporting of incidents.



Priority Outcome: Children and young people in Clackmannanshire have the best possible life experiences and opportunities

Through the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach we continue to provide holistic, rights-based, child, young person and family centred, early co-ordinated support. Collaborative and integrated approaches to the planning and delivery of support for Clackmannanshire infants, children and young people remains central to improve family outcomes, through the provision of universally available support and preventative action at the right time and more intensive targeted help when this is needed.

Universal Health Visiting Pathway

Effective GIRFEC systems and processes are enabling early identification of need to provide the right support at the right time. With focus on families in the early years, our Health Visiting service continues to deliver the 'Named Person' role for children 0-5yrs. All our families have access to a health visitor who delivers the Universal Health Visiting Pathway, which consists of 11 home visits, eight of which are in the first year of an infant's life and 3 Child

In 2022/23 **85.8%** of children received a 27-30 month review with **17.5%** of them identified as having at least one developmental concern. This has **reduced** from 2021/22 data where 20.1% of children at the same assessment were identified as having at least one concern. **80.3%** of children had no development concerns at 27-30 month review, compared to the Scottish figure of 83.1%

Health Reviews between 13 months and 4-5 years. The Universal Pathway supports the early intervention and prevention model to ensure families and children in their early years are provided with tailored support that they may require.

The Family Support Team who works with the Health Visitors received 224 referrals in 2023 for baby massage, a joint initiative with Children's Services Early Help team and Health Visiting team to deliver the Baby Massage/Baby Bonds programme. The uptake rate was 73% with 162 parents attending. There were 122 referrals for the Under 1's groups with 84 out of 122 taking up the groups indicating a 69% uptake. In addition, 110 referrals were made to the

Introduction to Solids groups with 73 parents attending, an uptake rate of 63% and there were 126 referrals for individual support with 100% uptake. Fathers, partners, and other family members are actively encouraged and supported to be included in these local groups.

Breastfeeding Support in Clackmannanshire

2022/23 data:

Health Visitor first visit (10 -14 days) exclusive breastfeeding rates: Clackmannanshire **27.9%**
Scotland 37.5%
Health Visitor 6–8-week review exclusive breastfeeding rates: Clackmannanshire **22%**
Scotland 32%

We have higher cessation rates between initiation of feeding at birth and breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks review however this is improving. The Baby Steps Project aims to prolong the duration of breastfeeding. Launched in January 2023 the project offers home visiting support for breastfeeding mothers and their babies in Clackmannanshire. Two Infant Feeding Support Workers are based with Midwives at Clackmannanshire Community Health Centre offering breastfeeding support to women up to 8 weeks following the birth of their baby.

The success of the NHS Forth Valley Health Visiting and Family Nurse services having achieved reaccreditation of the Unicef Breastfeeding Friendly Initiative programme demonstrates that high quality infant feeding support is being provided by these teams. In

addition to this achievement, the Breastfeeding Network support through their peer led group provision and their ongoing support and commitment (currently 27 local businesses have signed up), continue to support the roll out the Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland. This is a national scheme backed by Scottish Government which aims to help businesses and people who breastfeed know their rights and responsibilities and has made a significant contribution to the modest improvement in exclusive breastfeeding statistics.

The lack of sustainable funding for the Breastfeeding Network to continue to run their 2 peer led groups in Clackmannanshire in areas of highest deprivation remains a key challenge, putting further progress being made in increasing breastfeeding rates and reducing breastfeeding drop off rates in recent years. This could limit any further progress being made in increasing breastfeeding rates and reducing breastfeeding drop off rates that we have seen in recent years. A short-term funding package up to July 2024, from the Maternal & Infant Nutrition budget within NHS Forth Valley is currently providing bridging support.

Family Nurse Partnership support

- The rate of teenage pregnancies fell from 39.1 [per 1000 women 15-19 yrs] to **36.7** in 2021, [3-year aggregate, per 1,000 females aged 15-19] still **higher** than the Scottish average of 25.0 and fourth highest across all local authorities
- Pregnancy rates for 16 & under **fell** from 2.8 per 1000 women to **2.3** per 1000 women [average 2019/21] same as the Scottish rate of 2.3 per 1000 women
- Pregnancy rates for 18 & under rose slightly to **18.6** per 1000 women from 18 per 1000 women [average 2019/21] compared to the Scottish rate of 13.6
- The rate of smoking during pregnancy was **higher** than the Scottish average at **18.8** per 100,000 population compared to the Scottish rate of 12.9 per 100,000 [data 2021/22].

The Forth Valley Family Nurse Partnership continues to offer their programme to younger, first time mothers (aged 19 or under) providing advice, guidance and tailored, person-centred, responsive support. 89% of eligible first time mothers in Clackmannanshire enrolled in the FNP programme in 2023-2024. In November 2023, FNP increased eligibility criteria to include care experienced first time mothers who are aged under 26 years. To date there have been no referrals from Clackmannanshire relating to care experienced first time mothers who are over 19 years. The Health Visiting service continues to work alongside partner agencies to ensure that all eligible pregnant women are offered this service to improve maternity and infant neonatal care and support.

Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)

In line with the Scottish Government ELC national initiative, we are delivering the 1,140 hours of fully funded Early Learning and Childcare for every three and four year old child, with children experiencing the most disadvantage able to access this offer from age two. We further developed our funded offers by expanding early learning and childcare for children aged 1-2 years of low-income households and developed a discretionary policy to allow placement's for children who do not meet the eligible 2's criteria. The discretionary policy can be used to offer a limited number of sessions per week in order to provide support to families. Between August 2022 and April 2024, 20 children were offered a discretionary place. The Scottish government ELC census was carried out during week of the 22nd April 2024. At that point 153 eligible 2 year olds received 1,140 hours of early learning and childcare. Of those 153 children, 34 children received their placement in a private nursery, 4 with a partner childminder with the remaining 115 children in a local authority setting. Clackmannanshire has been identified as having a high uptake rate for 2 year olds, when compared nationally to other Local Authorities.

Our education service has been developing a process for the collection of data concerning Clackmannanshire's children who are two years old and receiving their 1140 hours of eligible funding within Local Authority Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) establishments. The overall aim is to ensure all children aged 2-8 years are reaching their developmental milestones by the time they start school and beyond. The approach is focussed on tracking children's development and progress under the following areas: Social/Emotional Literacy; Gross Motor; Fine Motor; Personal and Social; Communication; Problem solving. With continued engagement with Health visiting teams and involvement of families, children are making progress and are identified much earlier if they require extra support and/or focussed work. Next steps will include a more efficient data gathering tool and roll out to partner providers. Currently 65 children across our local authority ELCs are involved within cohort 1. Cohort 2 commenced in February 2024 and cohort 3 will start in May 2024.

Child Wellbeing Partnership (Early Adopter Community Project)

Clackmannanshire's Child Wellbeing Partnership (CWP) received £1.14m of funding in 2023/24 from the Scottish Government's School Age Childcare Team to create a community-based system that provides school age childcare before and after school, as well as during the holidays, where families on

the lowest incomes will pay nothing. CWP has been working with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), local partners and council services to build and develop a local system of school age childcare within Alloa South and East contributing to Community Wealth Building and Wellbeing Economy agenda. Future plans include work to extend both the geographical scope and school age childcare beyond the Alloa South and East area.

Eligibility for childcare/child activities is determined by the priority family types set out in the Best Start, Bright Futures Tackling Child Poverty delivery plan 2022- 2026, with the local addition of 'care experienced families' as a priority group, and in line with Clackmannanshire's work towards Keeping the Promise. Of the families accessing childcare: 47% of children were in families accessing Free School Meals, 47% were of children in families living in SIMD 1 and 2 and 26% were of children in families living in SIMD 3 and 4. Between April 2023 and March 2024, the CWP has supported a total of 239 children in 165 families across Alloa South and East, exceeding the target set. This included holiday provision of up to 125 places during the Easter, Summer, October, and February breaks as well as school staff development days and agile planning in response to industrial action closures. Clackmannanshire Sport and Leisure offered holiday sports camps for seven weeks of holidays and eleven weeks of holiday services were provided across Connect Alloa, Kidz-World, Community House Alloa and Hawkhill Community Association.

26.7% of children & young people in Clackmannanshire were entitled to Free School Meals in 2022/23. This is an increase compared to 2021/22 where 24.8% were entitled.

77% of primary school pupils were eligible for school meals [includes all P1-5] in Clackmannanshire in 2022/23 and between 20 - 30% of secondary school pupils.

Inclusion remains a key driver of the CWP. Children with complex additional support needs in Alloa South and East and children from our Alva ASD provision have provided places at Play Alloa, a specialist provider of regulated childcare. Play Alloa also offered four weeks of sessions during the summer, with collaboration from the transport team. Lochies School, a school for primary aged children with profound, multiple, severe and complex additional support needs, who require a significant level of additional and/or medical support to access learning, was a new addition to the CWP offer in 2023/24. Keen to build on the learning from the Lens 'Without Exception' collaboration with PAMIS (Promoting a More Inclusive Society) to ensure that our learning around inclusion continued, PAMIS has in place a monthly programme of friendship clubs and social opportunities for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties and their families. PAMIS have also offered wider family supports and access to other online

activities and events. The learning from this work is being shared nationally by PAMIS and influencing local decisions, such as the addition of two changing places toilets in the Wellbeing Hub and one in Forth Valley College.

A focus of the CWP work is creating opportunities to provide engaging childhood experiences and ensuring early intervention for children, where appropriate. This has included consultations and a survey with children to ask what interests them and to share their thoughts and opinions about the clubs they were attending, based on the criteria identified in the national charter.

Young Parents project

The Family Wellbeing Partnership is funding a Young Parents worker who works closely with a number of partners; particularly NHS Forth Valley, Forth Valley College, Skills Development Scotland and various Council services, including housing,



children's services and education. Relunched in September 2023, the Young Parent worker project aims to improve the life chances of young parents

Young Parents Project Outcomes: Sept 2023 to March 2024:

14 young parents received support, of which:

One entered full time higher education

Ten secured additional benefits

Five secured housing

Young parents supported to obtain a combined financial gain of £18,932

and their child[ren] by helping to ensure that their immediate needs are addressed and that appropriate services are accessed, helping young parents stay engaged with education or training and prepare for employment, when the time is right for them. Most referrals have come from the NHS Family Nurse Partnership and children's services Early Help team.

Active Schools programmes

Clackmannanshire's Alliance Sport and Active Living Framework 2018/28, which was refreshed in March 2024, sets out how partners will work together to deliver on our aim to encourage families and communities to enjoy sport and being physically active together and for this to be a feature

of their daily lives. Reducing barriers to participation and addressing inequality of access ensures our children and young people can enjoy active lives, improve their physical, mental and social health and wellbeing through a wide range of accessible sport, leisure and physical activity opportunities.

In April 2023 Clackmannanshire Council entered into a new Partnership Agreement with sportscotland on a four year investment cycle to plan and deliver shared local and national priorities and outcomes for sport and physical activity over the period 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2027.

The partnership allows the Sport and Leisure Team to deliver the Active Schools programme, the Community Sport Hubs programme, enhanced places for sport - including the new Wellbeing Hub and Lochies School project and inclusion projects through the Family Wellbeing Partnership programme and the delivery of the refreshed Sport and Active Living Framework 2024/2028.

The recent Health & Wellbeing Census 2021/22 aimed at S1-S3 pupils reported 78% across Clackmannanshire as participating in a positive leisure activity with those living in our most deprived participating to a lesser extent at 70% compared to the least deprived participating at 86%.

As progress is made towards the development of the new Wellbeing Hub the wider Sport & Leisure team have continued to enhance and expand the offering for our children and young people to take part in a range of sport, physical activity and physical education programmes. All 19 Primary Schools including Lochies School received a 5 week block of Aquatics Skills and Water Confidence. There are 527 pupils participating, led on both poolside and in the water by our 18 Primary PE teachers and 5 swimming teachers. They have been supported throughout the programme by 30 PE students from Stirling University and various staff from the primary schools themselves.

All schools have school sports committees and completed the sportscotland School Sport Award self assessment process, with 11 schools achieving Gold status including Lochies school.

Our Active Schools Co-ordinators take part in an integrated planning approach with staff and pupils in each school. All schools have bespoke extra curricular programmes in place which are free for all children and young people, providing them with more opportunities to take part in sport during and after school. As at April 2024 Participation levels in extra curricular activity were: Primary 51% and Secondary 20%. Active Schools Co-ordinators and School Sports Committees are working together to create clear signposting and pathways from school into community sport with volunteers from 14 local community clubs/local organisations delivering Active Schools programmes. The new Leadership Academy pupils have been volunteering within Active Schools programmes, Sports Development Classes, Firpark Ski Centre and Local community sports clubs. Currently 14 leadership academy members have delivered outside of their own school in a sports & leisure programme or community setting. Our Community Learning & Development (CLD) team offers outdoor learning opportunities with schools, including the School Support Service and these have been particularly successful with children and

In school year 2022/23, **73.5%** of Primary 1 children measured had a healthy weight, 25% were at risk of overweight or obesity and 1.5% was at risk of underweight.

Overweight or obesity rates are higher than the Scottish average and the percentage of young people at risk of underweight is lower.

young people who display dysregulated behaviours, have attendance issues or on the cusp of disengagement. Enhancing and encouraging families to engage in the benefits of leisure time activities that support them and their children's health and wellbeing and lead healthy lives continue to be key priority focus.

Improving children and young people's wellbeing and attainment

Supported by the strategic goals of The Promise and the Scottish Attainment Challenge, the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund is a targeted resource provided to local authorities to support care experienced children and

young people from birth to the age of 26, aimed to improve their educational outcomes and experiences. This includes children and young people who are on the edges of care and who need support in order to avoid becoming care experienced. In Clackmannanshire this funding has been invested in the Virtual Head Teacher (VHT) role and embedding MCR Pathways; a programme that ensures care experienced young person, or those who have experienced disadvantage, has access to the same educational outcomes, career opportunities and life chances as every other young person. Over the 2023/2024 academic year, 174 young people were supported by MCR pathways, 68 of whom were care experienced. Impact data for academic year 2022/23 showed 77.3% of mentored care-experienced leavers left school with a level 5+ qualification compared to 29.4% of non mentored across the three schools.

Clackmannanshire's National Improvement Framework (NIF) Plan 2023-2024 considers the totality and use of combined Attainment Scotland Funding (Strategic Equity Funding (SEF), Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) and Care Experienced Children and Young People (CECYP) funding and the achievements being made against the five national priorities of the NIF which includes: a focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap, whilst raising attainment for all; improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy; and improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.

Robust and proactive tracking in place is monitoring attendance and achievement, with appropriate interventions implemented to remove barriers to engagement, including work experience; mentoring, volunteering, Columba 1400, VHT Leadership Academy, VHT Open University Learning, Skills Academy and ClacksWorks being examples. Enhanced tracking of attendance is enabling the Virtual Head Teacher to work together with partners on progressive support programmes and bespoke packages for care experienced children and young people. All our care experienced young people across our secondary schools has access to a key worker from Skills Development Scotland, ensuring consistency of approach in supporting our young people into a positive destination. MCR positive destinations have improved by 9.1% from the previous year. For the academic year 2022/23, 90.9% of care experienced young people left school to an MCR positive destination (college, university or employment). This compares 50% of those non mentored and 73.3% of care experienced young people nationally.

We continue to target interventions to those areas of greatest need to improve outcomes and close the poverty related attainment gap through delivery of co-ordinated and focused programme plans designed to improve children's literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in our schools. Work streams for 2023/24 focused on: Improving Outcomes team; Speech and Language Therapy; and Early Intervention team.

Across Clackmannanshire, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected CfE Level increased in 2022/23 across P1, P4 and P7 combined in both literacy and numeracy compared to 2021/22.

There has been yearly increases reported in the achievement levels for both literacy and numeracy:

- 69.6% achieved Literacy in 2022/23; lower than pre pandemic levels by 1.6pp but lower than the Scottish average
- 72.4% achieved Numeracy in 2022/23; lower than pre pandemic levels by 4.4pp but lower than the Scottish average

At senior level:

- 90.7% achieved third level or better in Literacy in 2022/23; higher than pre pandemic levels by 7.9pp and higher than Scottish average
- 86.9% achieved third level or better in Numeracy in 2022/23; higher than pre pandemic levels by 9.6pp but lower than the Scottish average
- 53.5% achieved fourth level in Literacy in 2022/23; higher than pre pandemic levels by 20.3pp but lower than the Scottish average
- 66.1% achieved fourth level in Numeracy in 2022/23; higher than pre pandemic levels by 26.8pp and higher than the Scottish average

Poverty Related Attainment Gap

The achievement level for pupils from the most deprived areas [SIMD Quintile 1] for P1, P4 & P7 combined increased in 2022/23 in literacy but not in numeracy; literacy levels are the same as pre pandemic levels, but numeracy are lower. Compared to pre-pandemic levels, the gap has narrowed in both literacy and numeracy.

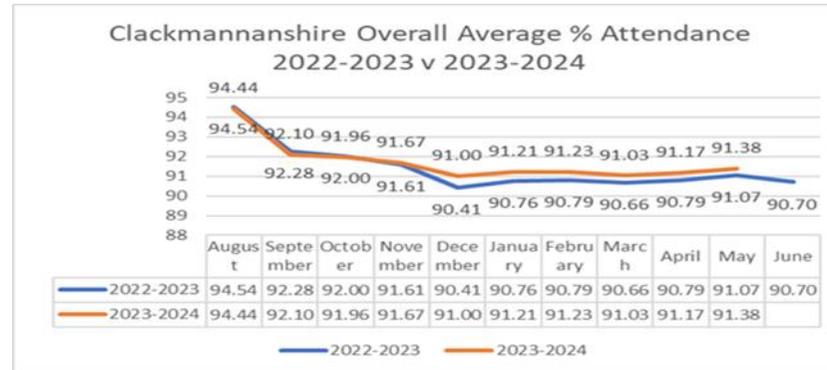
Community Around the School

As part of the Family Wellbeing Partnership, partners are working effectively together to offer a wide range of person-centred 'Community Around the School' activities within Alloa Academy. These have enabled our young people and families to feel included, make progress and achieve and participants are developing self-confidence, resilience, leadership and life skills. The 'Community around the School' approach includes our Council Environmental Services offering work experience, Alloa Academy's Engagement and Welfare programme, Clackmannanshire Active Learning Academy (CALA) and the provision of mentoring and support programmes such as MCR Pathways and Career Ready. There is an increasing use of youth awards to accredit learning, including the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) for young people who are struggling with attendance in mainstream school. These qualifications are being delivered with the support of CLD staff, Virtual Head Teacher and partners including Connect Alloa and 'Coach My Sport' Leadership Academies.

Improving attendance is a key focus for educational establishments. During 2023/24, media campaigns led by the Forth Valley and West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative (FV&WL RIC) have been targeting schools and pupils needing additional support to attend school. Staff in schools have access to a range of training and awareness raising resources to ensure there is a collegiate and collaborative approach to tackling and improving attendance, including the refreshed FV&WL RIC Blog: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/fvwlrlic/>

Overall attendance by pupils who are entitled to Free School Meals across Clackmannanshire was 83.8%; higher than the Scottish average but lower than the overall attendance rate. Attendance rate for pupils who live in our most deprived areas of Clackmannanshire [SIMD Q1] was 88.2%, higher than the Scottish rate; this compares to our least deprived areas [SIMD Q5] where attendance was 94.5%, and higher than the Scottish rate.

In 2022/23 overall attendance across Clackmannanshire was **90.7%**, and higher than the national average 90.2%.



Since the introduction of a new exclusion policy across the authority, there have been no recent exclusions. Last reported exclusion was 2020/21.

Children and young people with Additional Support Needs

We are reducing barriers to inclusion at home, school and in the community for children and young people with additional support needs (ASN) with the implementation of a whole systems approach for learners with ASN/EASN. During 2023, we developed Additional Support for Learning (ASL) Transition guidance to ensure well planned, successful transitions to provide the best possible outcomes; including positive destinations, transition to adulthood and accessing adult services and support. To ensure all our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed, an Additional Support for Learning [ASL] Strategy and ASL Action Plan 2024-2027 was also developed and approved by Council on 1 February 2024.

Across Clackmannanshire schools in 2022/23, **34.9%** of pupils were recorded as having an Additional Support Need [ASN].

30.1% in primary schools and **39.4%** in secondary schools; **lower** than the Scottish average [36.7%; primary 30.4% and secondary 42.9%].

The rate of pupils across Clackmannanshire who have been assessed and/or declared as having a disability per 1,000 pupils in 2022/23 was **16.2** [Scottish average 31.1] and 9th lowest rates across all local authorities.

Children's services, education and our Health and Social Care Partnership partners developed an integrated transitions strategy and operational procedure to improve outcomes for disabled children and young people to support their timely transition to adulthood and accessing adult services/support. Throughout August and December 2023 a programme of consultation and engagement and on-line survey involving a range of stakeholders and partners, including parents and carers informed the new policy. This policy was approved at Council on 1 February 2024.

In addition a successful transition fair took place in April 2024 which highlighted the range of services and destinations available for young people with additional support needs moving on from school. The key stakeholders had a development day to develop the policy further into an action plan to ensure there is broad awareness of the policy and related procedures in order to enhance the transition from school to adult life.

Youth Volunteering

During 2023/24 we continued to roll out and deliver the Youth Volunteering programme and Saltire Awards registrations to improve uptake. The number of young people registered to volunteer with Saltire Awards saw a 121% increase compared to last year with 258 new certificates given out for young people at the start of their volunteering journey. Whilst the number of organisations administering Saltire Awards increased to 5 compared to 3 last year, the aim is to get young people registered directly online. Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface (CTSI) is investing in a new 'portal' system called Team Kinetic for volunteers that will be launched early October (2024) to encourage young people and young adults to register themselves and their hours – and will help to encourage them to continue their volunteering pathway beyond 25 years old and keep them connected with volunteering opportunities and news. CTSI has launched a new Volunteering Approach to a Wellbeing Economy three year plan which puts volunteering at the heart of a healthy successful Clackmannanshire and also promoting the Saltire Ambassador programme to youth organisations to encourage more peer support to volunteer. Close partnership working between the Virtual Head Teacher and CTSI is supporting signposting/options for Volunteering.

Police Scotland Youth Volunteers (PSYV)

Clackmannanshire has an active Alloa PSYV group who have participated in several local community events. Across the reporting period Alloa PSYV contributed to their local communities in a variety of ways, volunteering at the Tullibody Delph Pond clean up and the Race for Life providing some great experiences for the young people. Alloa PSYV along with Falkirk PSYV visited the RNLI in South Queensferry where they all received some water safety advice and learned about RNLI work. Our Alloa PSYV along with Forth Valley Divisions Safer Communities team attended the learning disability sport games, held over two days at Stirling University. The Forth Valley Disability Sport group participated and included athletes from Clackmannanshire and the PSYV were able to support athletes throughout the event. Alloa PSYV took part in the Kilt Walk (14.9 miles) after choosing to fund raise for local charity 'Connect' which provides local young people who experience social isolation with a befriending service. They raised £2000 for the charity. Furthermore, Alloa PSYV has engaged with the public, providing safety advice and information when supporting local communities at Dino Day Alloa and Alloa Saints Youth football tournament.

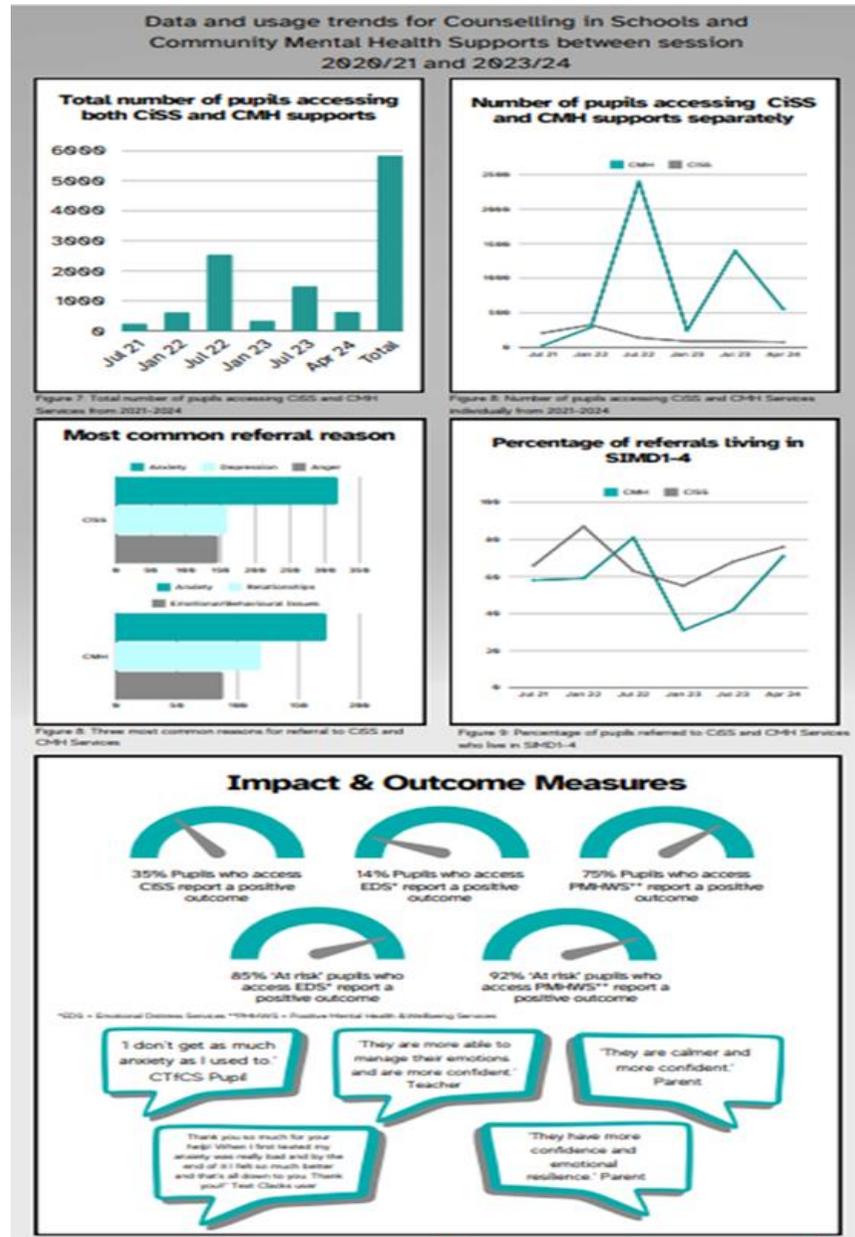
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Youth Scheme

The Youth Volunteer Scheme continues to be a success at Alloa station and is a pivotal part of youth engagement within Clackmannanshire. Run weekly, the scheme is creating opportunities for those aged 12-18 years to work together for a safer community, while developing skills for life, learning and work and enhancing inter-personal skills and confidence as they volunteer as young ambassadors for SFRS. One individual within the programme was awarded a Chief Fire Officers Commendation following his actions to provide medical aid to a member of the Clackmannanshire community.

Mental Health and Wellbeing in Clacks programme

Since the launch of the Transforming Mental Health Services Programme in 2021 (now more commonly referred to as 'Mental Health and Wellbeing in Clacks'), just under 6000 children and young people have accessed a combination of the Counselling in Schools Service (CiSS), Creative Therapeutic Interventions for Children Service (CTIfCS) and digital services (Mind Moose, Kooth and Text Clacks). The programme has four key principles – holistic ('Closer to Clacks'), one door ('Tell Us Once'), contextual ('Closer to Clacks') and responsive ('Children Cannot Wait') and are embedded in the continuum of mental health supports, available both digitally and face-to-face as outlined. We continue to see a strong impact of deprivation on referral figures, with anxiety being the most common reason for referral across all services. A range of positive impact measures have been recorded, including improvements

on standardised assessments (e.g. YP Core, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, Behaviour Rating Index of Executive Function 2). The impact appears to be particularly positive in those users classed as 'At Risk' e.g. those who have additional support needs or are care experienced.



In addition to services for children and young people, two new services for parents and carers were launched in 2023/24. The Barnardo's In Mind project offers small group peer support for parents/carers of children and young people who are struggling with their mental health. An initial pilot group was successful, with participants reporting increased confidence in dealing with mental health difficulties and feeling more supported through the links and networks established in the group.

Qwell, a digital service for mild to moderate mental health needs was launched in February 2024 for all parents/carers of children/young people under the age of 18 yrs. A usage rate of 2.9% has been achieved within the first five months, with a predicted usage rate of 4% by the end of the first year. This is at the top end of usage estimates for new digital services. The service is primarily being used out of hours, with some representation of male users and particularly those from ethnic minorities and those in the LGBTQ population. 100% of users have stated that they would recommend the service to others.

A revised Digital Learning Strategy was approved by Clackmannanshire Council in May 2023. The development of our **Directory of Mental Health Supports website** offers a 'one stop shop' for information and advice relating to a range of mental health needs: <https://sites.google.com/view/directory-of-mental-health-support/mhwbinclackmannanshire>



Priority Outcome: The health and wellbeing of children and young people is improved and inequalities are reduced

Addressing the key issues at a local level that contribute to poverty and inequalities and improving the health and wellbeing of our infants, children and young people and their families in our most disadvantaged communities is being achieved through enabling models of personalised support and enhanced financial and practical help. Our work to tackle child poverty is strongly aligned with our commitment and focussed efforts on the drivers of child poverty reduction and priority families at greatest risk of poverty. Our Children's Services Planning Partnership and local Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan are central to driving this activity to ensure we maximise collective action and impact to sustainably reduce child poverty in our communities and promote improved health and wellbeing.

Promoting good oral health

68.4% of P1 pupils in Clackmannanshire have good dental health (no dental decay) lower than the Scottish average at 73.8%. Unlike the Scottish picture, the percentage of P7 pupils with good dental health fell to **67.7%** whereas the Scottish average for P7 pupils increased to 75.2%

We are improving the level of support for families by building prevention into our policies and services which are having a positive impact on children's health and wellbeing. We continue to maintain an enhanced focus on preventative health initiatives that ensure all children in our early learning centres, nurseries and schools have access to Childsmile, the national child oral health improvement programme which includes supervised tooth brushing. The National Dental Inspection Program undertakes routine dental inspections of all our Primary 1 and Primary 7 children, including community based oral health promotion, early registration at a dentist and targeted provision of fluoride varnish for children in the most deprived populations.

Active travel

Active travel to school is being encouraged, with nearly two thirds of our school children normally travelling in an active way, including Walking Bus initiatives taking place across the county. As well as promoting physical activity this initiative is reducing traffic congestion near schools. We have achieved top quartile rankings in all years but one, with the 2nd highest levels of any authority for the last 2 years. Significant investment has been made in our core paths network and the safer routes to school initiative to promote accessible and sustainable active travel routes, often separate from the main road network, alongside work to make our roads more walking and cycling friendly. We are also focussed on ensuring the county has suitable public transport provision, and road safety is a key priority in our schools.

In 2022, **65.3%** of primary and Secondary school children in Clackmannanshire normally travel to school in an active way (walking, cycling, and using a scooter, skateboard or inline/roller skates) higher than the Scottish average of 50.2%

Partnership work to reduce Child Poverty

A wide range of work has continued to be undertaken directly by Alliance partners through our Tackling Poverty Partnership, the Local Employability Partnership and Family Wellbeing Partnership to mitigate the cost of living crisis for local families and communities. This has included activities to support and promote improved wellbeing, through targeted responses and grant funding to address financial insecurity such as employability programmes alongside the integration of money advice and holistic support services to prevent future hardship which are highlighted in our Local Child Poverty Annual Report 2023/24. Across Scotland, the proportion of children aged under 16 in low income families varies from 11% to 32% for Relative low income families and from 9% to 26% for Absolute in financial year ending (FYE) 2022. Clackmannanshire had the 3rd highest proportion of children aged under 16 in low income families for both Relative and Absolute measures (before Housing Costs) at 25.9% and 20.4% respectively. [DWP, FYE 2022].

Clackmannanshire remains the third highest child poverty rate in Scotland, with **29.2%** of children living in poverty (after Housing costs) compared to the Scottish indicator of 21.8%. [Source: Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2022/23]

The Council's Economic Development service is responsible for the governance of the No One Left Behind funding (£262k for 23/24) and Tackling Child Poverty funding (£441k for 23/24) which is allocated annually by Scottish Government. Use of the funding is agreed through the Local Employability Partnership to address identified gaps and complement existing provision locally. During 2023/24 this funding supported a range of interventions focussed on parental employability and support. This included:

- 6 paid work placements for parents in Council nurseries
- 9 paid work placements for parents with local employers including NHS Forth Valley
- Employability Grant Scheme funding 11 projects across mainly Third sector organisations to deliver a range of activities/services for parents
- Contribution to a Childcare Project Executive post with Clackmannanshire Economic Regeneration Trust (CERT)
- Childminding recruitment project with the Scottish Child Minding Association
- Contribution to Money Advice, Digital Skills and Mental Health Services for Clacks Works participants
- Contribution to the THRIVE to Keep Well programme
- Barrier Free Fund – discretionary fund for Clacks Works Key Workers to access for their clients to pay for travel expenses, certificated training, child care costs, clothes for interviews/starting work.

During 2023/24, three programmes for young people aged 16 – 19 year were commissioned with external providers using No One Left Behind funding. Programmes were delivered in two cohorts with late summer 2023 and January 2024 intakes:

- 20 week programme delivered by Enable for young people with multiple barriers or Additional Support Needs to help build their confidence and skills to enable them to progress towards employment. 24 young people were supported in 2022/23, with 13 moving into a positive destination and a further 6 moving into further support provision.
- 13 week Construction Sector Skills programme delivered by Stirling Community Enterprise. Programme provides a mixture of certificated training and work experience for 20 young people. 21 young people were supported in 2023/24 with 8 moving into a positive destination and a further 7 moving into further support provision.
- 16 week Customer Facing Sector Skills programme delivered by Positive Qualities using the Inglewood House & Spa as the training venue. 19 young people were supported with 10 supported into a positive destination and a further 2 moving into further support provision.

- All young people on these programmes are paid a weekly training allowance of £55.

Employability Programmes delivered during 2023/24:

Parental Employability Support

This programme provides employability support for parents who are either out of work or in work. Support is tailored to individual needs and helps parents increase their income either through supporting them into work or increasing their wages and/or hours. Funded through Tackling Child Poverty Funding from the Scottish Government, Clackmannanshire Works team supported 109 new parents in 2023/24; moving 37 into employment, 12 into Further or Higher Education and 12 into volunteering.

Positive Moves

This is a voluntary programme offering assistance to local people who are seeking work or thinking about taking the first steps towards employment. Delivered through a partnership of Clackmannanshire Economic Regeneration Trust (CERT); who are providing support to the ‘economically inactive’ group of clients, and Clackmannanshire Works; providing support for unemployed residents to remove barriers and help into employment. The programme was launched in April 2023 and is funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund up to March 2025. Positive Moves is the successor programme to our previous successful ESF funded Employability programme which ran from April 2015 to end March 2023. In 2023/24 Positive Moves programme supported 369 unemployed people, supporting 83 people into employment and 6 into further or higher education.

Fair Work Incentive

An employer recruitment incentive, up to £8,000 is used as a contribution to the additional costs of an employer recruiting and sustaining an eligible recruit during their first 52 weeks of employment. Clackmannanshire Works have supported 33 people with local employers. Funded through a mixture of No One Left Behind (NOLB) funding, Tackling Child Poverty funding and Council funding.

School Key Worker

This new post has been created to support young people with multiple barriers who are summer and winter leavers from the three secondary schools to help them transition towards and into a positive destination. The post is funded through No One Left Behind funding and UK Shared Prosperity funding up to 31 March 2025. This post has supported 31 young people who were at risk of not being in education, employment or training. In 2023/24, 7 young people were supported into further or higher education, 6 into vocational training, 4 into employment and 4 into volunteering.

More young people [18 – 21-year-olds] are claiming out of work benefits than any other age group at **6.1%**, more than the Scottish average of 4.6%. Despite being higher than the Scottish average, this rate is lower than the same period in 2023 where it was 7.5%.

Initial positive destination data 2022/23: Clacks 94.9% [Scottish figure 95.9%]

- 26.5% of young people moved on to higher education, a fall on 2021/22 where it was 32.7%; lower than pre-pandemic levels [32.3%]
- 28.4% of young people moved on to further education, an increase on 2021/22 where it was 24%, slight fall compared to pre-pandemic level [28.7%]
- 28.4% of young people entered employment, a fall on 2021/22 where it was 29.9%; an increase on pre-pandemic levels [24.4%]
- 3.1% of young people were “unemployed seeking”, an increase compared to 2021/22 where it was 2.4%; lower than pre-pandemic levels [3.9%]

Modern Apprenticeships

The Economic Development team continues to support services to recruit and train Modern Apprentices (MAs) across the Council. There are currently 13 MAs in post - 1 Mechanic, 3 Plumbers, 2 Joiners, 5 Electricians, 1 Road and 1 Business & Administration.

Clackmannanshire Council's Employability Service supports around 700 Clackmannanshire residents each year providing them with the confidence and skills to progress towards and into work. This is through in-house provision and commissioned services. The in-house Clackmannanshire Works key worker team support around 400 people annually and last year over 200 of those were supported into work, and over 100 into training (mainly vocational training).

Developing the Young Workforce

Youth employment rate [16-24-year-olds] across Clackmannanshire between October 2022 & September 2023 was **41.3% lower** than the Scottish rate of 56.9%. This is a yearly fall of 25.2 pp [between October 2021 & September 2022 the rate was 66.5%, higher than the Scottish rate of 58.3%].

Working with school staff, Clackmannanshire Environment Services staff co-created "taster experiences" for S4 pupils, with the aim to raise awareness of the five Environment areas (Waste; Transportation; Roads; Fleet; Land Services), to ask what young people would be interested in doing and what would be of value to them. There has also been a work experience pilot programme with Environment Services.

Challenge Poverty week

During Challenge Poverty week in October 2023, partners within the Tackling Poverty Partnership developed engagement sessions to run during the course of the week. These events included:

An information and recruitment session for people interested in becoming childminders as part of the Alloa South & East child wellbeing partnership programme. The Scottish Childminding Association promoted a full digital recruitment campaign from the end of October 2023, which has brought an additional 4 childminders within Clackmannanshire to date.

Flexibility Works: *Are you interested in flexible working? What it means, what your rights are, how to ask for it and where to find it?* This session ran once, by Glasgow-based organisation "Flexibility Works" which supports organisations and people to have the flexible working they need to balance their work life with their home life. Four parents attended the session, two of whom were starting placements with flexible hours.

Unclaimed Entitlement- *Supporting parents to claim for benefits they are either unaware of or are unable to apply for independently.* Volunteers from Parental Employment Support, CAB, Clackmannanshire Councils Home Energy Advice Team, Clacks Works, Family Wellbeing Partnership and Alloa Academy were on hand to help identify potentially unclaimed benefit entitlement, help with applications for council tax reduction, free school meals, and clothing grants. Eighteen parents/carers attended the session and were supported by all partners who took referrals to continue support. Advice was given on home energy, employment and training, benefits, debt and pension credit. Following the success of this session, the Tackling Poverty partnership will run and promote these multi-agency support sessions on a regular basis, building this activity into the new Local Child Poverty Delivery

Plan (2024-27).

Schools focused support for Food Insecurity

Further Development, Evaluation and Roll out of 'Make and Taste'

'Make and Taste' is an intervention that aims to support early year's staff to facilitate and embed food activity in early year's settings. This increases opportunities to engage with families, particularly where there may be a concern about a child's food intake and support the child and family to make good food choices. During 2023/24, the Public Health Nutrition Team trained 8 team members from Homestart Clackmannanshire and 3 team members from St Serf's nursery in Clackmannanshire in 'Make and Taste'. Small grant funding (Child Healthy Weight) was given to St Serfs Nursery in Alloa to support this programme. Further details of this work can be found in our Local Child Poverty Action report for 2023/24.

Community focused support for Food Insecurity

A Forth Valley wide needs assessment for maternal and infant food insecurity in liaison with the local authority and Third sector organisations was carried out in 2023. A short life working group formed with representation from NHS Forth Valley Public Health, Public Health Nutrition lead, Infant feeding lead, Health Visitor services, Child poverty leads from the 3 Forth Valley Local Authority areas and third sector organisations involved in emergency food. In line with the Scottish Governments *Guide to Responding to and Preventing Infant Food Insecurity Toolkit*, the following resource were developed:

- Interim guidance for local food banks on the provision of infant formula.
- Standard Operational Procedure for health visiting, midwifery and family nurse colleagues.
- Work on signposting to CAB/ income max supports.
- Vitamin distribution point re-established in Sauchie ELC.

Development of Tasty Beginnings: Introducing Solid Foods Toolkit

- During 2023, a needs assessment was carried out with parents/carers and key staff groups who regularly support parents/carers with infants.
- A budget friendly, pictorial resource developed promoting responsive feeding through safe self-feeding, repeated exposure and food acceptance through promoting vegetables as the first solid food.
- Practical information on how to safely prepare appropriate family foods, including finger type foods for infants from 6 months of age according to development stage;
- A free-standing table-top flip book and accompanying parent information and evaluation tools piloted.
- Small grant given to Health Visitor Support workers Clackmannanshire for 'Tasty Beginnings' pilot.
- For 2024/25: The roll out of 'Tasty Beginnings' will include training to ensure staff and those from partner organisations (particularly those reaching child poverty target groups) are skilled in and encouraged to use the updated toolkit and resources.

The recent Health & Wellbeing Census 2021/22 aimed at P5 to S3 & S5 to S6 pupils, reported only **22.3%** eat both fruit & vegetables at least once a day with females marginally better at 24%. This percentage dropped quite significantly with children & young people who live in our most deprived areas where only **13.6%** admitted to eating both fruit and vegetables at least once a day; this more than doubled in our least deprived areas at **32.5%** confirming the link with poor diet and deprivation.

Reducing diet related inequalities, increased food and nutrition knowledge

Since April 2023 the Public Health Nutrition team has delivered Food and Health Training courses across the NHS FV area to approximately 165 people.

Organisations in Clackmannanshire included those from the voluntary and third sector who support young families and young people such as Action for Children, Homestart Clackmannanshire and Barnardo's. Also included were volunteers from The Gate Food bank, ELC and nursery staff from Alva Nursery and staff working with pupils and families with Additional Support Needs within Alloa Academy.

GROW sessions are engaging people of all ages who want to learn more about where our food comes from and some practical skills. Alva ELC in Clacks which received a Public Health Nutrition grant to undertake some growing sessions ran a twilight event to share tips and ideas with other ELC's across the Clackmannanshire region.

To support families and individual's facing literacy barriers, 26 pictorial 'How to Cook' recipes have been developed, 6 pictorial Slow Cooker recipes, 9 Cook-Along videos to support the recipes and 4 Porridge recipes developed to support the 'Porridge Pot Project' and 6 pictorial Grow Guides developed. There are now 39 web pages of recipes available on the Public Health Nutrition website.

The New Baby Financial Health Check Project, established as a partnership between NHS Forth Valley and Citizens Advice Bureau provides direct access for families referred from health visitors. During 2023/24, 72 referrals were received, resulting in financial gain of £16,940.42 for families.

During 2023/24, Voluntary organisations such as Homestart Clackmannanshire provided a range of financial and practical support for priority families at greatest risk of poverty alongside their core services including food parcel referrals (29%); Fuel and food vouchers (41.5%); supported families in paying the membership fee for families to join the Hawkhill Community shop (43%) and administered Save the Children Early Years grants to families with a child(ren) under 5 years in financial difficulty (21.5%). This support enabled families to access practical items such as prams, single beds, stair gates and access store vouchers to the value of £340 per family. Thirty five families benefitted from this financial support in 2023/24. Families also benefited from access to creative wellbeing activities through partnership working with Reachout with Arts in Mind – including play in the park sessions, parent workshops and wellbeing groups.

Clacks Actions for Children Family Support Services provided financial support to families requiring new bedding, beds, flooring, clothing and help for household fuel costs through their Action for Children Emergency Fund, and helping families in need to access the Foodbank or Food Larders.

Nourish & Thrive (Action for Children)

Nourish and Thrive, is funded via Tackling Childhood Poverty Funds (No-one Left Behind) which is the Scottish Government's approach to placing people at the centre of the design and delivery of employability services, transforming employment support in Scotland. Nourish & Thrive plays a crucial role in achieving the Scottish Government's vision for economic transformation and tackling child poverty. Two cohorts have completed the Nourish and Thrive course offering support with menu planning, cooking on a budget, bulk cooking, healthy and nutritious foods as well as offering participants the opportunity to gain valuable cooking skills and a REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene certificate. Seven parents and carers have completed the course and a third cohort of a further 6 parents have commenced. Parents and carers have benefited from support and education around food and healthy eating which is having a direct improvement on overall family health and wellbeing.



Priority Outcome: Children and young people in Clackmannanshire understand their rights and are engaged and involved in decision making

On 16th July 2024, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 will come into effect. The Act will incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law, helping to ensure that children and young peoples' rights are legally recognised and protected. The UNCRC is about what children need to grow up happy, healthy and safe and ensure their views are taken into account in decisions that affect them. Clackmannanshire is well placed to implement the legislation when it comes into effect through the progress that we continue to make in taking forward a rights-based approach that puts the rights of the child at the heart of all that we do and puts them at the centre of decision making. This includes ensuring that people know them - including children, young people, parents, carers and everyone who works with or for children. Our work to embed, promote and protect children's rights is being practiced through Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) principles and values.

UNCRC implementation

Work has continued over the last year to ensure that we are ready in Clackmannanshire for when the UNCRC Act becomes law. The Scottish Government has published guidance on 'Taking a Children's Human Rights Approach' and further information has been made available on our council website for staff.

The Improvement Service is working with local authorities across Scotland, including Clackmannanshire to support readiness for UNCRC Incorporation and to embed children's rights approaches. National discussion meetings and our local Forth Valley West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative (FV&WL RIC) meetings are also continuing and highlighting common issues where work can be shared and resources developed. <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/fvwlric/uncrcnew/>

Our established Clacks UNCRC Working Group is meeting regularly and working on identified topics in the run up to implementation. Workstreams include Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments; Child Friendly Complaints Handling Process; Child Friendly Language; Youth Voice and Engagement in policy and decision making; Employee Development and E-learning on awareness and embedding UNCRC, including packages from the Scottish Government, Children in Scotland and Children's Parliament; parental awareness and support; and reporting requirements supporting partners and contractors to take account of Children's Rights. Our Council Employee Development Manager met with representatives of the Children's Parliament to discuss using their e-learning package which can be rolled out to all staff via Clacks Academy and there is also an offer of specific awareness raising training for the Senior Leadership Forum and Team Leads Forum. This work will continue beyond July 2024 to ensure implementation of all aspects of the UNCRC Act and ensure children's rights are understood, protected and embedded. We developed a Youth Engagement Framework and this is operational across the authority. NHS Forth Valley has established a group to progress children's rights throughout current services and service redesign, led by the Head of Children's Universal Services. Training is ongoing around the implementation of UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act for Children's Reporters. Discussions will then require to be undertaken with partner agencies, particularly around obtaining the child's views when referrals are received by the Reporter.

Rights Based Approaches

The promotion of children's rights is fundamental to all that we do. We ensure that the voice of infants, children and young people are valued, heard and acted upon in all decisions impacting them through embedding the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) principles and approach that provides holistic, rights-based, child-centred support. Children's wellbeing is assessed using the eight wellbeing indicators. Ensuring children's rights and needs are met and promoted has been strengthened through our revised and refreshed GIRFEC assessments and child's plans and that our written information is clear and accessible for children, young people and families by adoption of our Language of Care policy, as well as continuing to incorporate UNCRC into our policies and procedures. We extended our roll out of Viewpoint, a digital tool to better capture the views and voices of children and young people and support their participation in assessments, their plans and in decisions which affect their life. Training for staff on the use of the Outcomes Star tool and My Star assessments is being rolled out.

Our Clacks Voices is a participation group for care experienced young people. The group have contributed to a number of initiatives this year examples include leading the changes in language that has been made within processes relating to child planning reviews. Young people have informed the language used within the report format, and the change to refer to meetings as My Plan meeting and renamed Child's Plans to 'My Plan'. Similarly young people have been involved in developing and agreeing communications relating to UNCRC, and providing support for the Respect Programme.

Practitioners across children's services and third sector have signed up with the Children's Parliament to the '*Unfearties*' campaign and in doing so have made a pledge to courageously discuss children's issues and stand alongside children to advocate for their rights on their behalf to ensure that children get the opportunity to grow up safe, healthy and happy.

As part of ongoing self-evaluation and improvement, our joint children's services thematic audit in 2023 identified further opportunities in strengthening the voice of children, young people and parents/carers in key child protection processes such as child planning meetings. An action plan is in place to take forward identified improvements to strengthen children and young people's participation and support made available.

Advocacy support

Who Cares? Scotland is our commissioned provider to deliver an advocacy service to care experienced children and young people from Clackmannanshire. Over the reporting period 2023/34, Who Cares? provided advocacy services to 81 children and young people, of which 54 were new referrals. Young people were supported at 169 formal meetings comprising of Children's Hearings (62%), My Plan reviews (18%), Child Planning Meetings (5%) and Throughcare/Aftercare Pathway Reviews (15%). The top advocacy issues are similar to the national picture and themes relate to maintaining relationships, moving or placement issues, education and training (including support in higher education), and legal issues (challenging legal issues or accessing legal support). These issues correlate with our continued priorities within our Promise Delivery Plan.

Close links exist between Woodside children's house with an advocacy worker visiting the house on a monthly basis to have dinner with the five young people resident and staff. Young people are supported with group advocacy as well as any specific advocacy tasks. Eighteen visits have been undertaken to Woodside over the twelve month reporting period in addition to specific advocacy visits. Who Cares? have supported all seven young people who have lived at Woodside over the last twelve months, two young people now report that they feel able to self advocate which is indicative of the support that they have received to develop and have confidence in their own voice and rights. In addition, eleven young people living in residential houses out with Clackmannanshire received contact and support from Who Cares? Advocacy workers.

The profile and role of advocacy has continued to be promoted within Clackmannanshire through the following activities: information sessions to social work staff, regular meetings with foster care and kinship care groups, information sessions to panel members, attendance at fresher's week, and information days at Forth Valley College. The impact of this has been an increased number of advocacy referrals and greater awareness of advocacy within the care community and with corporate parents.

We have continued to ensure that the Children Hearing advocacy services are well promoted and made available to children and young people. Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) is fully supportive of the provision of children's advocacy services and has played a key role in developing an information leaflet and setting up a website on advocacy services for hearings. Four multi-agency training modules are delivered by SCRA, as part of this training the importance of advocacy services and the role they play in the hearing system is highlighted.

'The referrals from various professionals within the authority are heartening. It demonstrates an awareness of our advocacy service, and an appreciation of the value independent advocacy support may have for a young person in care...We will work towards maintaining the impressive referral rate across the LA area by promoting the service and reaching more council employees' (Who Cares? Annual Report 2023/24, Clackmannanshire)

According to SEEMiS [education system] there are currently **127 young carers** across Clackmannanshire schools. This number has steadily increased over the last few years due to increased awareness and confidence of children and young people identifying as being a young carer and our work on The Promise to raise awareness of young carers as children and young people who need extra support.

We have a Young Carers Champion in every high school in Clackmannanshire, giving young carers an identified member of education staff who understands their caring role and the issues they may be facing. During 2023/24, 38 of young carers & young adult carers took part in involvement and engagement opportunities. With support from the Big Lottery, Young Start funded a Young Carers Involvement & Engagement Worker and Carers Trust funded a Young Adult Carer Development Worker, both of these posts work across Falkirk & Clackmannanshire, supporting young carers to have their voices listened to both on a local and national level and supporting young carers to transition from high school to further education, employment or training and into the Young Adult Carers Project.

Young carers took part in the following opportunities to have their voice heard in this reporting period:

- 18 completed Group Activity Survey
- 3 attended the Young Carers' Voice meeting with Board and Carers Trust
- 9 attended the Scottish Young Carers Festival '23
- 1 took part in the Carers Trust Media Ambassador programme
- 1 took part in the Carers Trust YAC Advisory Group
- 1 attended the Young Carers' Voice trip to the Children & Young People's Commissioner Office in Edinburgh
- 9 completed an activity feedback survey
- 16 took part in, In-person Clacks Activity Grant Consultation, as part of the council's budget setting process
- Young Carers Champions from Alva Academy and St Modan's attended 'Young Carers Champion Sharing Event' Young Carers Action Day.

The Care Experience Hub has been created in partnership with the Through Care After Care Team, Housing, Barnardos and other partners. Young people were actively involved in the Hub's development and identified opportunities to reduce isolation and loneliness through this model of support. The

Hub is still in its early stages and offers an environment where care experienced young people can access support from services, peer support and themed group work on a weekly basis.



Priority Outcome: Children and their families can access a range of support services and family therapies in Clackmannanshire

We continue to enhance and strengthen our family support services in Clackmannanshire so that infants, children, young people and families benefit from the right early help and preventative support at the earliest opportunity. Additional resource through Whole Family Wellbeing funding and the Family Wellbeing Partnership is expanding the range of support to families. A directory, bringing together community based whole family support services in Clackmannanshire, including universal services and more targeted support has been produced to better support families to navigate and access the range of support services available.

Family Support Commissioning Consortium

During 2023/24, third sector providers and children's services partners came together to discuss how a more innovative and progressive way of delivering services to families across Clackmannanshire could be achieved. A 'Family Support Commissioning Consortium' was established to co-produce a new delivery method to support the work of the Children's Services Early Help team, our front door, first point of contact service and align with the work of the Family Wellbeing Partnership. To date, five commissioning consortia have been held and around 30 third sector organisations have taken part. These have been complemented with additional input and discussions being held at the Children and Families Third Sector Forum. Consortium members have endorsed a plan to develop a new 'Family Support Collaborative' which is proposed will be operationally-led by three organisations, Barnardo's, Action for Children and Homestart Clackmannanshire, supported with funding and financial management by Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface (CTSI) and informed by our 'Family Voices' group. The proposed model of family support will be a community based Hub model with early intervention and prevention at the core of delivery and self-referral encouraged. The aim is to locate community hubs in spaces and places where children, young people and families already attend and align the hubs with our existing One Stop Shop provision. A key objective is that families, through self-referral can access support tailored to their needs; from employability advice through to parenting and family support.

The Promise Principles remain at the heart of the Family Support Collaborative's work and the systems change partners collectively aim to achieve which includes working with the Improvement Service to develop a Logic Model for the new Collaborative model. The diagram aims to illustrate how integration of the Family Support Collaborative will align within the Family Wellbeing Partnership's work streams and with Positive Moves, the pre-employability supports that are there for families, with the aim to tackle concurrently issues relating to deprivation and poverty.

Infants, children, young people and families are benefiting from the range of early intervention supports in place, delivered by our third sector services, with a reported increase in parents/carers accessing parenting programmes who report improved family wellbeing. The range of family support activity and impacts being achieved during 2022/23 are highlighted below.



Third Sector commissioned family supports



Action For Children Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is an evidence-based programme aimed at improving the outcomes for young people aged 8- 18. It is a family based intensive intervention programme that builds on the existing strengths within family relationships. The programme works with some of the most vulnerable young people including those who are demonstrating significant behavioural difficulties, involvement in offending, violent behaviour and substance misuse. Working with the whole family, FFT supports young people and their relatives to learn new skills and address the challenges they face by developing them in the context of their relationships with each family member. By taking a whole-family approach FFT works to ensure that changes are maintained and that the young people we help make real progress.

- New Referrals (April 23- March 24) = 39
- Referrals carried over from previous year waiting list = 9
- Total Referrals = 48
- No of Families supported during 2023/24 = 35
- No of children supported during 2023/24 = 63

FFT Outcomes

- 50% of completed cases were assessed by referring social workers as being likely or somewhat likely to become accommodated at intake. By completion of the FFT intervention only 11% of young people were assessed as being “somewhat” likely to become accommodated and 89% deemed as unlikely or very unlikely to become accommodated.
- Improvements in all the 18 self-reported subscales for families, social workers and therapists, with all subscales showing average scores exceeding 3 (a score of 3 and above indicating a clinically significant outcome.)
- A summary of some of the highest and significant scores reported were:
 How much has family changed. Average score 4.08 (as reported by parents/carers.)
 How much has changed in parent supervision ability. Average score 4.20 (as reported by FFT Therapists.)
 How much has changed in improving parenting skills. Average score 3.75 (as reported by referred youth.)
- While FFT has provided consistently strong outcomes across the history of the service in Clackmannanshire it is noted that these are some of the highest impact scores recorded since the start of the service in November 2017.

Participant Feedback:

- *"I feel since starting FFT things have improved as a family. I still feel we have a long journey with X however feel it will now be more manageable" (Parent)*
- *"Thank you so much for all your help trying to get our family back on track. It really did help and we are in a much better place than this time last year so thank you." (Parent)*
- *"FFT was fun. The Therapist listened to everyone and did not take sides." (Young person)*



Homestart Clackmannanshire provides early intervention to limit families needing more intensive intervention/statutory measures, providing bespoke package of support based on each family's needs, from parenting groups through to individual support.

Key outcomes achieved between April 2023 and March 2024:

- 151 families supported
- 8 children on the CP register supported (from 3 families).
- 36% of families accessed direct support from a co-ordinator.
- 34% accessed support from a Home-Visiting Volunteer.
- 57% accessed group support (early years and parent wellbeing).
- 50% attended Play in the Park sessions.
- 95% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that they felt listened to and supported throughout their journey with Home-Start Clacks.
- 77% of respondents feel more able to deal with challenging situations and make positive changes in their lives.
- 75% of respondents feel better able to manage their mental health/wellbeing.
- 77% children have increased confidence.
- 63% children are more able to manage daily life.
- 79% of families supported last year report that their children have improved social skills.
- 77% of families supported last year report that their children are more interested and excited to learn and try new activities.

Parents/carers reported that they feel more confident in their abilities, resulting in positive changes for families, and diversion from wider more intensive services being required:

"Helped me to be consistent with boundaries for my child and also helped sort out the mess in my house" (Parent)

"When the kids were removed from my care Home Start helped me to make the changes and encouraged me all the way until I was in a better and more stable place and got the kids home" (Parent)

Wider supports provided out-with our core services:

Food Parcel Referral – 29.23% of supported families

Save the Children Grant – 21.54%

Voucher (fuel, food, etc.) – 41.54%



Clackmannanshire Family Support Service has provided support to 63 children and their families between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024. Around 67% of these children were protected from harm as a result of the support offered to them; the other 33% moved on from receiving intensive family support and are attending groups to maintain the progress and improvements achieved. 7 of these children are being supported in kinship families.

Interventions include formal and informal parenting support through groups such as Incredible Years, Wellbeing Support Groups and Parent Interest groups, these are all underpinned by Positive Parenting. In addition the service provides 1:1 support for parents, carers, children and young people both in the service and within their homes. This includes support in relation to routines, boundaries, emotions, practical support in the home, support with health and nutrition, support to create a safe and healthy environment.

Action For Children Family Support Practitioners work in partnership with colleagues in Education, Health and Social Work as part of the Psychology of Parenting Programme (PoPP) to deliver The Incredible Years Programme. This year 6 parents completed the Incredible Years Programme within the service and practitioners have used their knowledge of the programme in their individual work with families.

One parent commented towards the end of the programme: *“The Blue Hoose has friendly caring people...they help me feel more confident...they help me believe I can do it”* *“IY made a huge difference to my confidence and our learning”*.

Clackmannanshire Family Support Service also works in partnership with other third sector agencies, including but not limited to, Barnardo's, HomeStart and The Gate Foodbank ensuring children are kept safe from harm and that families have access to a range of supports. This involves joint working, signposting to other agencies, sharing venues and resources and helping families in need to access the Foodbank or Food Larders where necessary.

The team also collaborate effectively with local schools. As part of this partnership Clackmannanshire School Support Service utilises the building and facilities allowing space for pupils and teachers to meet, socialise and even prepare and cook food. The school are also actively involved in maintaining their garden within the service.

The Clackmannanshire School Support Services stated: *“A number of young people and families are known to both Action for Children and Clackmannanshire School Support Services and this joint working really supports their needs at a community level. At CSSS we have deliberately undertaken projects with Action for Children that can be of benefit to them and can also support our Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) agenda”* (Principle Teacher)



Action for Children Clackmannanshire Additional Support Service (CLASS)

CLASS provided support to 62 children and their families between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024. 88% of those children are being protected from harm as a result of the interventions offered by Action for Children. The other 12% moved on from more intensive support and attend groups or sessions to maintain progress and improvements achieved.

CLASS is a partnership with Barnardo's and is fundamental to supporting social work children's plans with 75% of referrals coming from social work. The CLASS service has a focus on maintaining family relationships and contributing to the success of children being able to remain or return home to live with their family. CLASS also provided 1:1 support to 16 individual children and young people out with the family home.

A key focus of the CLASS work is supporting families to introduce good, safe and healthy routines working alongside families to model the implementation of these routines. Practitioners also use The Decider Skills to allow families to develop a range of strategies to use when times are more difficult within the home. The CLASS team link in with all the resources and services provided by the Clacks Family Support Service including families accessing both formal and informal parenting programmes, including Incredible Years, Raising Teens with Confidence, Seasons for Growth and very recently Mellow Caring for Young People.

Practitioners at Clacks Family Support Services and CLASS all receive training in the use of the Neglect Toolkit which they then apply in their work with families to address the impact of childhood neglect. The whole team take a trauma informed approach when working with children and families, informed by NHS Education for Scotland Trauma Training Programme, providing support at a time and place that meet the individual needs and views of the family.



Barnardo's Clackmannanshire Open Door Service (CODS)

CODS offers a wide range of services for children, young people and families living within the Clackmannanshire area who are referred for specialist intervention in relation to being in conflict with the law, at risk of exploitation, young people who have substance use issues and young people who are engaging in problematic or harmful sexual behaviours.

During 2023/2024 CODS worked with:

- 66 new young people
- 37 young people were still open to the service from the previous year
- 8 young people were re-referred after closure
- 30 enquiries were received. Service responded and signposted enquiries where applicable
- 70 young people were closed during 2023/24

Work includes exploring the impact of behaviour on self, family and community, risk management, personal safety, family, school and peer relationships, self-esteem, and resilience.

For parents Barnardo's offers systemic family work along with the use of parenting programmes, developing a consistent approach to managing behaviour, developing positive communication, routines, boundaries/consequences, and work with brothers and sisters. They also undertake work with young people aged between 8-18 (or 25 if care experienced) where there are concerns around offending, substance use, harmful sexual behaviour or where they are at risk of being exploited.

Positive key outcomes being achieved are:

- Increased resilience
- Reduction in risk/harm
- Improved peer relationships
- Increased understanding of impact of own behaviour



Aberlour Sustain

In October 2023, Whole Family Wellbeing Funding was used to commission Aberlour Sustain to avoid children becoming cared for away from their home and family.

To date the service has actively supported 16 children from 10 families:

6 of the 16 children were on the Child Protection Register at the start of Sustain involvement

8 children were involved with the children's hearing system

Main Presenting Issues:

- 1: Parenting Skills Development (15/16 children)
- 2: (joint second) Household Substance Abuse & Household Mental Health (11/16 children)
- 3: (shared third) Domestic Abuse; Routines and Boundaries & Education Support (10/16 children)

- As of 31st March 2024, 6 families are being supported by the service and 9 children
- As of 31st March 2024, 4 families and 8 children closed to Aberlour Sustain. 5 of these children remain within the care of their families, 3 other children were closed when they became accommodated.



Falkirk & Clackmannanshire Carers Centre

The rights and needs of young carers in Clackmannanshire continue to be a priority focus. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 51 young carers in Clackmannanshire were offered a Young Carers Statement, of which 48 were completed and 28 reviews undertaken. This ensures that young carers' views and opinions are heard and what information and support they may need in relation to their caring role. When support was reviewed young carers said:

- 23% reported feeling safer
- 18% reported feeling healthier
- 36% reported feeling more respected

During 2023/24:

- 69 young carers attended 33 young carer respite groups, totalling 284 attendances
- 83 young carers received 124 1:1 sessions with a young carers worker
- 678 contacts were made with young carers
- 12 young carers took part in residential
- 13 young carers/young adult carers were awarded a Creative Breaks Grant (from Time to Live Funding, Scottish Government)

"The young carer program has really helped with coping being a young carer. The big player has been the residential trip. It was absolutely amazing. It proved a real break also from studying and was a great opportunity to connect with people who I'm still in contact with." (Young Carer)



The Women's Outreach Service in Clackmannanshire commenced service delivery in October 2023. The service aims to deliver a whole family outreach service for women, children and their families affected by experiences of domestic abuse, mental health issues, and substance use. The integrated team consists of a senior family outreach worker, therapeutic counsellor and a children's resilience worker. Since October 2023, 16 families have accessed the service (16 parents/carers and 32 children).

Working with the children's resilience worker on positive relationships increased awareness of safety relating to alcohol and substance use, anxiety and improved educational links, strengthened relationships with grandmother. (Young person and grandmother)



Priority Outcome: Children and their families can access the right services based on their needs

Support to our children and families through expanding the range of early intervention provision available has continued throughout 2023/24. The Children's Services social work redesign with the development of the Early Help service has substantially increased opportunities for early intervention and prevention supports. This work has developed alongside emerging community supports developed through the Family Wellbeing Partnership, STRIVE and the new Family Support Collaborative to support families and prevent crisis. Strengthened partnership working is ensuring streamlined pathways to the right service at the right time for families.

Early Help

Clackmannanshire Early Help team was fully implemented in October 2023, following a redesign of children social work services aimed at improving early access to family support services, ensuring families are provided with the right support, in the right place, at the right time. With a focus on early help and prevention the aim is to reduce the number of children subject to statutory measures of care with a focus on keeping more children safely at home. As a front door service for early support, positive outcomes are being achieved:

- In the first 6 months of operation the Early Help team supported 63.5% of all referrals to children's social work.
- There have been over 400 participants accessing the 0- 3 year drop-in sessions.
- 28% decrease in child protection investigations compared to the previous year.
- 27% reduction in referrals to the children's reporter compared to the previous year.

One of the key innovations of the Early Help model is the strengthened partnership working with universal and third sector services. This is set in the context of the Early Help team becoming more community focussed and embedded within the local community. The team are working closely with health, education and local community groups as part of the Clackmannanshire Family Wellbeing Partnership which aims to deliver the commitments of the Christie commission by moving staff and resources closer to communities and developing a network of support accessible locally at point of need. An example of this is the team's role within the emerging and innovative Family Support Collaborative which will be delivering family support hubs six times a week in locations across Clackmannanshire.

The second is the embedding of Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) alongside kinship support, within the early intervention service, rather than as a service aligned to alternative care provision. The purpose is to ensure that at the first point of contact with children's service, families have the opportunity to build capacity and be supported to deliver their own solutions to difficulties. FGDM has a focus on the wellbeing of whole families and works with families in a way to enable children, parents and their wider extended families and networks to develop their own family support plan and reduce the need for statutory social work involvement. The FGDM approach is enabling more children to live safely at home or support transition to kinship care.

Family Group Decision Making

During the period from 1st of April 2023 to 31st of March 2024 the FGDM team delivered:

- 74 Initial Referral Meetings
- 47 Family Meetings
- 6 Emergency Family Meetings
- 11 Reviews

FGDM Outcomes:

- Potential kinship carers were identified for 22 of the children referred should this be required in the future.
- 12 children were prevented from being accommodated in foster care as they were placed with kinship carers.
- 1 child in foster care at the final stages of a rehabilitation home with an FGDM scaffolding /support plan in place.
- 4 babies discharged from hospital into the care of parents with scaffolding/support plan in place.
- 2 children enabled to remain at home by children's hearing as a direct result of an FGDM scaffolding/family support plan in place.

FAMILY SUPPORT

As well as providing holistic, whole family support to families at home, the Early Help team welcome families into Alloa Family Centre and other local venues across the Clackmannanshire area to join in a range of community group programmes. Examples of some of the groups delivered by the Early Help team, delivered in partnership with universal and third sector organisations during 2023/24 are outlined below.

Stay and Play Groups (Birth - 3 years)

Healthcare professionals attend sessions to offer support and advice to families. Activities include sensory play, messy play, free play, soft play, music and rhyme, water play and arts and crafts.

Parent/carers feedback:

'Its a great time of day and great set up with stations for all different ages'

'Brilliant, relaxed atmosphere'

'Open space to play'

'Really good mix of activities for varying ages'

'Good advice with any questions I have'

Baby Bonds – Baby Massage (Joint initiative with Early Help Team and Health)

Baby massage sessions held at various locations across the county. Some of the benefits of baby massage include improved bonding and attachment, helps with digestion, constipation and colic, improved sleeping patterns, teething, pain and discomfort and strengthens primary systems and supports with weight gain.

Parent/carers feedback:

'Baby massage has been something we have looked forward to all week as the class is so welcoming and informative, we have loved it! This has been the first group I've ever attended in Scotland as I have never met other mums or known of any groups and it has changed my social life with my baby. Thank you!'

'We have loved coming to baby massage it's always so nice and cosy when we come in. The class is very informative and explains exactly what we are doing and what benefits it has for baby. A great service for parents and also a good way to socialise with other parents.'

'Baby massage has been an absolute delight to come to. The facilitator is lovely and all the baby's and mummies were a great bunch. I really enjoyed it as it wasn't on when I had my other kids.'

'Thanks so much for the baby massage class. My little boy enjoyed it and it helped my so much at home as well! I have spent the past 4 weeks bonding more with my baby and meeting other parents and babies. Thanks again'

Incredible Years Parenting Programme

The Incredible Years Parenting Programme is an evidence-based programme designed to enhance parental engagement while improving children's academic, social and emotional abilities, all while reducing behavioural issues. The programme offers weekly sessions over a period of 14 weeks where parents engage in role-play, discussions and home activities to put their new knowledge and skills into practice. Incredible Years parenting programme allows an opportunity for parents to learn from each other while trained facilitators guide the process. Action for Children has two practitioners who had completed Incredible Years Parent Group Leader Training, these practitioners work in partnership with other group leaders in education and health to deliver Incredible Years programme to parents and carers. This year 6 parents completed the Incredible Years Programme within the service and practitioners have used their knowledge of the programme in their individual work with families.

"The Blue Hoose has friendly caring people...they help me feel more confident...they help me believe I can do it" "IY made a huge difference to my confidence and our learning". (Parent)

Season for Growth programme

In partnership with education colleagues Season for growth was provided to 6 children aged 6-8 years. The Programme is offered to children/young people based on need and age groups of children requiring support. Seasons for Growth incorporate a wide range of age appropriate activities, including drawing, role-plays, stories, discussion and journal activities. The programme helps children and young people navigate life transitions while promoting resilience and emotional wellbeing. Children experiencing bereavement and loss benefit immensely from the programme.

One child said when the programme ended: *"Can I come back to season for growth I loved it"*. The child and her parent were able to explain that it was one of the first places where the child felt able to talk openly about the loss they had experienced and felt safe with the workers and other children present to be open and honest about her feelings. Her Mum was able to reflect on the positive differences that it made to her child's behaviours in the home stating *"She seemed less frustrated"*.

After School Group (Blue Hoose)

After school group provides a safe place for children and young people to come together, making new positive friendships, develop social and emotions milestones. The group allows children and young people the opportunity to experience a variety of different activities some of which young people may not get the opportunity to do at home. Referrals are mainly received from the Whole Family Support Screening group and are also offered to children requiring less intensive support following on from individual sessions. The group offers children the opportunity to experience safety and inclusion within their local community. Children attending commented that the groups:

"Teaches us about sharing", "I like making snack" and "Without The Blue Hoose I would be sad".

Play Together sessions

Play Together sessions enabled 21 children and their families to come together in a safe space to play, facilitated by Action for Children practitioners who mentor and provide low level shoulder to shoulder play opportunities and coaching to parents/carers. Sessions also took place within family's homes who find it difficult to travel to the service. Parents, carers and children learn to play together within the groups gaining essential skills in relation to communication, sharing, building healthy relationships through play, respect for each other and play listening where the parent takes the lead from the child's play, building connections and trust and understanding their child's development and how to respond to it.

THRIVE to Keep Well

This 16 week programme, targeted towards parents, builds participants' confidence, motivation, self esteem as well as providing opportunities for volunteering, learning and employment. Feedback from participants is positive with individuals reporting improvements in confidence, parenting and mental wellbeing. Many of the participants have gone on to volunteering and pre employment opportunities. In 2023/24 a total of 4 programmes ran across Clackmannanshire, facilitated and coordinated by a range of community planning partners (NHS Forth Valley, Social Services, CLD and Education services, Third sector, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Forth Valley College). A comprehensive evaluation framework is in place across the programme. Validated tools such as the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale and Parental Strengths and Difficulties survey are used. Participants' confidence, self-esteem and motivation are also assessed through self-evaluation using questionnaires and THRIVE to Keep Well Life Wheel. Two groups; one for women and one mixed gender ran from February-June 2023, with 14 participants completing the programme 82% of those who had originally enrolled. Two further groups; one for women and one mixed gender, ran from August-December 2023, with 12 participants completing the programme. Participants, who reported being parents to children under 18, completed the Parent & Family Life Questionnaire. Every parent reported an increased average score across all categories, with the greatest improvement in 'confidence and control'.

Impact Statements from THRIVE participants:



I have loved every minute with my THRIVE family and getting to know myself better and let myself be pampered once in a while.

I have really enjoyed THRIVE, it has built my confidence more to go looking for what I want.

THRIVE has helped me overcome my fears and anxieties and helped me cope in real life situations.

THRIVE has made me more outgoing and positive.

Awareness Group - Early help team and Barnardos

This weekly group engages young people aged 12 – 18 yrs who are coming into conflict with the law and picking up low level charges. Feedback is that young people are completing the group with an increased level of understanding into the associated risk factors and potential consequences of re-offending. Increased young people engaged through group work/outreach support. The Group is jointly run by the Early Help Team and Barnardo's and consists of 6 sessions giving focus to the following:

Offences and risk-taking behaviours
Offensive weapons & Knife Crime
Substance awareness and alcohol

Fire raising
Hate crime
Peer influences

Mellow Caring for Young People

Run in partnership with Action for Children Family Support Service and the Early Help team, this evidence based 12 week parenting programme is for parents/carers of young people between P7 and S4. Parents and carers that benefit most are those who require more targeted support as their young people navigate adolescence. The programme aims to decrease isolation and help parents and carers understand and strengthen their relationship with their teenagers at this crucial stage of their lives. Mellow Caring for Young People is attachment focused, trauma informed with relationships at the heart of it. The programme covers topics like young people's brain development, our emotion systems, co and self-regulation, window of tolerance, empathy, trust and connection, gratitude, therapeutic and empathic parenting approaches, resilience, family strengths and life story conversations. Ten parents/carers commenced the programme with six completing the full programme.

Participants did a lot of reflection during the sessions and discussed their experience of being parented, violence within relationships, their own mental health and well-being and both theirs and their young person's experience of relational trauma.

Feedback from participants:

A parent said that when she was offered to come to the group, she thought that it would be people telling you how bad a parent you are, as she felt like a bad parent, she said that she was pleased that it was not like that at all and it was a really nice group to attend, where she felt listened to. She also said that she has a better understanding of herself, her situation and her relationship with her son is improving.

All the parents said that they feel better able to understand why their young people behave the way they do, and they are more open to thinking about these reasons and what they can do to help when their young person is becoming distressed or dysregulated and what they can do to look after themselves to be able to parent more sensitively and in the way they want to.

Another parent spoke about her better understanding of co-regulation and gave examples of what she does to provide co-regulation for her daughter.

The Early Help team and Action For Children, in collaboration with Mellow Parenting, are facilitating a further mellow group - Mellow Growing Together, commencing August/September 2024. This parenting programme is targeted at families with younger children aged 0-5 years.

Kinship Support Group

The Early Help team run a monthly group for carers to experience peer support, access to workshops, seek advice and guidance and networking. In addition a Family Support worker from the Early Help team provides kinship care support to kinship carers in each of the three locality areas. 7 children in kinship families were being supported by the Action for Children Family Support Service.

Co-design

A range of co-production activities and feedback loops are built in to the work we are doing to ensure that children, young people and their families are involved in the co-design and construction of new supports and services that are tailored to their local context and needs. For example, the Early Help team have linked closely with the Whole Family Wellbeing fund Participation and Engagement worker to ensure that feedback is actively pursued from

families who have used the service or might in the future. This feedback has been critical to the development of the service, for example it is as a response to feedback that Baby Massage groups are being run in several locations across the county and our baby group is delivered in two locations, including altering the age range in response to feedback about gaps in provision for 0-1's infants.

STRIVE- Safeguarding Through Rapid Intervention

STRIVE (Safeguarding through rapid intervention) delivers a multi-agency rapid response at an early stage to reduce risk and increase opportunities for prevention and early intervention and prevent statutory intervention. Through co-location and working together, agencies have been able to provide rapid responses to those individuals on the cusp of statutory intervention and prevent risks from escalating. STRIVE team members include Police, Housing, Money Advice, Education, NHS Mental Health, Social Work: Children's Services, Justice and Adult services.

Main issues referred to STRIVE are financial concerns, mental wellbeing, risk of homelessness, drug and/or alcohol use, domestic abuse. As part of a whole systems approach, our Justice Hub, in collaboration with Police Scotland, Housing, SACRO, Women's Aid, VAWG partnership, Community Justice and ADP partnerships developed an early intervention pilot to fund a Women's Worker to support women affected by domestic abuse who are referred by Police Scotland. Whilst the SACRO worker is funded for one day a week, 30 women survivors have been contacted and being offered support at an earlier stage. SACRO work closely with these women to help them identify the impact of their partner's behaviour both on them and their children, placing equal importance and emphasis on helping women identify what constitutes a healthy, equal relationship and the benefits to themselves and their children.

The STRIVE team are working hard to expand access to a wider range of support at the point of need. Through the Community Justice Partnership, the Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership and Justice Services, £3000 funding was secured for video door bells to assist women affected by domestic abuse.

The service is being expanded to include a Justice women's support/tenancy worker and employability worker. These posts are being funded through collaborations with Police partners, Housing, Alcohol and Drug Partnership and Community Justice Partnership. The STRIVE team has been focussing on a programme of expanding referral opportunities and strengthening links with as many third sector and partner agencies as possible, including;

- Family Wellbeing Partnership
- Family Support Collaborative
- Clackmannanshire Positive Moves – pre employability support
- Clackmannanshire Works
- CLG and Transform (3rd sector agencies supporting people affected by substance use).

STRIVE data 2023/24:

- 147 referrals
- 61 individuals received direct STRIVE support

Outcomes:

- Homelessness prevented n=4
- Improved financial situation n=25
- Improved ability to sustain tenancy n=19
- Engaging with addiction services n=13
- Improved mental health n=7
- Reduction in impact of fuel poverty n=9
- Supported towards employment/volunteering n=4
- Engaging with 3rd sector supports n=13

Funding has been agreed from Clackmannanshire Council's Be the Future Transformation Fund to recruit a Community Partnership Officer whose role will be to manage STRIVE and progress transformational partnership working approaches, working in collaboration with community planning partners and services to realise local place based, community-led responsive approaches and person-centred solutions that improves the wellbeing and lives of people of Clackmannanshire.

Supporting the Workforce



Readiness for Learning

To improve visual and spoken communication and close the vocabulary and spoken language gap, Clackmannanshire has fully embedded the Readiness for Learning (R4L) principles and practice in schools, with the aim of increasing knowledge and skill of educators. The approach is fully embedded within the Educational Psychology Service at both individual case level, and embedded within strategic approaches e.g. by applying principles of the approach to the development of mental health services for children and young people. The Wellbeing and Inclusion Empowerment Team are seeking to reinvigorate the approach across educational establishments in Clackmannanshire through an in-person CLPL event during the November inset days in 2024. The event will feature a keynote speaker, as well as a marketplace with stalls from a range of services/providers who offer supports and services into educational establishments.

Trauma-informed practice

We have worked in partnership with the specialist lived experience organisation Resilience Learning Partnership to develop trauma-informed approaches across the Council workforce, in line with the Scottish Government's 'Transforming Psychological Trauma' initiative. A programme of mandatory training for all managers was undertaken during 2023/24. A 'Toolbox Talk' to spread awareness of the prevalence and impact of trauma is being delivered across all Council staff. 'Conversation Cafe's' have also been held to allow managers the opportunity to participate in reflective discussions regarding how they can take forward actions to move further towards becoming a trauma-transformed organisation. More intensive work is planned with key teams to complete self-evaluation 'walk through' activities to ensure that services who are more likely to encounter those experiencing the impact of trauma are providing their services in ways that are sensitive to the needs of their service users. A recent funding announcement from the Scottish Government will allow this work to continue into 2024/25.

Effective multi-agency child protection processes and practices

A multi-agency audit undertaken by partners in police, social work, education and health provided Clackmannanshire's Child Protection Committee and Children's Strategic Planning Partnership with assurance on the quality and effectiveness of key multi-agency processes and practices; aimed at protecting the most vulnerable children and young people in Clackmannanshire. The purpose of this quality assurance review was to demonstrate compliance with recognised national and local child protection standards, including the effectiveness of the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) process and to highlight learning and development opportunities for all partners. Key strengths included the quality of the initial multi-agency response to notification of concerns and eIRD process, assessment of needs and risks and multi-agency chronologies. The review also identified further opportunities to improve practice in single agency chronologies and strengthening the voice of children, young people, parents/carers in key processes such as child planning meetings. A joint action plan is in place to take forward identified improvements.

Values Based Leadership (VBL)

Columba 1400 continues to be a main Family Wellbeing Partnership delivery partner working with young people, staff, Third Sector and the wider community. Notable VBL activities over the past year include a parliamentary event - "Celebrating Clacks and Columba 1400" - attended by Clackmannanshire Council staff, young people, parents/carers and Third Sector partners. Young people in Clackmannanshire secondary schools have continued to take part in Columba 1400 leadership projects as well as the Train the Trainer programme to further develop skills and to ensure sustainability. A pilot project at Redwell Primary involved a two-day introduction to Columba 1400 for all staff and a week of VBL for the two P6 classes – supported by Train the Trainer young people.

There have also been re-connect days for council staff and Third Sector partners and community connector sessions for parents/carers and the wider community. In addition, the third of a three-day programme for Clackmannanshire Legacy Facilitators (Council staff) has taken place and there are already examples of staff using these new skills to further support colleagues and to enhance meetings. All these activities are further steps towards fully embedding VBL across the local authority and wider community.

Building Capacity



We continue to ensure local implementation of key national areas of legislation and policy. During 2023/24, this has included our work on:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – through our UNCRC Implementation group.
- Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019 - Established an e-module within Clacks Academy for council employees. ACRA is also covered during key multi-agency training courses delivered by the Learning and Development department.
- Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Bill - We refreshed/updated our local Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. The aims and objectives align with those of the recently revised Equally Safe Strategy, with focus on earlier interventions, prevention and quicker access to supports for survivors. The Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Bill is aimed at protecting survivors whilst waiting for matters to be addressed at Court. Effective partnership working and strong collaborations is ensuring early, timely support for survivors.

- Updated National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland - The Forth Valley multi-agency guidance on the National Guidance was refreshed and available on our Forth Valley Practitioner Pages. Clacks CPC submitted a self-evaluation on our implementation of the new guidance to CELCIS and areas requiring development included in our CPC Implementation Plan.
- GIRFEC single report framework, Child's Plan and Chronology template refreshed. The framework and associated guidance places greater emphasis on language, the voice of children and young people, rights and participation, keeping connected, and relationships with brothers and sisters. The refreshed suite of documents is to be launched in June 2024.
- Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together legislation - Tracker strengthened to support greater data gathering and aligned to national reporting requirements. Refresh of GIRFEC reports & guidance includes emphasis on brother and sister relationships to support assessment and planning, incorporating principles of Staying Connected. Staff accessed training in relation to assessment/planning for brothers and sisters.



Keeping the Promise in Clackmannanshire

Our Promise Delivery Plan 2023-2026 seeks to build on what we have already achieved within Clackmannanshire since The Promise Scotland published Plan 21-24, and looks ahead at how we can build momentum in Clackmannanshire to uphold our Promise by 2030. Our plan is ambitious and reflects our commitment to transformational change to ensure that we are able to Keep Our Promise that care experienced children and young people in Clackmannanshire will grow up loved, safe, and respected.

Our Promise Delivery Plan 2023-2026 aligns to the National Promise Change Plan and aligns with Clackmannanshire's Community Planning Partnership's anchor Plans including:

- Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017-27
- Children's Strategic Partnership's Children's Services Plan 2021-2024
- Clackmannanshire Community Justice Plan 2018-23
- Violence against Women and Girls Strategic Plan 23-24
- Family Wellbeing Partnership Strategic Plan 23-24
- The National Improvement Framework Plan 23-24
- Local Employability Partnership Delivery Plan 23-24

Clackmannanshire's Promise Delivery Plan is an expression of our commitment to uphold our corporate parenting responsibilities through the lens of the Promise, as loving and supportive parents, providing the scaffolding and support to enable all of our care experienced children and young people to thrive and meet their full potential. Governance arrangements for overseeing and reporting on progress on our Promise plan activities is through our Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership and to Elected Members through the Children & Young People's Board and The Alliance, Clackmannanshire's community planning partnership. Last year we reported in our Children's Services Plan Annual Report 2022/23 on our progress to #KeepThePromise and highlighted key activities that had been accomplished. During 2023/2024 we have maintained a persistent focus to deliver on our Promise commitments. Highlights of these achievements are outlined below.

What Clackmannanshire has already achieved as part of our Promise commitments:



Clackmannanshire's Keeping The Promise Plan 23-26 was agreed at Council and by the Clackmannanshire Alliance in August 2023. Our plan is also a statement of our corporate parenting commitment to Care Experienced Young people through the Lens of the Promise. A high level of activity has continued over the last twelve months involving all directorates within the authority, building on the considerable work that has been undertaken since the publication of the National Care Review and launch of

Plan 21-24. Highlights of some of this work includes:

A Good Childhood

- Increased support to care experienced children and young people in education through strengthened tracking and quality assurance approaches to planning for children. Collaborative approaches within Alloa Academy identified as national best practice by Education Scotland. This approach is shared as a best practice model across the authority with oversight through regular Care Experience Meetings between Heads of Establishment, Virtual Headteacher, and a Senior Manager within Children's Services.
- A collaborative approach within ELC's and Primary Schools to track children's development within local authority settings with provision for two year olds. Establishments are tracking children's development using observation and data gathering tools developed in partnership with Psychological Services. The impact of this is that children are receiving support at an earlier stage to support their development.
- Partnership working has been strengthened across education services and the voluntary sector to ensure a range of creative options are available to support attainment and offer broader experiences to young people. Work has been undertaken to establish Clackmannanshire's Active Learning Academy (CALA) to offer enhanced bespoke education provision for young people. The first cohort will begin in August 2024.
- Communities that Care delivered by Who Cares? Scotland continues to be embedded within our schools reducing stigma and increasing awareness of rights and advocacy for care experienced young people. All Secondary pupils have attended sessions and have regular access to support sessions facilitated by Who Cares?. P6 and P7 pupils from ten primary schools have accessed sessions, and a further ten will attend in August 2024.
- Key processes within Children's Services have been reviewed to embed principles of 'Staying Connected' ensuring that identification and planning in relation to a child's significant relationships is a focus at an earlier stage when working with families and during transitions. Changes in the Adoption Service both in relation to staffing and practice ensures that support is in place for significant relationships for children to be supported post adoption.
- Improved data gathering regarding brothers and sisters. It continues to be the case that brothers and sisters are predominantly placed together if they have lived together prior to becoming looked after, or through moving to a placement where a sibling is already.
- Early and effective interventions for young people provided jointly by Early Help team and Barnardos. This is becoming well established and extended to include individual work as well as group work options. Evaluation underway early indicators show success in reducing offending behaviours. A steady reducing trend of referrals to reporter on offence grounds is being noted, in addition to this Clackmannanshire continues to have no children or young people in secure care – this has been the case for over five years.

Whole Family Support

- Clackmannanshire Care Leavers' Guaranteed Interview Scheme is extended to lead to more employment opportunities for care experienced young

people

- Increase in the support to foster carers, adopters and kinship carers locally – continuing to build care community
- Families receiving proactive support in relation to children's and young people's school attendance – through monitoring and tracking with establishment Heads and Virtual Headteacher.
- Development of a commissioning consortium which will align various funding streams and develop the foundation for the commissioning of a broad range of family support across the county.
- Increase in intensive family support services available to children and young people on the edge of care.
- A new Family Support Collaborative has been established with a wider range of community groups involved. In addition the Family Voices groups have been formed - 2 lived experience groups which are a core part of the model of delivery for the family support collaborative. Utilising the Scottish approach to service design. Families have been involved in designing and delivering the hub model of family support.

Supporting the Workforce

- Work is now progressing in relation to delivery of the Readiness for Caring and Readiness for Practice model building on principles and similar approaches to Readiness for Learning. Roll out and implementation is a key priority for the year ahead.
- Managers have completed trauma informed training and delivered toolkit to their staff groups across the council.
- Schools in Clackmannanshire are working towards being accredited through the Keeping The Promise Award. All schools in Clackmannanshire are working towards this at different stages with one school being the first in Scotland to have achieved the award.

Planning

- Children's Services redesign implementation focusing on earlier intervention, relationship focused locality based practice, and increased support for foster carers, adopters and kinship carers.
- Improved planning for children and young people through further development of Quality Assurance Team including designated Independent Reviewing Officer to undertake Pathway Reviews, and extension of remit of the team to include review of children looked after at home, and post adoption support plans.
- Keeping The Promise Award training delivered to Senior Leadership and elected members

Building Capacity

- Foster carer recruitment activity focused through the lens of the Promise. An event took place in April, followed by activity at local galas during the summer.
- Collaboration with SDS and Virtual Head Teacher to target young people who are not in education, or post school who are not in positive destinations. The impact of this is that young people within this group have been supported to access education, training and employment.
- Continued work with the Vardy Foundation to explore and scope options to increase range of supports and accommodation available to care experienced young people.



Whole Family Wellbeing Funding



Progress on Clackmannanshire's Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (2023/24)

The Scottish Government's 2021-22 Programme for Government committed to investing £500 million of Whole Family Wellbeing Funding (WFWF) over the lifetime of the Parliament to support the development of holistic whole family support services. It also set out the ambition that by 2030, at least 5% of community-based health and social care spend should be going towards preventative whole family support measures. The 2022-23 Scottish Budget allocated £50m for the WFWF and proposals for distribution of this spend were developed in close collaboration with partners across the sector, including Children's Service Planning Partnership (CSPP) Strategic Leads and COSLA. This included the recommendation that £32 million should be provided to the CSPPs to build local capacity for transformational whole system change and to scale up and drive the delivery of holistic whole family support services.

Clackmannanshire has received £337,000 annual funding for 2022/23 and 2023/24 which has been used to implement an effective range of early intervention provision and progress the agenda of system change required to deliver The Promise – toward family led, child centred and trauma informed services available locally at the point of need which have been highlighted in this report. The funding is enabling family support services in Clackmannanshire to shift towards early intervention, in line with the principles of The Promise.

Clackmannanshire's allocation of funding is being used to focus on 3 key priorities:

- 1) Bolster our provision of intensive support services in order to reduce the number of children with care experience and to enable us to return children home from placements outwith Clackmannanshire.
- 2) Increase the participation of children and families in the design of family support services, including creating opportunities for them to develop ideas regarding what services should be delivered.
- 3) Increase the range of early intervention services available to support communities at the earliest point, across the county.

A proportion of the funding has been used to recruit a Participation Development Worker to help involve children young people and families in developing the range of family support provision in Clackmannanshire through the creation of a consortium of Third sector family support providers. We have also commissioned Aberlour to deliver an intensive family support service for children on the edge of care from October 2023. The key performance indicators for this service will be to avoid children and young people leaving the care of their family.

The remaining funding has been used to further expand whole family support services to help return and retain our children within Clackmannanshire. **Appendix B** sets out in further details our progress and activities on our Whole Family Wellbeing Funding for the reporting period 2023/24.

Children's Services Plan 2021-2024

Ambition				
We want Clackmannanshire to be a great place for children and young people to grow up. We will do this by ensuring they have the best opportunities and life chances; experience a safe and happy childhood; develop positive wellbeing and can access high quality learning and development opportunities.				
Objectives				
A Good Childhood	Whole Family Support	Planning	Supporting the Workforce	Building Capacity
Outcomes				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children in Clackmannanshire are safe from harm Children and young people in Clackmannanshire have the best possible life experiences and opportunities Children and young people in Clackmannanshire understand their rights and are engaged and involved in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children, young people and their families can access a range of support services and family therapies in Clackmannanshire Children, young people and their families can access the right services based on their needs The health and wellbeing of children and young people is improved and inequalities are reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Children and Young People Strategic Partnership Group is meeting the planning and reporting requirements under Children's Services legislative framework Joint investment plans for Children's Services in Clackmannanshire are in place and reviewed at least annually Plans, policies, information and systems for Children's Services are shared seamlessly across the partnership where there are clear benefits to do so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CYP partners have the skills and competencies they require to deliver high quality services when working with our children, young people and their families CYP partners have common and shared workforce values when working with our children, young people and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The partnership and its public agencies have plans in place to meet Children Service Planning and emerging legislative framework
Actions for 2024-25				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that there is early and effective support in place to identify children and families affected by substance use and to minimise the harm caused by this Develop a rights-based approach that reflects the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Deliver Place based provision for children and young people in communities delivered in partnership with community, voluntary organisations and public sector partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop opportunities for early intervention and family support for financial inclusion at earliest opportunity Develop integrated early intervention pathways for vulnerable children and explore options to link this work with STRIVE Improve the support available for kinship families Develop a collaborative approach to the commissioning and delivery of Family Support provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the Community Planning Partnership can respond to national policy and developing legislation including consultations on these Strengthen the sharing of information across partners in order to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults to align with the national refresh of GIRFEC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop access pathways to training for wider workforce working with children and young people within communities and third sector through the new TSI Scotland Network online training platform Develop values and workforce development strategies to fully implement the UNCRC across Children's Services The Clackmannanshire Family Wellbeing Partnership to understand what it takes to shift a whole system towards a wellbeing and capabilities approach to service design and delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure CYP partnership have clear operating arrangements and governance structures in place. Improve collaborative use of data to drive performance across Children's Services Planning Partnership to ensure robust performance management processes and systems are in place

Appendix A: Performance Measures Clackmannanshire Children's Services Plan 2021-24 - Annual Report 2023/24

Improving Outcomes and Wellbeing: Key Performance Indicators

 Data-only	 Target or Value Not Available	 Meeting Target, or Within 5%	 5% to 15% Outwith Target	 More Than 15% Outwith Target
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In many health, crime and demographic indicators, targets are set as the previous year's Scottish average. Status, Target and Scotland figures relate to the most recent year for which data is available. While more timely information would be highly beneficial to evidence-based decision-making, there is unfortunately a substantial lag on many national publications.

Safe: Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
Unintentional Injuries in Under 5s (3-year aggregate, per 100,000 population)	1,135.1	1,067.4	1,019.0	1,067.0	Not yet available		1,054.4	1,005.0
Infant mortalities (rate per 1,000 live births) (calendar year) (5 year rolling average and crude rate)	3.8	4.0	3.0	3.0	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		3.2	3.4
Deaths in Children - Aged 1-15 Years (5-year aggregate, per 100,000 population)	7.1	7.1	4.7	4.7	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		10.1	10.1
Young People Hospitalised Due to Assault (aged 15-25, 3-year aggregate, per 100,000 population)	117.0	113.0	73.8	42.1	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		79.2	79.2
Young People in Most Crime Deprived Quintile (aged 0-25)	25.7%	25.6%	25.5%	25.4%	Not yet available		20.0%	20.0%
Domestic Abuse Incidents (per 10,000 population)	136	152	158	146	127		114	114
Children on the Child Protection Register (per 1,000 children under 16)	2.7	4.8	4.6	1.4	1.7		2.3	2.3
Children on the Child Protection Register with Parental Drug or Alcohol Misuse (per 10,000 children under 18)	9.9	11.0	5.0	15.0	Not yet available		9.1	9.1
Children Referred to Children's Reporter for Care & Protection (per 1,000 aged under 16)	11.6	24.6	14.7	16.4	Not yet available		9.5	9.5
Referrals - With IRD	179	240	222	198	203		N/A: raw totals not targeted or benchmarked	

Healthy: Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare, and support in learning to make healthy and safe choices

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
Maternities with Drug Use (3-year aggregate, per 1,000 maternities)	12.3	20.5	22.3	18.5	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		16.7	16.6
Smoking During Pregnancy (3-year aggregate, % of those with known smoking status)	18.8%	22.9%	21.4%	18.8%	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		12.9%	12.9%

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
Smoking During Pregnancy - Quintile 1 (most deprived, 3-year aggregate, % of those with known smoking status)	29.3%	35.0%	36.7%	32.0%	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		25.9%	24.3%
Maternal Obesity (3-year aggregate)	25.3%	25.3%	27.7%	30.1%	32.7%		26.1%	27.0%
Premature Births (3-year aggregate)	10.9%	11.1%	10.0%	9.4%	9.2%		8.2%	8.2%
Healthy Birth Weight (3-year aggregate)	84.0%	86.4%	87.0%	85.3%	84.8%		84.1%	84.6%
Babies Exclusively Breastfed at 6-8 Weeks (3-year aggregate)	21.3%	21.6%	21.0%	20.6%	22%		31.2%	32.0%
Immunisation Uptake at 24 Months - 6 in 1 (3-year aggregate)	98.2%	97.6%	97.3%	96.9%	96.7%		97.0%	97.0%
Immunisation Uptake at 24 Months - MMR (3-year aggregate)	95.1%	94.9%	95.2%	94.8%	94.5%		94.4%	94.4%
Child Dental Health in Primary 1 (no obvious decay at basic inspection)	64.7%	68.4%	N/A	73.5%	68.4%		73.8%	73.8%
Child Asthma Hospitalisations (0-15 years, 3-year aggregate, per 100,000 population)	153.7	116.3	81.1	104.7	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		112.0	112.0
Deaths from Suicide in Young People, Aged 11-25 years (5-year aggregate, per 100,000 population)	18.5	20.9	16.3	9.4	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		11.1	11.1

Achieving: Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self-esteem at home, at school and in the community

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
Children with 'No Developmental Concerns' (at 27-30 month health review)	81.8%	85.4%	83.3%	81.8%	80.3%		83.1%	83.1%
School Attendance - Care-experienced Children	89.0%		90.0%	86.5%	86.1%		84.4%	84.4%
School Exclusions - Care-experienced Children (per 1,000 Care-experienced Children, biennial) * represent small numbers that have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality.	N/A*		N/A*		N/A*		0%	96.9
Care-experienced School Leavers With 1 or More SCQF at Level 4	57.0%	69.0%	77.0%	81.0%	66.7%		91.7%	75.7%
School Leavers Entering Positive Destinations	94.2%	96.5%	95.9%	96.5%	94.9%		95.7%	95.9%
Care-experienced School Leavers Entering Positive Destinations [Positive destinations includes higher education, further education, training, voluntary work, employment and personal skills development]	86.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.7%	94.4%		91.7%	86.4%
Care-experienced School Leavers Follow Up Positive Destination	71.0%	77.0%	38.0%	61.9%	83.3%		71.1%	71.1%

Nurtured: Having a nurturing place to live, in a family setting with additional help if needed or, where this is not possible, in a suitable care setting

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
Children Looked After by Local Authority (per 1,000 children 0-17 years)	20.8	18.4	24.8	27.0	22.7		12.1	12.1
Care-experienced Children Looked After in the Community	93.0%	93.1%	93.7%	95.1%	94.7%		92.5%	89.2%
Care-experienced Children with More than 1 Placement in the Last Year	22.2%	23.8%	16.9%	14.8%	16.9%		15.9%	17.2%
Care-experienced Children with 3 or More Placements in the Last Year	4%	6%	6%	5%	5%		0%	4%
% children and young people with foster carers provided by the local authority	13%	12%	9%	8%	11%		22%	22%
% Children and young people with foster carers purchased externally by the local authority	22%	23%	21%	24%	22%		10%	10%
% Care-experienced children who remain at home or in kinship placement	55%	58%	63%	62%	56%		54%	54%
Child Protection Re-registrations (within 18 months)	19.0%	13.0%	8.1%	13.3%	11.3%		5.6%	5.6%
Spend on Services for Care-experienced Children in Residential & Community Settings as % of General Fund Budget	3.40%	3.62%	4.28%	4.79%	4.66%		4.23%	2.95%
Gross Expenditure - Services for Care-experienced Children in Residential Settings (£,000)	£1,672	£1,836	£2,500	£3,200	£3,234		N/A: raw totals not targeted or benchmarked	
Gross Expenditure - Services for Care-experienced Children in Community Settings (£,000)	£3,352	£3,691	£4,351	£4,969	£5,303		N/A: raw totals not targeted or benchmarked	

Active: Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport which contribute to healthy growth and development, both at home and in the community

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
Active Travel to School	64.2%	64.3%	65.9%	66.1%	65.3%		50.2%	50.2%

Respected: Having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions which affect them

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
% of reviews result in a Having Your Say report being completed by the child/young person (8+)	38.1%	36.7%	79.9%	66.7%				
% Care leavers aged 16+ who have a pathway plan		92%	0%	2%	51%		71%	71%

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
% Care leavers aged 16+ who have an allocated (social worker) pathway coordinator		100%	100%	95%	44%		52%	52%

Responsible: Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles in their schools and communities, where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision and being involved in decisions that affect them

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
Alcohol-related Hospitalisations, Aged 11-25 Years (3-year aggregate, per 100,000 population)	192.5	210.9	165.1	147.4	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		255.3	255.3
Drug-related Hospital Admissions, aged 11-25 years (3-year average per 100,000)	187.0	197.5	159.0	145.4	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		167.7	167.7
Teenage pregnancies under 16 years of age (3 year average rate per 1,000 females aged 13-15)	3.4	2.9	2.8	2.3	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		2.3	2.3
Teenage pregnancies under 18 years of age (3 year average rate per 1,000 females aged 15-17)	16.8	16.4	18.0	18.6	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		13.6	13.6
Teenage Pregnancies - Aged Under 20 Years (3-year aggregate, per 1,000 females aged 15-19)	38.7	39.1	38.1	36.7	Update due Q3/Q4 2024		25.0	25.0
Children Referred to Children's Reporter for Offences (per 1,000 aged 8-15)	8.0	9.0	7.7	5.8	6.9		5.6	5.6
Number of children and young people in secure accommodation	0	0	0	0	0		0	0

Included: Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn

Performance Indicator	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Status	Target	Scotland
Children Registered for Free School Meals (P4 & above, as % of all pupils P4 & above)	20.4%	18.1%	21.4%	Not avail	Not avail		17.5%	17.5%
Young People in Most Access Deprived Quintile (aged 0-25)	14.3%	14.4%	14.5%	15.1%	Not avail		21.3%	21.3%
Young People in Most Income Deprived Quintile (aged 0-25)	27.8%	27.6%	27.8%	27.6%	Not avail		19.6%	19.6%
Child Poverty Rate (after Housing costs)	26.1%	25.5%	25.4%	28.3%	29.2%		21.8%	21.8%

Appendix B: Clackmannanshire's Whole Family Wellbeing Fund – Annual reporting 2023/24

SECTION 1: Activities, WFWF Logic Model Outcomes, and Estimated Budget Allocated

Activity 1:

Bolster our provision of intensive support services in order to reduce the number of children with care experience and to enable us to return children home from placements outwith Clackmannanshire

Question 1: Activity title and description: Funding was allocated to three 3rd Sector providers to increase the range and quantity of intensive support services available in Clackmannanshire. The funding was allocated as follows:

Aberlour Sustain – Intensive Whole Family Support for children on the edge of care £100,000

Sustain is commissioned to work intensively with 15 families over the 12-month period (from October 2023) with the aim for children and young people identified as being at risk of being accommodated, remaining with their family, where safe to do so.

Action For Children – Functional Family Therapy (FFT) - £70,767

Functional Family therapy is a specialist family therapy service for families who are currently accessing support from social work and are at risk of becoming accommodated.

Barnardo's Clackmannanshire Futures Service - £45,000

Clacks Futures supports our young people with experience of care to return to the community and support them with a wide range independent living skills.

Question 2:

a) Which short-term, intermediate, or long-term WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) identified in your WFWF Initial Plan template does this activity contribute to?

WFWF Logic model outcome: WFWF Logic model Early Outcome: **Increased WFS capacity – scaled and new services are integrated**

WFWF Logic model Early Outcome : **More families receive Whole Family Support**

WFWF Logic Model Long Term outcomes: **Reduction in numbers of children and young people living away from their families**

b) During this financial year (23/24), how has this activity contributed toward these outcomes? Please describe how this has happened (what processes or mechanisms) using specific qualitative or quantitative evidence and cite the sources used.

WFWF Logic model Early Outcome: Increased WFS capacity – scaled and new services are integrated:

We have increased capacity of Functional Family Therapy by 100% (1FTE therapist – 21 families) and increased capacity of intensive whole family support for children on the edge of care and children and young people returning from care through the creation of the new Aberlour Sustain Service and the expansion of the Barnardo's Futures service.

All three of these services have been introduced part way through the financial year – between October 23 and January 24 so the impact results are restricted. However, extensive work was undertaken in identifying the priority areas for funding (as detailed in last years submission) and as a result the services were quickly integrated into current referral pathways and are well embedded within the children's service landscape. The overall effect has been to increase the capacity of services within Clackmannanshire to support children and young people on the edge of care. The detail of the outcomes achieved is provided below.

WFWF Logic model Early Outcomes : More families receive Whole Family Support:

At least 50 additional families will receive support from the additional Family Support provision over the year.

WFWF Long Term outcomes: Reduction in numbers of children and young people living away from their families:

In April 2023 there were 198 children looked after away from their parents care, in April 2024 this had dropped to 185 children.

Local Outcome as detailed in plans submitted: **Increased provision for children at the edge of care and leaving care resulting in reduced external placements.**

In April 2023 Clackmannanshire had 66 children placed in external placements. In April 2024 it had reduced to 58.

Question 3: Estimate of WFWF funding spent on this activity in this financial year (in pounds):

£215,676 has been allocated in this financial year – however this has been utilising the WFWF award for 2022/23 which was not spent. Many of the initiatives started half way through the year and delivery will continue into financial year 2024/25.

Activity 2 Increase the participation of children and families in the design of family support services, including creating opportunities for them to develop ideas regarding what services should be delivered.

Question 1: Activity description:

The WFWF funding was used to recruit a Participation and Engagement Worker to support the development of family support provision in Clackmannanshire, based on the input of children, young people and parents who had experienced the use of these services. This role has been critical in the development of a new means of commissioning and delivery of family support services within Clackmannanshire.

Question 2: a) Which short-term, intermediate, or long-term WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) identified in your WFWF Initial Plan template does this activity contribute to?

WFWF Logic model Early Outcome :

Early Evidence of meaningful and ongoing participation by CYPF in service design which ensures choice and control

WFWF Intermediate outcomes:

1 Collaborative Multi agency Approach to the funding Commissioning and delivery of family support

2 Services shift to needs and rights based planning and participation

3 Services are more accessible Children, Young People and Families know where to go, receive help when needed

b) During this financial year (23/24), how has this activity contributed toward these outcomes? Please describe how this has happened (what processes or mechanisms) using specific qualitative or quantitative evidence and cite the sources used.

1)WFWF Logic model Early Outcome :

Early Evidence of meaningful and ongoing participation by CYPF in service design which ensures choice and control

Progress:

We have appointed a WFWF Participation Development Officer who has developed a lived experience participation group Family Voices where the focus is on family support commissioning and delivery. This work enabled the creation of an action plan to tackle the main points of feedback. This action plan was created in partnership with the family voices group and is being continually reviewed and updated by the group.

2) WFWF Intermediate outcomes: Collaborative Multi agency Approach to the funding Commissioning and delivery of family support

The Council, third sector providers TSI and Family Voices Group have developed a more innovative and progressive way of delivering services to families across Clackmannanshire. A Family Support Collaborative has been established which is proposed will be operationally-led by three organisations, Barnardo's, Action for Children and Homestart, supported with funding and financial management by Clackmannanshire TSI. to co-produce a new hub based delivery method to support families, alongside the work of the Early Help team and Family Wellbeing Partnership.

•Services shift to needs and rights based planning and participation

The WFWF Participation Development Officer coordinated participation work on the Children's services plan and Family Support Strategy.

•Services are more accessible Children, Young People and Families know where to go, receive help when needed

Participation work from the Family Voices group has helped shape and create a Family Support Directory and Collaborative which are designed to deliver family supports which are flexible, accessible and near to people's homes and not dependant on referrals.

Question 3: Estimate of WFWF funding spent on this activity in this financial year (in pounds):

£50,000 of WFWF funding will be spent on this activity between August 2023 and August 2024.

Activity 3: Increase the range of early intervention services available to support communities at the earliest point, across the county.

Question 1: Activity title and description: WFWF Grant Early intervention Fund.

This involved the development of a grant scheme for early intervention initiatives, administered by CTSI and collaboration between multiagency partners and the Family Voices Group.

Question 2:

a) Which short-term, intermediate, or long-term WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) identified in your WFWF Initial Plan template does this activity contribute to?

WFWF Early outcome : **CSPPs start to redesign/design new WFS services, including removing barriers to access for CYPF**

WFWF Early Outcome : **Development of holistic workforce approach**

WFWF Long Term Outcomes (that the funding will contribute to):

- Reduction in families requiring crisis intervention**
- Improved family wellbeing**
- Increase in families taking up wider supports**
- Reduced inequalities in family wellbeing**
- Reduction in the number of children and young people living away from their families**

a)During this financial year (23/24), how has this activity contributed toward these outcomes? Please describe how this has happened (what processes or mechanisms) using specific qualitative or quantitative evidence and cite the sources used.

CSPPs start to redesign/design new WFS services, including removing barriers to access for CYPF

WFWF grant funding was awarded to Third Sector Groups through Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface. The application process involved screening by a multiagency group of CSPP partners with representatives of the Family Voices group.

•**Development of holistic workforce approach**

A key component of the applications was that they should demonstrate a holistic approach, partnership and multiagency working.

•**Reduction in families requiring crisis intervention**

Referrals to our multiagency crisis response team (STRIVE) have dropped in the last year and referrals dealt with by our early help response has increased

•**Improved family wellbeing:** There is no available evidence from Outcomes stars as yet however the following feedback has been provided:

•**Increase in families taking up wider supports:** Homestart have reported that:

52.31% of families supported have attended a group/support service out-with Home-Start.

21.54% accessed Save the Children Grants 41.54% benefitted from a fuel/ foodvoucher

21.54% benefitted from onward referral to other services

•**Reduced inequalities in family wellbeing:**

77% of respondents feel more able to deal with challenging situations and make positive changes in their lives.

75% of respondents feel better able to manage their mental health/wellbeing.

•Reduction in the number of children and young people living away from their families:

In April 2023 there were 198 Clackmannanshire children looked after away from their parents care, in April 2024 this had dropped to 185 children, 8 of these children moved from external placements

Question 3: Estimate of WFWF funding spent on this activity in this financial year (in pounds):

£69,336 was awarded during this financial year.

SECTION 2: Progress Narrative for your overall WFWF plans

Question 4: Overview description of what has been achieved to date and how this compares to intended plans, including specific partners who have been involved, particularly third sector organisations.

In 2023/24 we have made good progress in relation to the plans outlined, however we took a year to utilise the previous years funding and have therefore carried forward the funding for 23/24 to 24/25. The spend outlined relates to the previous carry over. The most significant success has been in the increase of capacity of family support provision across the authority.

Although we have early evidence of impact, this is likely to be more evident next year.

We have also made good progress in our efforts to embed the voice of lived experience in our planning processes and development of service delivery.

We have made progress in embedding system changes such as changes to our commissioning processes to embed the voice and views of children and families in service design through the development of our Whole Family Support Collaborative and have started to develop evaluation of this in partnership with the improvement Service, however it is unlikely that we will reap the benefit of this change until well into the multi year funding programme agreed.

Question 5: Describe the main successes to delivery and how specific factors enabled these successes.

Our main successes have been the joint working with the 3rd sector and the development of the Collaborative. The Participation development worker post and the contribution of the Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface and third sector partners have been key to this success.

Over the coming year as services develop and embed, we would expect to see more evidence of the impact of changes in outcomes achieved

Question 6: Describe the main challenges to delivery, and how these have been mitigated or plans to mitigate them. Please include any details on any activities which have not progressed as expected. This is a space to reflect on any lessons learned and how these might inform future work.

The main challenges to delivery have been the delays in identifying the appropriate legal routes to allow the delivery of an innovative collaborative approach to delivering commissioned services. In addition it proved time consuming to work alongside families and to fully involve them in the development of the model. This was anticipated however and is unavoidable.

Question 7: How have the activities and outcomes in Section 1 been informed by different stakeholders? (especially third sector partners and children and families)

The Participation Development Officer facilitates two participation groups called Family Voices. Group1 is based in Alloa and was created in October 2023. Group 2 is based in Tillicoultry and was created in April 2024. The members in both groups range from young people, parents and carers. All members have lived experience of using family support services and both groups have members with care experience. At the time of writing group 1 had met 15 times and group 2 has met 3 times. The groups have informed, co designed and fed back on all activities surrounding the commissioning collaborative for example supporting with the design of "Model of Care".

The Participation Development Worker has attended 15 community and partner events since September 2023 to engage with communities and third sector representatives. These opportunities have been used for consultation/ feedback pieces of work surrounding Family Supports in Clackmannanshire including the Children's Services Plan.

The Participation Development Officer has formally spoken with 111 families gathering feedback on family support services These families were identified through social workers, Education staff and Third sector services. The rich feedback gained from these families has been compiled into a feedback report. Various methods were used to collect feedback on a qualitative and quantitative level including surveys, interviews, and group work. This feedback has shaped and led the commissioning consortium.