

EDINBURGH CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP
ANNUAL REPORT
2020-2021



getting
it right
for every child

THE EDINBURGH PARTNERSHIP

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2020-2021

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN
2020 – 2023



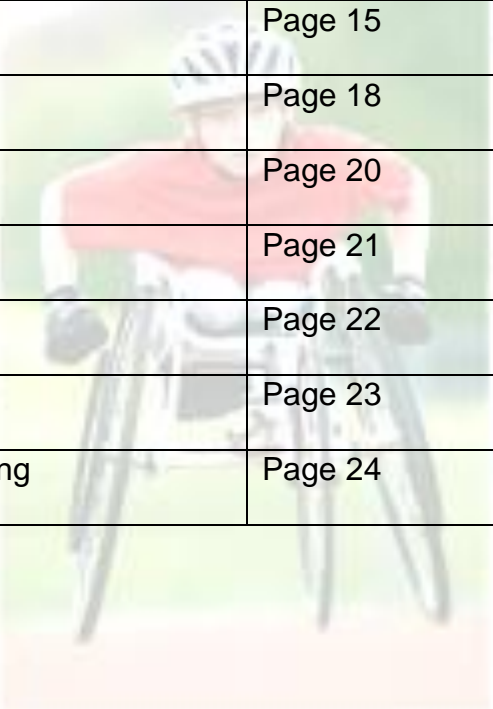
Contents

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THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Introduction | Page 3 |
| Impact of Covid | Page 4 |
| Progress of the Plan | Page 7 |
| Best Start | Page 7 |
| Bridging the Gap | Page 9 |
| Being Everything You Can Be | Page 10 |
| Children's Rights | Page 13 |
| Community Mental Health Services | Page 13 |
| Child Poverty | Page 15 |
| Corporate Parenting | Page 18 |
| Edinburgh's Promise | Page 20 |
| Whole Family Support | Page 21 |
| Family Homelessness | Page 22 |
| Youth Justice | Page 23 |
| Children's Commissioning | Page 24 |



Introduction

This is the first annual report against the progress made by the Edinburgh Children's Partnership Children's Services Plan 2020-2023. The Edinburgh Children's Partnership (also referred to as the Partnership) directs the strategic planning, development and delivery of children and young people's services on behalf of the Edinburgh Partnership. The Children's Partnership has representatives from City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), NHS Lothian (NHS), the voluntary sector (through EVOC), Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), Edinburgh College, Skills Development Scotland, Edinburgh Leisure and Police Scotland.

The Partnership is currently chaired by the Director of Strategic Planning, NHS Lothian and is vice-chaired by the Chief Social Work Officer, Service Director of Children's and Criminal Justice Services.

Since the Children's Services Plan's publication in September 2020, the world continues to be affected by the Covid-19 pandemic; the largest public health challenge of recent times. Although we have seen the success of the NHS vaccination programme in reducing the need for lockdown measures, we are still some way from having fully recovered from this pandemic.

The impact on children, young people, parents, carers, families and communities is still to be fully understood. As this report will highlight, the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the disadvantage and inequity faced by many children and their families. If life was challenging prior to the pandemic, almost without exception, it is viewed that those challenges have grown and not diminished.

However, the pandemic has created new opportunities. Technology and its use with children and their families has taken a large leap forward from where its use had been pre-pandemic. Likewise, the increased collaboration with agencies and services responding to the needs of Edinburgh's children has created and sustained a collective response to the needs of children and families across Edinburgh.

The Partnership in Edinburgh have seen services continue to deliver vital services to children and their families, as well as continue to look to develop and improve service delivery as part of an ongoing culture of improvement.


The National Performance Framework articulates the vision of creating a more successful country. It sets out the purpose of ensuring opportunities for all people in Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing and sustainable, inclusive economic growth (focused on reducing inequalities and giving equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress).



The Edinburgh Children's Partnership is committed to contributing, along with its connected planning partnerships covering the City of Edinburgh's population, to the national performance framework's purpose, values and intent.

Impact of Covid-19

Whilst the overall, long term impacts of Covid-19 are not yet known, the pandemic has exacerbated existing health and social inequalities. Groups of people who are already disadvantaged through unemployment, low income, race and caring responsibilities have greater risks from COVID pandemic and a harder financial and social impact associated with loss of income and unemployment. The most recent data from National Records of Scotland indicate that people from the most deprived communities are 2.4 times more likely to die from COVID-19.



While children and young people have been far less affected by the direct health impacts of the pandemic, they have been disproportionately affected by the wider impacts including lockdowns and longer-term economic implications. These impacts are exacerbating existing inequalities amongst children and young people.

During this first year of the Edinburgh Children's Partnership plan, measures to respond to the Covid pandemic continued. Partners' responses are described throughout the report, and in summary, included:


- **Crisis services** including financial support and advice, extended free school meal provision and school clothing grants
- **Supporting children back into education following easements to lockdowns**
- **Supporting families cope with the challenges and lost opportunities that the Pandemic has created**
- Support for **vulnerable and shielding** groups including wellbeing checks and deliveries of food and medicines
- **Support for families** at home through an adapted Discover programme
- Face to face support in each locality through **Council Resilience Centres**
- Providing digital equipment and WIFI connections to those school pupils who needed them
- **Covid testing and vaccination support:** A multi-agency (NHS/CEC and third sector) Enhanced COVID Response group has been established and is delivering work to increase access to vaccination and testing for more vulnerable or poorer communities
- Shifting to **online provision** of classes for school and adult education including refugees

Responding to the pandemic has provided valuable learning as well as challenges.

Locality Operational Groups

Since April 2020, the COVID19 Children's Services Taskforce led by CEC and EVOC coordinates our shared efforts and resources to support vulnerable children, young people and their families in response to the impact of Covid-19. We share information and develop new ways of working together to ensure that we continue to build on our Restorative culture to mitigate the effects of poverty and social isolation.

The Taskforce immediately set up weekly Locality Operational Group meetings to build supportive local networks for our children and families so that the wide range of services and supports are directed in the most effective way, and to increase the two-way flow of information about emerging need between local practitioners in the LOG and senior managers in citywide partnership forums.



Each LOG includes at least 13 members: voluntary sector reps for Early Years, Equalities & Rights, Family Support, Health & Wellbeing, Support for Learning and Universal Youth Work; local authority/NHS reps for Additional Support For Learning, Early Years, Family & Household Support, Lifelong Learning, NHS Health Visiting Service, Parent & Carer Support and Social Work.

By December 2021, the LOGs responded to 316 consultations by professionals submitted using an online needs form. The most frequent categories requested by consultees were Parent/Carer, Educational and Family Support. In addition, there was high demand for support with Befriending and Peer Relationships, and Social, Emotional and Behavioural concerns and Mental Health. Most additional support needs references were to ASD (71) or ADHD (41). Other prevalent factors included domestic abuse and parents' mental and physical health.

The LOGs feed real time learning to the Taskforce, which takes this directly to senior managers in the Children's Partnership and forums including the Child Protection Committee. This led to action on many operational challenges: access to school hubs for vulnerable children and young people, access to places for professionals to meet clients, interpretation of national and local COVID-19 restrictions and associated guidance, access to CEC buildings including community centres, effective ways of working with children and young people in line with changing restrictions.

An outstanding example of work involving the Taskforce and LOGs to connect-up localities, themes and other client groups to better deliver joined-up services was the Family Support Mapping Exercise Report - December 2020. This report highlights the findings of the mapping exercise undertaken in September 2020 by the LOGs with the support of the Lifelong Learning Parent and Carer Support Development Officers. This mapping and a high response parent and career survey is informing the extension of family support across the city, through a collaborative commissioning approach.

The LOGs are a community of practice supporting the GIRFEC process, moving services towards early intervention, and are an important long-term partner for the Promise. No additional costs were incurred by the Taskforce and LOGs.



Progress of The Plan

In the Edinburgh Children's Partnership Service Plan, it is stated that the Edinburgh Children's Partnership will monitor and measure success over the life of this plan through:

- the ongoing collection of feedback from children, young people and their families about their lives and specifically around the aims and priorities set out in this plan
- the periodic reporting to the Edinburgh Children's Partnership from the project/delivery groups, drawing on a wide range of evidence of progress from partners
- a small set of population measures relating to the three Aims, that reflect national measures wherever possible

This annual report will cover where and how the above actions have been taken forward. The ongoing pandemic has given the Partnership several challenges. However, the extensive consultation on parenting support clearly demonstrates the Partnership's commitment to speaking with parents and carers of children and seeking their views on what will make a difference to them.

The Partnership three priority aims, known as the 3Bs (Best Start, Bridging the Gap and Being everything you can be), are the focus for the Partnership. The Partnership's frequency of meeting has increased from every second month to monthly, with updates and feedback from the 3B projects at each meeting. This allows the Partnership to be aware of and understand the challenges that each project has in reviewing and making impactful change in the area of their focus.

Each 3B Group has project management support through NHS Lothian, as well as dedicated business support from both the Council and NHS Lothian.

The following are updates on the 3Bs, a narrative of activity, as well as review of the key population data.

Best Start

Best Start - To be thriving adults, the first few years in our lives are vital. The Edinburgh Children's Partnership is determined to ensure that appropriate support is provided at the right time to children and their families, to create the environment required to give every child the best start to a fulfilling life.

Every child should have love, care and support Families should have access to the support they need to create a loving, stable and caring environment. This will

encourage positive attachment and give the child the best possible chance to thrive. The Partnership will expand the delivery of early intervention and prevention services.

1. *Improvement in early child development* - measured by an increase in the percentage of eligible children reaching all their developmental milestones at the time of their 13-15-month review [90.3% 2018/19] – there has been no change with this being 90.1% for 2020/21 which given the difficulties the pandemic brought to families, this should be considered positive. However, now face to face visiting is fully reinstated this data set will be monitored closely.

2. *Improvement in early child development* - measured by an increase in the percentage of eligible children reaching all their developmental milestones at the time of their 27-30-month review [90.4% 2018/19] this has slightly slipped to 88.8% for 2020/21

3. *Reduction in the level of concerns around child welfare* - measured by a decrease in the number of Child Welfare Concerns (CWCs) for children aged under five [2,675 in 2019/20]; this figure has risen to 2,877 CWCs for aged under 5

The Best Start group has met fortnightly since August 2021 and initially developed a process map for Health Visitors to use when carrying out 27-30-month child health review. Health visitors already asked parent/carers if their child attended an early years setting, but there was no requirement for them to record the name of the setting. The process map introduced a step to include this along with permission from the parent to share any developmental concerns with the child's early years setting.

Testing of new approaches

The health visitors agreed the process was helpful, but the number of children they saw meant it was difficult to test the communication with the early years setting part of the process as the children they see attend several settings. It was agreed that Craigentenny and Craigmillar Early Years Centres would send the health visitors details of the children in their setting who would be eligible for the 27-30-month child health review.

There was good communication already in place between the Early Years Centres (EYCs) and Health Visitors and both already knew of existing developmental concerns with appropriate support in place.

It was noted that ELC settings with staff less experienced in identifying developmental concerns may not access timely support. The following process was

put in place after consultation with members of the project group and educational psychologist team.

Health Visitors receiving information from EYC settings saw the benefits of prioritising children where concerns are shared for their health reviews, as well as children on the Child Protection Register (CPR). This process will stop children being missed and could highlight issues about EYCs if a health visitor identifies a concern that has not already been picked up.

Next step - Test the process with early years settings with children eligible for the 27-30-month health review, but do not meet the criteria and or have not been referred to a service.

THE EDINBURGH CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN 2020 - 2023

Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap - Poverty and inequality affect many children and families, and this can bring great disadvantage upon several aspects of their lives. The Edinburgh Children's Partnership is determined to ensure that regardless of the challenges their circumstances may bring, every child will have the same chance to live a healthy, happy and fulfilling life.

Every family should have enough money to live on. Families should have access to the support that they need to maximise their resources, increase employability, and make informed choices to improve their financial situation. The Partnership will embed discussions regarding family budgets as central to their everyday tasks in order to effectively signpost families to the correct supportive services.

1. *Reduction in Child Poverty* – measured by a decrease in the number of children living in Relative poverty (after housing costs) [20,862 (23%) in 2017/18]; this figure has reduced to 19% 2019/20

2. *Reduction in the deprivation related gap in early child development* - measured by a decrease in the percentage point gap between the most deprived and least deprived of eligible children reaching all their developmental milestones at the time of their 27-30-month review [14.3pp 2018/19] this has improved slightly to 13.8pp in 2020/21

3. *Reduction in the deprivation related gap for literacy levels* - measured by a decrease in the percentage point gap between most deprived and least deprived Primary pupils achieving expected level in Literacy [26.9pp in 2018/19]. The pandemic has not

supported this work for many reasons, and the percentage point gap has increased to 27.5pp (for 2020/21 – no figure for 2019/20)

Bridging the Gap's membership and purview have been widened in recent months, with membership now comprising representation from Police Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council (Lifelong Learning and Development, Family and Household Support Team, Looked After Children/Young People/Corporate Parenting), Education, Capital City Partnership, EVOG and NHS, with the Group's parameters incorporating the full suite of established risk groups - large families/those with young children/lone/young parents/homelessness/BAME families/families with disability and looked after children/young persons.

Poverty remains a recurring pan-organisational commitment, and with a comprehensive suite of Poverty related work already being delivered across a plethora of Strategic partnerships i.e. Local Outcome Improvement Plan/ End Poverty in Edinburgh, which also provides a schedule of multi-agency awareness raising sessions (network of networks), and consequently, with primacy and accountability sitting with Strategic stakeholders

Predicated on enabling access and promoting availability, we have discussed an intention to widen accessibility of Education's '1 in 5' (a programme aimed at removing costs for families from education) training package to enhance awareness of poverty (an appropriate delivery mechanism is to be considered). This training focuses on negating stigma, promoting understanding and a strength-based relational approach, for wider dissemination across these touchpoints. We also aim to promote assured sites (employability and support services) and engage with Young Scot to progress a joint promotion campaign which aligns with the free transport scheme for young people. Reach is obviously key, and we regard assured and agreed materials, allied with a cogent multi-themed communication strategy as imperatives. In that regard, the Group are keen to build upon the Children's Partnership's Communication Strategy.

Being Everything You Can Be

Being Everything You Can Be - It is important to promote and support every child's aspirations to ensure they can become everything they can be, now and in the future. The Edinburgh Children's Partnership is determined to ensure that every child has the right to have all their needs met and be able to shape and live a fulfilling life.

All children and young people should have access to a safe place and someone to talk to. All children and young people should have access to support from parents, friends and family to raise issues they may have such as bullying. The Partnership will ensure that adults know how to signpost and access such support for children when required,

and children and young people are also aware of these supports through targeted and universal publicising.

1. *Improvement in mental health and wellbeing* - measured by the % change in average monthly referrals to CAMHS outpatient services. There was a 22% increase (43.7 extra referrals per month) comparing 2019/20 to 2021/22 YTD and a 26% increase (48.6 extra referrals per month) comparing 2020/21 with 2021/22 YTD. (This considers a fall in referrals during the height of the pandemic (20/21 due to reduction in some services).

2. *Improvement in school attendance* - measured by a decrease in the percentage of Primary pupils with low attendance (captured as attendance below 85%) [8.0% in 2019/20]; reporting has been affected by Covid and lockdown impact upon attendance data. However attendance remains a key priority for Education Services as this is a gateway to raising attainment and has become a focused theme within the Children's Partnership and the work of the LOGs.

3. *Improvement in destinations of school leavers* - measured by an increase in the percentage of school leavers entering a positive destination [95.1% for 2019]; this figure has dropped slightly to 92.5% which is understood to have been the impact of the pandemic upon levels of support available, as well as uncertainty regarding how the pandemic would affect courses, jobs, training, etc.

PLANS

- Mapping exercise of community support and opportunities for positive destinations and pathways.
- Support pupil consultation/survey to ensure links with community-based youth and children's services.
- To agree additional measure of success around early intervention and wider achievement opportunities and what data is available to drive improvement in this area.
- Contribute to Thematic Attendance Review and sharing of data/case study with wider Partnership
- Consideration of Christmas school leavers and positive destinations.

ACTIVITY/PROGRESS

- Meeting with Education colleagues to discuss measures of success and what work is currently taking place that can be linked with Be Everything You Can Be.

- Meeting of 3B Project Group with some initial actions identified – including mapping what working groups already exist that have crossover with Measure of Success in 3B to avoid duplication and missing relevant contributions.
- Mapping exercises around pathways underway – linking education and youth work opportunities within North West Locality and a second mapping exercise to support Gorgiemills, with a focus on positive destinations and wellbeing support.
- Engagement in Thematic Attendance Review group. This review includes community-based youth and children’s services alongside education.
- Sharing of community-based youth work services information to support curriculum reform work in North West locality, linking with wider achievement opportunities.
- Meeting with Edinburgh College to identify representative on Project Group and areas of contribution.
- Offer of engagement with 16+ to link education with community-based youth work opportunities supporting education recovery.
- CAMHS Developments in 2021
 - Recruitment to additional CAMHS staff across all teams using additional funding. This has included recruitment to new posts such as Advanced Nurse Practitioners and Pharmacy Prescribers, Nurse consultant, and Physician associates.
 - Implementation of the CAPA model and methodology to better support and understand demand and capacity for NHS Lothian CAMHS.
 - Launch of the CAMHS Unscheduled Care service in Summer 2021 which ensures that all children and young people requiring emergency assessment and crisis support can access a pathway 24/7. Currently operating 7 days a week till 8pm.
 - Delivering contract with the organisation 'Healios' to take on some neurodevelopmental assessments and mental health support. Delivering upwards of 470 neurodevelopmental and 200 mental health assessments.
 - Work to prepare for a new neurodevelopmental pathway has been taken forward, including the split of the CAMHS waiting list into those waiting for mental health support and those waiting for neurodevelopmental diagnosis and support. Developing a test of change in East Lothian for a new neurodevelopmental pathway, which will commence in Spring 2022
 - Development of a Primary Care Mental Health workforce - due to be in place in Spring 2022

Edinburgh Children's Partnership Children's Rights Report 2017-20

[Edinburgh Children's Partnership Children's Rights Report 2017-20 \(PDF\)](#)

This is the first report on the steps the Partnership has taken to progress the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) across its services throughout the city. It covers 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the report includes the period since March 2020.

The report highlights progress and achievements that we can build on in the next three years. It also sets out progress, evidence and challenges in relation to each of the eight clusters of rights that make up the UNCRC. It ends with lessons learnt and recommendations for future work in this vital area.

The report makes 21 recommendations that will form an action plan to ensure that Children's Rights are key to all decisions taken and made for children's services in Edinburgh.

Community Mental Health Services


Scottish Government funding has enabled Edinburgh to strengthen our work supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families. An implementation group including third sector, health and council representatives led the local approach for the funds.

Local Approach

Children, young people and their families told us that local in person supports were highly valued and as a result the focus of the funds was to strengthen the level of support and activities that were available in each locality. They also told us it isn't always easy to find out what support and activities are available where. As a result the funds aim to join up services and collaborate to make support easier to navigate.

Phase One – Extend and Enhance

To achieve these aims the implementation group liaised with third sector partners with the expectation that collaborative proposals would be required to achieve the scope of the specification. As we recognised collaboration of this scale and nature would take planning and time funds for March to September 21 were directed towards short term grants. These were successfully awarded in partnership with EVOC. The grants focussed on extending and enhancing effective practice that was



already being delivered whilst planning for the longer-term strategic collaborations was ongoing.

Phase Two – Collaborate and Connect

The long-term aim is to collaborate to provide more activities, early supports and interventions that promote mental wellbeing and reduce the risk of difficulties becoming worse over time and requiring specialist mental health services. The partnership will continue to work collaboratively to develop ‘seamless supports’ for mental health from early intervention and universal activities to specialist mental health services. The aim is to offer the right support at the right time.

THE EDINBURGH CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP

The community mental health services were successfully procured through an open procurement process in July 2021. Partnership representatives from health, third sector, social work and education supported the moderation. In total 8 collaborative services were procured totalling around 28 local organisations. Six collaborative services will be delivering locality-based supports. Two services are delivering city-wide supports for specialist areas of support; family and social adversity and neuro-developmental diversity.

The services will all; focus on collaborating and connecting mental health provision to provide ‘seamless pathways to support’. The partnership will continue to collaborate to provide joined up pathways to support that is easily navigated and understood by stakeholders especially children, young people and their families.

The new services have a focus on mental health and wellbeing including supports related to distress. Supporting and promoting mental health and distress can include a wide range of activities and targeted supports; arts, sport, outdoor activities, therapeutic interventions. The new services will build on the effective supports that are already in place with a focus on addressing identified gaps and increasing capacity within the existing locality and citywide provision. Six of the new services will be delivered locally and therefore will also support the council’s aspirations in relation to 20-minute communities.

Codesign and Evaluation

Each service will work with the children, young people and families in their locality to develop and evaluate the range of supports and activities that will best meet their local needs. Initially Social Value Lab will be supporting the services to develop their

systems and approaches to co-design and evaluation. The partnership will report to Scottish Government on delivery and impact every 6 months.

Accessing Support

The services and the partnership will work together to support children, young people and their families to easily understand and identify the right local supports. This will be supported by clear online signposting through the development of a community mental health website focussed on supporting 5 to 26-year olds in Edinburgh.

Next Steps

The children's partnership will support the continued work in this area including;

- Working collaboratively to develop an easy to navigate No Wrong Door / Single Point of access pathway to access the right support at the right time.
- Doing so by building on and strengthening our established Getting it Right for Every Child process and the locality collaboration that has already developed through the Locality Operation Groups (LOGs).
- That this pathway will enable children, young people and families to ask for support and ensure services work together to respond effectively and efficiently.
- Supporting the development of a joined-up communication strategy so that children, young people and families understand how to seek support
- Continuing to enable joined up working across funding streams to maximise and co-ordinate the supports available to children, young people and families.

Addressing Child Poverty in Edinburgh

Within each of the 7 calls for action made by the [Edinburgh Poverty Commission](#), this report highlights specific actions tailored to improving outcomes for families, children and young people. These include:

- Action to improve employment outcomes for young people and school leavers through Young Person's Guarantee Team, Modern Apprenticeships, and employability support for parents

- Action to improve income security and reduce living costs, through family focused advice and services such as Maximise! as well as provision of key supports for families such as free school meal payments and school uniform grants.
- Action to improve support for children and families in temporary accommodation
- Action to improve impact of Corporate Parenting
- Action to improve education outcomes and prospects, through the Edinburgh Learns for Life programme, Youth work partnerships and establishment of the learning communities' approach, and
- Action to improve wellbeing for families experiencing poverty, through family focused programmes such as Discover!

Progress during the past 12 months has been guided by the **Edinburgh Learns for Life strategy**. This approach recognises that to improve opportunities for all, actions need to extend beyond school buildings and that ingrained issues such as poverty, diversity and inclusion can only be tackled through long term planning, determined leadership and stronger cohesion with other council services. Key steps during 2020/21 include:

- **Expansion of early years support** so that all 3- and 4-year olds and all eligible 2-year-old have access to 1,140 of childcare from August 2021. Around 10,500 children receive early learning and childcare in Edinburgh.
- **A doubling of the number of practitioners available to support Home Learning.** The Council's Parents Early Education Partnership Programme (Peep), supports parents to be engaged in their child's learning through a variety of play experiences. Feedback from parents, children and staff has been very positive around transitions.
- **A new Intensive Family Support service** developed in North Edinburgh to tackle child poverty. Early years staff work with the Maximise! team and parents to access family support, maximise income and consider opportunities to volunteer, develop skills, training or employment.
- **A new Teachers Charter** established to ensure teachers have the enhanced level of skills necessary to support young people to reach their full potential. The target over the next three years is for all teaching staff to achieve this level.
- Development of the **Leadership for Equity** professional learning programme designed to support changes in attitudes and perceptions about poverty. There are two sets of training: one for people in a leadership role, and one for class teachers, with 40 people from each attending this year.
- **The 1 in 5: Raising Awareness of Child Poverty programme** continues to support culture change and building knowledge and awareness. Over 74% of schools have participated and following training, 80-90% of staff involved were more aware of poverty and its impacts and felt more able to make changes needed to tackle stigma and reduce costs of school.
- Progress in work to **involve learners in designing their environments and courses.** Schools are being asked to ensure that young people have opportunities to lead their own learning so that it best reflects their lives, circumstances and interests - this includes pupils who are care experienced, from BAME communities, those who have additional support needs, and those who experience poverty.
- **Pupil Equity Fund investment** during 2020-21 meant that during the school building closure period January-March 2021, all households with children attending primary or secondary were provided with at least one electronic learning device if

they did not already have one. Funding was also used to reduce the cost of the school day (wider achievement activities, school trips, the cost of classes e.g. Art and Design and Photography as well as clothing and essentials, and breakfast clubs).

- **Progress in developing pathways beyond school for both academic and vocational career paths.** Progress over the last year has included:
 - Targeted support for young people at risk of negative destination through JET (Job Education Training), which provides extended work placements and tailored support
 - Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) co-ordinator posts started in January 2021 aiming to have them in all the Council's secondary schools by Christmas 2021. Co-ordinators engage with local employers to provide more work-based learning activities; and work closely with SDS (Skills Development Scotland) career advisors and pupil support to share information about opportunities
- **Progress in establishing learning communities:** The Learning Communities approach has been developed over the last year to help school and other community leaders to work together to improve outcomes for learners and to make sure that children and families living in poverty receive early intervention and holistic support. Learning communities include high schools, primary schools, special schools and early years, as well as services and resources within the whole community (including police, health and housing), forming a network of collaboration and support. This approach aligns with the Council's Business Plan, and future schools will be planned according to the principles of a 20-minute neighbourhood.

Youth Work Partnership working between the Council and the Local Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC), which supports community-based youth and children's work in Edinburgh has included:

- Training opportunities for youth and children's workers, based on a needs analysis with the sector (including sexual health, mental health and wellbeing, substance use, child protection, autism awareness, LGBT and trauma informed practice).
- Training was co-delivered with a range of partners (Youth Scotland, Edinburgh and Heriot Watt Universities, Zero Tolerance, Healthy Respect, NHS Lothian, LGBT Youth Scotland)
- Young people's consultations used to inform planning.
- Ongoing work to build the evidence base on the impact of community-based youth work to improved outcomes for children and young people.

The recently launched Youth Navigator service provides **joined-up hospital and community youth work** to support young people with some of the life challenges that can bring them into contact with health services. Such times are 'reachable moments', when people are more open to accepting support. The Youth Navigator works alongside the medical and nursing staff to make sure that those important opportunities are not missed. The partnership for delivery includes NHS Lothian, Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation, and Medics against Violence (a charity founded and led by senior clinicians) and is based in the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People and St John's Hospital, Livingston.

Mentoring: recognising that young people benefit from mentoring support from a trusted individual, there are a variety projects in place in the City to provide this - MCR

Pathways, Intercultural Youth Scotland and Light up Learning provide in school support; Working Rite, Move On, Rock Trust and Project Scotland offer mentors to those who are post-school.

In August 2021, City of Edinburgh Council published **Edinburgh Learns for Life**, a revised strategic plan for education to meet long term city priorities amid the emerging pressures and opportunities presented by COVID. The plan makes a specific response to the findings of the Edinburgh Poverty Commission, with a focus on the poverty-related attainment gap and inequitable pathways, and culture change needed to remove the stigma of poverty.

The work of the **Edinburgh Learns for Life Equity Board** will play a clear role in ensuring alignment of all functions – including learning estates, curriculum, and inclusion – towards goals to end poverty.

In response to the Edinburgh Poverty Commission recommendations, **NHS Lothian** has recognised the need for a Lothian wide approach to tackling poverty and inequalities exacerbated by COVID-19. The corporate objectives for 2021-22 include developing and defining an approach to inequalities and poverty and establishing an Anchor Institutions approach. A Board has been established to oversee this work and is chaired by the Director of Public Health.

Corporate Parenting

In December 2020 Edinburgh Council’s Corporate Parenting Plan was revised to mirror itself against the 3Bs of the Children’s Partnership Services Plan.

Best Start in Life –

A considered communication plan, including training on attachment and trauma, to ensure all partners are aware of and understand their corporate parenting responsibilities so that all children are loved, safe and respected

Clearly defined structures are in place between Social Work and Education to ensure strong partnership working thrives and has as its core, clear and defined points of contact

A broad range of care placements are available to provide a loving, stable and caring experience for children and young people who cannot live within their own family networks

Bridging the Gap –

Review the work of and develop a sustainable model for the Champions Board including the coordination and participation capacity.

Clear monitoring and understanding of the progress and achievement of all looked after children including robust attendance processes and procedures which are monitored to increase the number of children engaging in learning

Partners work together to guarantee that education needs are identified and met through the CYP Planning process and young people have access to safe affordable housing options

Be Everything You Can Be –

Praise and recognition is celebrated. Corporate Parenting week publicises and highlights achievements, successes and outcomes

Extend and expand opportunities, pathways and transition programmes to achieve positive destinations for those in S4 and above including further commitment to Edinburgh being a Family Firm Employer

Develop a comprehensive data set to gather and analyse information on the profile and wellbeing of Edinburgh's looked after children. Children and young people receive support to understand and make sense of their own life story and their treasured memories are stored safely and in way they can access.

There has been sustained progress in delivering the Corporate Parenting plan since its revision:

A Corporate Parenting lead officer post has been created and has now been recruited and is in post. This post holder will support the Champions Board as well as Corporate parenting partners.

A head teacher has been recruited into a virtual headteacher role responsible for all of Edinburgh's children who are care experienced. There will be a change to the name of the Corporate Parenting group – Corporate Parenting Board – to reflect the multi-agency contribution that is required, and clarify that this is not merely a Council responsibility but requires all partnership to identify actions to take forward in their support of care experienced children and young people.

New approaches to the balance of care have begun, including a new foster carer recruitment strategy as well as plans to review the residential estate.

Life Story Guidance and Training under development.

Collaboration with Care Inspectorate to develop digital vault.

Edinburgh's Promise



THE EDINBURGH CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP
CHILDREN'S SERVICES
2023-2023

Edinburgh's Children Safe, Loved and Respected


[The Promise](#) was published by the Care Review in February 2020, concluding that Scotland's Care System was neither caring nor a cohesive system. The Promise outlines the transformational change needed across children's services in Scotland, with a clear requirement for the views and voice of children and young people at the core of changes.

The Scottish Government's first three-year plan to deliver the Promise addresses 5 main themes – A Good Childhood, Whole Family Support, Building Capacity, Supporting the Workforce and Planning. Any service developments or service redesigns must address 5 additional fundamentals – what matters to children and families, poverty, language, listening and children's rights.

Edinburgh have chosen to brand its response to the Promise by referring to it as [Edinburgh's Promise](#). Edinburgh's Promise will be governed through the Edinburgh Children's Partnership, as all sectors of children's services – voluntary, statutory and regulatory – will be required to review, consult and amend service provision, in order to keep The Promise. This matches the ambition of the Children's Partnership to be as joined up as possible regarding children's services.

Given the scope and scale of the Promise, a further layer of leadership between the Partnership and service redesign was required. This group is the decision-making body of senior leaders to provide leadership, guidance, instruction, prioritisation, communication and championing of Edinburgh's Promise to those designated with delivering the service redesign and remodelling required. This group is known as the Edinburgh's Promise Leadership Group and is responsible for taking forward this bold agenda of Children's services reform. The Edinburgh's Promise Delivery Group is responsible for co-ordinating the work required to address the ambitious plan required for Edinburgh's Children's Partnership to keep its promise.

There will, over the lifespan of Edinburgh's Promise need to be linkages with several other governance and special interest groups i.e. Chief Officers Group, Child



Protection Committee, Poverty Commission, Champions Board, Corporate Parenting Member Officers Group, etc.

This will be a long-term plan which will go on to shape and create the agenda for children's services for the next 9 years.

Whole Family Support

During COVID-19 lockdown, a Family Support Mapping Exercise was undertaken to identify gaps as well as an extensive consultation questionnaire for parents and carers. Over 2600 parents and carers responded and this has informed the needs analysis for the city. The questionnaire along with the mapping exercise across schools and organisations was carried out on behalf of the Edinburgh Children's Partnership (ECP). The process was facilitated by the Lifelong Learning Parent and Carer Support Team and supported by the Parent and Carer Collaborative, the Taskforce and Locality Operational Groups (LOGs).

As a result of this process, the following 7 key priority areas for improving Family Support were identified building on existing good practice across the board.

1. Accessible Outreach Support for Families
2. Support for Parents of Children with Additional Support Needs (ASN)
3. Supporting Parents with their own and their children's Mental Health
4. Improving Confidence in Parental Engagement/ Family and Home Learning
5. Increasing Access to Low Cost Family Activities
6. Antenatal and Perinatal Support
7. Better Signposting and Information on Available Family Support

As per the recommendation from the ECP paper, the members of the multi-agency Parent and Carer Collaborative (a voluntary group) have divided into small working groups to identify some **short-term** actions that could be achieved **by 30th June 2022** to address the 7 priority areas.

The aim is that these will also help Edinburgh to contribute to the priorities outlined in The Promise and the Children Services Plan.



Family Homelessness

A significant amount of work has been engaged with in how we can better support children and families who have become affected by homelessness.

There are approximately 6500 households who currently have an open homeless case in Edinburgh. Since the pandemic the demand for homelessness services has increased by nearly 40%. Currently the numbers have increased to 2890 and on average a further 40 children and young people enter temporary accommodation with their family each week. Most families in temporary accommodation have on average 2 children. The wait for a 2-bedroom social house is between 18 and 24 months, for larger properties that rises to an average wait of between 3 and 4 years

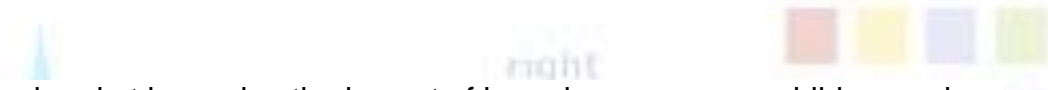
The current breakdown in Edinburgh is as follows:

- Over 800 are pre-school age (but 76% not accessing Early Learning Centres (ELC) at point of registering for a home).
- 1273 are primary school age
- 710 are high school age and
- 111 are 16 to 18-year olds.

Children who find themselves experiencing homelessness with their families are found in every single secondary school across the city and virtually all primary and special schools which highlights that this is a citywide issue and not limited to certain schools or communities. Most of these children and families are not involved with social work.

We have developed and delivered several online training seminars as part of the 1 in 5 Seminar Series to inform education and multi-agency staff about the scale of the family homelessness situation in Edinburgh, the impact living in temporary accommodation can have on a child's education, attainment and wellbeing, and what colleagues could do to support children and families.

Actions taken also include the weekly information passed to Head Teachers in primary schools and Depute Head Teachers in high schools if one of their pupils had moved into temporary accommodation that week, which has been in place for Health Visitors for some time. Schools are calling these families to find out if they need any additional help to support their children's education and wellbeing.



Other activities aimed at lessening the impact of homelessness upon children and supporting their parents during this time include, yet are not limited to:

- Increasing the capacity on Early Years services to support parents with children of pre-school age
- Focussing and supporting through enhanced transition work from nursery into P1
- Monthly multi-agency steering group focussing on families and children flagged by education services of challenges faced by families in homelessness who need additional support
- Securing of £100k of funding to offer enhanced mental health support for those children and families affected by homelessness issues
- Provision of 44 Chromebook through Connecting Scotland to families in temporary accommodation
- In collaboration with BrightLight access to 12 sessions of free counselling accessible to parents of children in temporary accommodation



Justice for Children and Young People

We support [A rights-respecting Approach to Justice for Children and Young People: Scotland's Vision and Priorities](#), which was published by the Scottish Government in June 2021. It complements the core principles and shared plans incorporated in the Children's Services Plan to achieve the vision of Edinburgh's children and young people to enjoy their childhood and achieve their potential. It also shares the Children's Plan three aims, the 3B's – Best Start, Bridging the Gap, Being Everything You Can Be.

For those children and young people who come into conflict with the law:

- Their rights must be upheld,
- Their life chances improved, and;
- The services and systems in place must support them effectively to address the needs and circumstances which led to the behaviour, in order to achieve positive outcomes.

Outcomes

The outcomes identified in the national vision have been adopted to support the achievement of Edinburgh's priorities by 2024.

- **Rights** of all children are upheld, and they are supported to **understand** what this means for them and what to expect.
- Children and young people are supported to actively **participate** and **engage** in the decisions which affect them.
- **Victims** are supported and their rights are upheld, with specific attention paid to child victims and their families.
- Children are diverted away from the Criminal Justice System to appropriate alternative supports through the continued delivery of the **Whole System Approach**.
- To the extent possible and appropriate, no under-18s are remanded or sentenced to detention a young offender's institution.
- We have the required **data and evidence** on children and young people, to better inform policy and practice so that children and young people benefit.
- Children and families are **supported at an early stage** to improve their life chances with their wellbeing and mental health needs addressed.
- **Speech, language and communication needs** for all children and young people are taken into consideration both when assessing individual needs and adapting information and communication used in formal processes.

Children's Partnership Commissioning Strategy

This is one area which we are providing more focus in the forthcoming year. We are reinvigorating this strategy and have created a multi-agency group to take this development forward for the Partnership in Edinburgh. In addition, we have created a Connected Collaboration approach to commissioning in respect of both Family Support and Mental Health, in order to ensure that all agencies and partners are undertaking the planning for additional resource and development of services together, based on the already completed mapping work for Family Support. The objective of this approach is to ensure we establish planned and coordinated equal provision across the city, with 'no wrong door' access, and an equality of access.