

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL26th March 2025Report by Chief Social Work OfficerEAST RENFREWSHIRE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROMISE 5TH ANNIVERSARY  
PROGRESS REPORT**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the work undertaken by East Renfrewshire Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership and the wider Children's Planning Partnership - the Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership – in promoting The Promise. The report highlights progress with local implementation over the period 2020 to 2025. The local partnership acknowledges that whilst progress has been made there is much still to do to be fully Promise compliant by 2030.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. Council is asked to:
- a) Note the publication of the national Promise Oversight Board 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Report (2025); and,
  - b) Note and comment on the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary progress update on implementation of The Promise in East Renfrewshire (Appendix 1).

**BACKGROUND**

3. The 5th February 2025 marked 5 years since the conclusions of the Independent Care Review were published and The Promise was made and launched. This anniversary is an important time for all public services and wider society to reflect on what has happened so far, and on the journey ahead. Five years ago this landmark publication acknowledged that the current "care system" in Scotland wasn't working and proposed transformational change over a ten year period driven by the following promise to care experienced children and young people:

*"You will grow up loved, safe and respected. And by 2030, that promise must be kept".*

4. On 5th February 2020 a promise was made to the infants, children, young people, adults and families who have experience of the care system in Scotland. The Promise and its commitments was clear that by 2030 the following would be delivered:

- Love will no longer be the casualty of the 'care system,' but the value around which it operates;
- Wherever it is safe to do so, Scotland will make sure children stay with their families and families will be actively supported to stay together; and,
- Children, young people, and their families will be listened to, respected, involved and heard in every decision that affects them.

5. The Scottish Government and the national Promise Team reinforced that this work is “*immediate and urgent work - what can change now must change now*” and that implementation of The Promise must not be delayed. In East Renfrewshire we have made the same commitment to our current looked after children and young people, those who we previously looked after, and for those who will experience care in the future. Even during the Covid-19 pandemic we sought opportunities to drive forward The Promise, believing that during this extraordinarily challenging time, children and young people in our care needed to be loved, safe, and listened to more than ever. The timeline (appendix 2) highlights the challenges faced by the Promise across Scotland.

## CONTEXT

6. The Promise Oversight Board published their [report](#) in February 2025 to mark the mid-way point in the ten year programme. It concludes that the national journey is behind schedule but still on course to be achieved by 2030. The report states that to get there will “*require pace, renewed purpose, and everyone to play their part*” over the next five years. It highlights the statutory provisions of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 that relate to public bodies as corporate parents and is clear all of these local and national organisations must fulfil their responsibilities if children and young people are to get the support they need.

7. The Calls to Action from the Oversight Board Report are being considered by our local multi-agency Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership and where necessary we will ensure areas for improvement are included in East Renfrewshire’s Place To Grow strategic vision, and the Children’s Services Plan.

## REPORT

8. Through our multi-agency East Renfrewshire Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership, we have worked hard to promote and implement The Promise. Firstly, by consistently raising awareness of the role of Corporate Parents, we have sought to ensure that partners understand that when a child or young person becomes looked after – at home or away from home - the local authority, health board, and a number of other public bodies take on the statutory responsibility of Corporate Parent. Achieving a shared understanding that Corporate Parenting is a collective responsibility is key to successfully keeping The Promise.

9. The two published statutory East Renfrewshire Children’s Services Plans that cover the period since 2020 ([Children’s Services Plan 2023-26](#) and [Children’s Services Plan 2020-23](#)) have very clearly placed the Promise as our top priority across the partnership. The five year progress report demonstrates the breadth and depth of implementation locally and the importance of the partnership in making this happen. The report is structured around the foundations of *Voice, Care, Family, People, Scaffolding* and indicates the partners who contribute in each area.

10. Similar to the national picture, over the last decade the population of looked after children and young people in East Renfrewshire has been reducing and changing. This is as a consequence of national as well as local factors (see appendix 3). Specifically, changes to how children can access essential services has meant that there has been a cultural and systems shift away from requiring a statutory supervision order to get the help they need when they need it.

Furthermore the implementation of Signs of Safety and a sensible approach to risk has meant that children's services work more collaboratively with parents and carers to achieve better outcomes for children.

11. The delivery of the national Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE) Programme has also led to the reduction in this population as more innovative ways of working, informed by children's rights, trauma and relationship based practice have been rolled out. Overall, the strengthening of prevention and early help has resulted in need being identified and responded to earlier by universal services in line with the Getting it Right for Every Child approach.

12. In addition, the characteristics of the looked after population have changed as there is a clear trend towards more children and young people with very complex needs such as neuro divergence alongside poor mental health, becoming subject to a supervision requirement (see appendix 4). Approximately one third of the current population are separated young people (unaccompanied asylum seeking young people) who have a high level of need that we are responding to. Both trends are forecast to continue to increase over the period. It is important to state that although the overall number who are looked after has reduced, the actual number of vulnerable children, young people and families who require intervention to prevent them from entering the care system is increasing across all services.

13. The East Renfrewshire 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Progress Update highlights further activity that has been undertaken by a range of our corporate parent partner agencies and includes:

- Development of an East Renfrewshire Promise Board
- Child Friendly Children's Hearings through 'Better Hearings' practice group
- Imagination Library has delivered 1414 books to 63 children in East Renfrewshire
- Roll out of Trauma Tier 1 and 2 Training programmes to over 350 staff across the Council workforce
- Publication of a new Housing and HSCP Protocol to support care experienced young people's access to housing
- Keeping the Promise Award in schools and other settings

## **CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

14. The Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership oversee the planning, implementation and evaluation of The Promise in East Renfrewshire and the work of the partnership individually and collectively has been captured in this five year mark report. Reporting also takes place annually through the Children's Plan.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS**

15. An Equality, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the planning process for the Children's Services Plan.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

16. We are determined to deliver The Promise in East Renfrewshire by 2030. However we agree with the Oversight Board that there is not a moment left to waste and all agencies need to play their part in making this happen.

The five year report illustrates the strength of commitment locally to do this. Ultimately we will be judged by children, young people and their families and carers as to how well we are achieving the change that needs to take place.

**RECOMMENDATION**

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## Appendix 1: East Renfrewshire Children's Services Plan Promise 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Progress Report

Promise Foundation	Corporate Parent Partner Agencies
Voice	
<p><b>The Promise Board</b></p> <p>To ensure that at the highest level children and young people are heard and engaged, and that they and their families are at the centre of everything that we do, we have developed an East Renfrewshire Promise Board. In addition to children, young people, families and carers, the Promise Board will draw its membership from chief officers, elected members, and senior officials from across the local partnership. This is a completely new way of working collaboratively with those who use our services, and to encourage meaningful participation a co-production approach will be adopted. The aim is for those with lived experience of the care system to help set the agenda, communicate what is working well for them and what is not going well, and ultimately help agencies shape better services and responses. The new Board model was approved by Council in October 2024 with Board membership recently agreed. Further development is now taking place with the first board event to take place in May 2025 and the full board operational by autumn. Ongoing evaluation will be established to ensure the experience of the first year is gathered and understood.</p> <p>To increase knowledge of the Promise Board and its aims, an information and consultation session on The Promise took place in October 2024 with 13 elected members and all senior leaders from the CMT in attendance. At the session young people from East Renfrewshire's Champions Board, who were also involved in the development of the national Promise, delivered a presentation on the partnership work being undertaken locally. The young people also gave their backing for the development of the new Promise Board and this was subsequently agreed by Council that evening.</p>	<p>Young People Families and Carers ERHSCP Senior Council Leadership Team</p>
<p><b>Children's Hearings Improving Practice Group</b></p> <p>The Children's Hearings Improving Practice Group, 'Better Hearings' has been working together to support children and young people to feel confident to attend their Children's Hearings. This includes the implementation of Child Friendly Scheduling - a process which will consider child's views in relation to when their Hearing takes place to break down barriers to attendance and prevent Hearings being deferred. A Pre Hearing checklist will be rolled out to ensure that children are supported to access child friendly information with the support of their Social Worker or Advocacy worker and will include the offer of a visit to the Children's Hearing Centre prior to their scheduled Hearing.</p>	<p>SCRA CHS ERHSCP Who Carers Scotland Partners in Advocacy</p>

<p><b>East Renfrewshire's Champions Board</b></p> <p>The Champions Board was established over 10 years ago and in that time has become a platform for care experienced young people aged 12-26 years to express their views and what they would like to see changed. They have worked together to explore issues facing care experienced young people and have suggested ways to improve the services that are available. Housing and mental health services have been key issues. Young people have worked directly with Heads of Service and other corporate parents at directorate level to discuss issues affecting them with the aim of influencing changes in policy and practice. There is also a focus on wider participation and engagement activities to promote relationships, connections and the overall wellbeing of our young people.</p> <p>The Champions Board were involved in the co-design of our Healthier Minds Service and the mid-year review in October 24 highlighted that nine Care Experienced young people and 15 Young Carers have been supported so far this year. Four care experienced members of the Champions Board were successful in gaining apprenticeships in the HSCP in 2022 and played a key part in the success of the Pathway Planning Project. More recently, the current members of the Champions board were equal partners in the 'Moving On' project (more below) and are currently instrumental in shaping the new Promise Board.</p>	<p>Young People ERHSCP</p>
<p><b>The Throughcare Aftercare drop-in</b></p> <p>The drop-in is an informal opportunity for care experienced young people to come together for a chat, relax or have a meal together. The drop-in meets on a frequent basis and takes a peer led approach, giving young people another platform to discuss any issues or problems. It also provides extra support for young people's transition into adulthood as they can get advice and guidance from peers and corporate parents. Money Advice attend the drop-in each month and this gives young people the opportunity to build relationships with other corporate parents and get immediate hands on advice for any money matters. Social activities are also a key focus, for example, making meals at the drop in, going on outings and planned Christmas dinners each year.</p>	<p>Young People ERHSCP MART</p>
<p><b>School Holiday Programmes</b></p> <p>During spring, summer, autumn school holidays, HSCP Children and Families staff deliver holiday activity for care experienced children and young people who they work with. These programmes are designed by the children and young people with the necessary funding drawn from existing budgets and from the Scottish Government Care Experienced Scottish Attainment Challenge (PEF) Fund.</p> <p>Since 2020, over 350 children and young people have attended holiday programmes and evaluation indicates that the programmes are well received and attendance remains very high. Parents and carers report better family relationships too.</p>	<p>HSCP</p>

Care	
<p><b>Imagination Library</b> Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting programme devoted to inspiring a love of reading in the hearts of children everywhere. Through a grant from the Scottish Government, the Imagination Library provides a free book a month to all care-experienced children and all adopted children in Scotland from birth to the age of five. East Renfrewshire was one of the first local authorities to sign up to the programme and since 2020, 63 young children from East Renfrewshire have received a total of 1,414 books.</p>	ERHSCP
<p><b>'Moving On' Young People's Housing Project – HSCP, Housing Services and Aberlour Partnership</b> Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, care experienced and vulnerable young people reported to East Renfrewshire HSCP that the current provision of housing and support was insufficient and failed to address their needs. A partnership between Aberlour and the HSCP was established to examine support for independent living, redesign supported accommodation and aftercare/outreach offers. Funding to support this project was secured through the Corra Foundation as well as the HSCP core budget. This funding enabled the HSCP to collaborate with Aberlour national children's charity and employ a Project Redesign Coordinator to undertake system-change planning work, focusing on improving young people's transition experiences. Underpinned by the principles of the Scottish Approach to Service Design, the Project Coordinator designed and completed 25 consultations with young people and foster carers, 13 contextual interviews with relevant departments and stakeholders, and held 4 multi-agency workshops.</p> <p>The two year project culminated in a number of achievements. The key one being an Out of Hours Support Service, 365 days a year for young people in emergency and temporary accommodation. Young people also designed housewarming hampers and a tenancy handbook for their peers. Community Learning &amp; Development (CLD) have also played a part in this work by assisting the partners to develop a Housing Skills Pilot Programme targeting care experienced young people which commenced in January 2025.</p>	Young People Aberlour ERC Housing Services ERHSCP CLD
<p><b>Separated Young People (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Young People).</b> Similar to all local authorities throughout the UK, East Renfrewshire has participated in the mandated Home Office National Transfer Scheme to provide care and support to separated children and young people (unaccompanied asylum seeking children/young people).</p> <p>In early 2025 at the time of writing, the number of young people we are supporting is 32 and this now represents approximately one third of our local looked after population. 82% of these young people have remained in their initial placement.</p>	ERHSCP Education Services ERC Housing Services CLD FE Colleges

<p>A small number of the young people have been accommodated with foster carers but most are housed in their own accommodation, usually flat sharing arrangements, where they have been matched in accordance with their background. The young people are mainly supported by the HSCP Children and Families Youth Intensive Support Team (YISS) and most are on supervision orders due to their vulnerability. Schools have provided safe and nurturing spaces for them and CLD staff have created community based youth work opportunities to help with integration, reduce isolation, and improve mental wellbeing.</p>	
<p><b>Care experienced young people's participation in CLD programmes and clubs</b></p> <p>The CLD Team are committed to ensuring that care experienced young people can access both universal and targeted youth work services. Over the past 5 years, over 80 different young people with care experience have participated in a range of CLD programmes including - ER Youth Voice, Duke of Edinburgh, Snow Camp, School Based Youth Work, Safer Choices, Diversionary activities, Youth Right's Association, One to One support, and Detached Youth Work. Through participation in these programmes, young people have achieved 36 awards through a range of accreditation opportunities including - Duke of Edinburgh's Awards, Heartstart, Saltire Awards, JASS, National Navigation Award Scheme, Snow Camp Assistant Instructor, SQA awards, British Red Cross First Aid Champions.</p> <p>Furthermore, in 2023 CLD identified a need for targeted youth provision for care experienced young people which would allow these young people a safe space and opportunities to share their experiences and build supportive relationships with youth work staff. The group is regularly attended and young people participate in fun and educational activities.</p>	CLD
<p><b>Child and Young People at Risk of Secure Accommodation</b></p> <p>East Renfrewshire continues to have one of the lowest rates of young people in secure care in Scotland and this has been sustained over a ten year period. To maintain vulnerable high-risk young people at home in their community and safely requires the commitment of considerable resources along with ways of working with young people and their families that is based on relationships and trauma informed.</p> <p>Courts and Children's Hearings need to be confident that care and support packages are comprehensive to engage young people and their families fully. HSCP Children and Families Teams have been very successful in evidencing that this approach works and that the services offered are having a positive impact.</p>	ERHSCP
<p><b>Children First and Learn Well</b></p> <p>We work in partnership with Children First to deliver a programme to care experienced children and young people who we identify as requiring</p>	ERHSCP Children First



<p>assistance with their school and learning experience. This programme is funded by a grant from the Scottish Government's Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) - Scottish Attainment Challenge for Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund and local delivery is, since 2023, in conjunction with Education's Learn Well Service.</p> <p>The service supports increased school attendance and helps pupils with a care history engage with their school. Staff work closely with parents and carers to assist them to nurture their child's learning in the widest sense with a focus on emotional wellbeing as well as knowledge and skills. Over 100 children and young people have accessed the service over the last five years with evaluation rates high. Annual reporting to the Scottish Government is in place in line with grant funding conditions.</p>	<p>Education Services Educational Psychology</p>
<p><b>Whole systems approach - Early Effective Intervention:</b> Preventing young people coming into contact with the law is a key priority within our Children's Services Plan and East Renfrewshire partners and Police Scotland have recognised the need to change and adapt processes and responses for supporting young people where this is a risk. This is important as a proportion of these children would otherwise become subject to statutory measures and referral to the Reporter could result in a children's panel deciding to grant a supervision order. Early help is key to preventing this happening.</p> <p>Our whole systems approach will be undertaking a test of change in this area to ensure prevention and diversion underpin all that we do. Similarly we are mapping our community and partner supports and offers to ensure they are targeted at those children and young people most in need, and especially those on the edges of the formal care system. Improved interventions to be considered are restorative justice approaches and positive diversion activities to redirect vulnerable young people who are on the edges of the care system.</p> <p>An increase in anti-social and risk taking behaviours and an increase in reports of youth disorder in the Barrhead area led to creation of a short film "No Bad" in partnership with the Scottish Youth Film Foundation. The CLD and YISS teams worked together with a group of 11 young people alongside the Scottish Youth Film Foundation to produce and star in a short film which looked at the perceptions of young people in the community.</p> <p>This film was supported by both local Police and Fire and Rescue. The film premiered at Eastwood Theatre in October 24 and received very positive feedback from elected members, senior leaders, parents/carers and friends.</p>	<p>ERHSCP Police Scotland SCRA CLD</p>
<p><b>Health Visiting and School Nursing Service</b> The Health Visiting and School Nursing service have been carrying out a scoping exercise in partnership with health improvement to improve the support provided to children and families who are care experienced. The aim is to improve timely and targeted support to dental health in particular, supporting with registration at local dentist</p>	<p>HSCP Health Visiting NHS Oral Health Directorate</p>

practices. National data would indicate gaps for more vulnerable pre-school children, who may need additional help to navigate the system.	
<b>Family</b>	
<p><b>Signs of Safety</b></p> <p>The Signs of Safety approach, rooted in strength-based and solution-focused social work practice, aligns closely with The Promise approach. It promotes safe connections and seeks wider participation to promote safety, growth and well-being. At its heart, Signs of Safety emphasises collaboration with families, recognising their strengths and involving them in solutions. This aligns with The Promise's commitment to keeping families together wherever safe and possible. In East Renfrewshire, social work practitioners work alongside children and families ensuring their voices are central in decision-making, fostering a sense of empowerment and belonging.</p> <p>Locally, Signs of Safety is currently in the seventh year of a ten year implementation plan and roll out with social work and multi-agency training and support ongoing. Since 2018, 194 practitioners have undertaken briefing sessions, 146 have completed the 2-day training course and 102 the more intensive training commitment. Importantly the approach in practice has contributed towards a reduction in the number of children and young people becoming looked after over several years and this trend is continuing. The data in appendix 3 does show a slight increase. However, as mentioned above this is due to our participation in the National Transfer Scheme for separated children. In the last two years there have been additional Signs of Safety training for foster carers, network practice sessions, and refresher courses that have been run with a total attendance of 78.</p>	ERHSCP Education Services
<p><b>Supporting Sibling Relationships</b></p> <p>2024 was the first year that local authorities were required to report on their efforts to ensure children and young people in care retained important relationships with their siblings.</p> <p>This new reporting requirement follows considerable work that has been undertaken within HSCP Children and Families Teams to improve assessment in this area and to acknowledge the importance of the child's views on sibling relationships being reflected in the child's plan and SCRA reports.</p> <p>We strive to keep siblings living together where it is safe and in their best interests to do so, but a vital part of this work is also championing and supporting these relationships to be lifelong even when they are not living together. The HSCP has offered to participate in two national tests of change on data and decision making, with the aim of improving practice in this area and the development of a new local sibling policy is due by the end of 2025.</p>	ERHSCP SCRA

### Whole Family Wellbeing Funded Programmes

The overall aim of the [Scottish Government Whole Family Wellbeing Fund \(WFWF\)](#) is that *every family that needs support gets the right family support at the right time, for as long as it is needed, to fulfil children's rights to be raised safely in their own families.*

In East Renfrewshire the partnership has targeted this important resource to create seven new service project responses. These are based on the priority areas of need from our Children's Plan Strategic Needs Assessment. These include:

- complex disability
- neuro diversity and co morbidity mental health
- vulnerable families – includes young families and kinship carers
- women and their children experiencing domestic violence
- children and families living in poverty
- non-school attendance – includes care experienced pupils and pupils with significant mental health concerns.

Recently the Scottish Government confirmed the WFWF will be extended to 2027. This is positive news as it will enable partners to make longer term commitments to improving wellbeing in the agreed areas. Annual reporting of the WFWF is undertaken by partners with a detailed report submitted to the Scottish Government annually in the summer. Now that all projects have been agreed the next step will be to publish a local evaluation on the overall impact this important investment is having. The Strathclyde Family Wellbeing Scale (SFWS) is being used to measure impact across the projects with initial results available from the Family First team. A paired samples - test showed a statistically significant improvement in wellbeing from pre-support to post-support scores. The last annual report submitted to the Scottish Government can be accessed here:



Final East  
Renfrewshire WFWF

ERHSCP  
Education  
Services

### Intensive Family Support Team (IFST)

Within the IFST an intensive health visiting service has been created to ensure intensive, timely, relationship based health support is available to families who require an intensive social work service.

This has allowed the team to support very young children to stay at home and offered mothers meaningful support when their children have been removed from their care - this ensures we are doing all we can to keep families together where it is safe to do so.


The IFST whole family approach provides opportunities to support all members of family networks. This includes information on how to promote healthy attachments, good nutrition, and how to provide opportunities for children to play and socialise. We also work with

ERHSCP

<p>families to help understand the child's voice through non-verbal cues and this helps everyone listen and respond to what the infant needs, leading to compassionate, caring decision making.</p>	
<p><b>Foster Carers – Recruitment, Retention and Support</b></p> <p>In 2023, we launched our successful Fostering Campaign, 'Foster a child' which included six images with various captions sought to invoke positive messages of fostering for potential carers. These images were promoted within our local community through billboards, bus stops as well as social media advertising. We also had a PR campaign showcasing our carers that we launched within fostering fortnight which brought with it national press coverage. This was our most successful fostering campaign to date as four new foster care families were approved. This has enabled us to expand the range of placements available to meet the needs of our families via extension of family networks.</p> <p>There are currently 14 registered foster, continuing and supported carer households looking after 17 children and young people. Also in 2023 our targeted training calendar for foster carers and supported carers was launched. We have reviewed training requirements and needs for carers and have established core and recommended training for all approved foster carers. Impact on retention will be evaluated in the coming year.</p> <p>The Scottish Government's commitment to keeping The Promise, led to the review and implementation of the National Recommended Allowance which will benefit care experienced children and young people. The move to a national Scottish Recommended Allowance (SRA) is to create parity across Scotland for all children and young people and recognises the support they receive, no matter where they live. In light of this we have also reviewed age ranges for our fostering and kinship fees to align with the age ranges introduced by Scottish Government for the SRA, whilst keeping our commitment to previously agreed rate increases that had anticipated this move.</p>	<p>ERHSCP Foster Carers</p>
<p><b>Supporting Kinship Carers</b></p> <p>The HSCP with the support of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund grant, has invested in an advanced practitioner social worker who will provide additional intensive support to kinship carers. We had identified an increase in the number of kinship care arrangements breaking down for children reaching adolescence and therefore need to offer targeted training and bespoke support.</p> <p>The new post will ensure that families remain together by providing separate support for both the child and kinship carer. This will mean that kinship carers will receive the same training, and opportunities as our registered foster carers in order to broaden kinship carers skillset, resilience and wider support networks.</p>	<p>ERHSCP</p>
<p><b>Share Foundation</b></p>	

<p>The Share Foundation is an arms-length organisation linked to the Department for Education in England. It is tasked with running the Junior ISA scheme for young people in care. Every child and young person who has been in care for at least 12 months has an account opened with £200 from the UK Government. The scheme is administered by our local business support providing the necessary information to the Share Foundation. Since The Promise was made, 218 East Renfrewshire children and young people have had a Junior ISA opened for them.</p> <p>An additional key aim of the Share Foundation is to help young people be better prepared for adult life and a programme providing guidance on handling money has been developed. Stepladder Plus is an incentivised learning programme made up of six modular steps for young people aged 15-17 who are in care, and have been for 12 months or more. Money is added to their Junior ISA for every module they complete. In the last three years, 16 eligible East Renfrewshire young people completed at least one module of the programme, six of these completed all six, with a total of £15,150 being paid into the Junior ISA's of this cohort. There is also a non-incentivised version of the same learning programme, Stepladder of Achievement, available for care leavers up to the age of 25.</p>	ERHSCP
<p><b>Tackling Poverty</b></p> <p>The Money Advice and Rights Team (MART) continue to support The Promise by ensuring that the financial scaffolding is in place to support our care experienced young people with Social Security, money advice and budgeting. MART have two dedicated workers who are known to the community. They attend the monthly Aftercare Drop in. This gives an opportunity for young people to discuss any benefit/debt issues they may have. In the financial year 23/24, 28 care experienced young people were supported to make £65K of financial gain.</p> <p>The MART staff are also working with Aberlour as part of their housing support programme to deliver budgeting and tenancy support. In addition, HSCP Children and Families Teams work with MART colleagues by referring families to have their income maximised, seek review decisions and help with appeal tribunal representation when required. 384 lone parent households were assisted to make financial gains of £1M and 138 households, with 3 or more children were assisted to make financial gains £365K in the last financial year.</p>	MART ERHSCP Aberlour
<p><b>People</b></p>	
<p><b>Keep The Promise Awards in Education</b></p> <p>The rolling out of the Keeping The Promise Award (including specific professional learning for those identified as trainers or Promise Leads</p>	Education Services

<p>in all establishments) has resulted in education staff better recognising and understanding the needs of care experienced children and young people and their families. The establishment of a Promise Leads network has facilitated learning in this area and offers a platform for sharing good practice. Currently 11 early years establishments, 12 primary schools and 2 secondary schools have successfully completed the award. Other teams including the Learn Well Service and Wider SEF team and the Educational Psychology Team have also successfully completed the award.</p> <p>The impact of this can already be seen in an improving attendance rate for our care experienced children and young people with an increase from 92.3% (Dec 23) to 94.14% (Dec 24) on last year's data in primary schools and an increase from 76.1% (Dec 23) to 81.7% (Dec 24) in secondary schools. In our primary schools there is almost no attendance gap for care experienced children, however the attendance of care experienced young people in our secondary schools is an area of focus and all our secondary schools have an intensive plan to improve this.</p> <p>In Session 22/23, 100% of our care experienced young people were in a positive destination and last session there were no exclusions for pupils who are looked after.</p>	Educational Psychology
<p><b>Trauma Informed Practice Training</b></p> <p>Since the Scottish Government launched the National Trauma Training Strategy a decade ago all public bodies have responded to the call to improve knowledge and skills in this important area. In East Renfrewshire, the development of a partnership with Epione Training and Consultancy has enabled us to deliver the Trauma Level 2 and 3 modules to approximately 350 staff across ERC and HSCP over the last two years. The generic aims of the training programme is to enable staff to engage with people who have experienced trauma in their lives and increase understanding of how to better support them moving forward. The programmes evaluate very highly and there are plans to launch a Level 1 E-Learning module later in 2025 that will increase understanding of trauma across the wider council workforce.</p>	ERHSCP ERC Departments Education Services
<p><b>Multidisciplinary intensive support for very vulnerable young people – Youth Intensive Support Service and Schools</b></p> <p>There are many examples of very vulnerable young people being helped to have their voice heard and considered in complex support arrangements. This is especially the case with care experienced young people with significant mental health concerns and/or neuro-divergent diagnosis who are often engaged in high risk behaviour at home or in the community.</p> <p>Assessment and planning of support has a focus on the young person's views on what would help them, being understood, as well as building on positive relationships with trusted adults across disciplines and services. This has resulted in a number of very successful intensive support packages being developed, with social workers and school pastoral support staff working closely on a daily</p>	ERHSCP Education Services – High Schools

<p>basis to re-engage the young person at home, in school, and out in their community.</p> <p>This work takes time to build up relationships of trust for the young people and their families, and resources need to be committed across HSCP Children and Families and our Education and Schools, in particular, for the agreed plan to be realised. However, results have been positive where the approach is used thus ensuring the young person does not re-enter the care system - especially the secure estate or admission to adolescent mental health units - and is more ready for the transition to adulthood.</p>	
<p><b>The Promise Workforce Learning Programme</b></p> <p>A three tier Promise Workforce Learning Programme has been devised to support The Promise Keepers, the workforce and all Corporate Parents understand the aim of The Promise and the part they can play in implementation. The new programme was approved by Council in October 2024 and local partners have agreed to promote the attendance and engagement of their workforce at levels appropriate to roles and responsibilities. Commencement for Tier One and Two is May 2025, with Tier Three expected to be delivered by autumn 2025. Information on the programme can be found here:</p>  <p>Promise Workforce Learning Programme</p>	ERHSCP
<p><b>Care experienced young people in the workforce - CLD</b></p> <p>We are fortunate to have a number of staff who are care experienced in the CLD Team, both as qualified community workers and sessional staff. These staff members were supported as young people in youth work activities developing long standing supportive relationships with youth workers. The staff recognise that these experiences and relationships have had a significant impact on their lives and encouraged them to move into this career path. The skills and experiences they have, have been invaluable to the development of services for all young people in East Renfrewshire.</p>	CLD
<p><b>Scaffolding</b></p>	
<p><b>Excellent Care Inspection Report</b></p>	ERHSCP

<p>In summer 2022, our considerable efforts to design and deliver the highest quality care and support was acknowledged when we were inspected by a team led by the Care Inspectorate.</p> <p>They observed the following strengths as a consequence of the East Renfrewshire partnership approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people at risk of harm were benefiting from high-quality assessments, plans and support from a wide range of services.</li> <li>• Children and young people were listened to and respected.</li> <li>• The safety and wellbeing of children and young people who were at risk of harm was improving as a result of the caring relationships they had with key members of staff.</li> <li>• Children and young people at risk of harm and their families were actively participating and influencing service planning, delivery and improvement.</li> <li>• The partnership was successfully using data and quality assurance information to inform and support decision making, service planning and delivery.</li> </ul> <p>In their assessment, the inspection team found the work of our Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership to be excellent which means that East Renfrewshire is the first in the country to receive an evaluation of Excellent for this quality indicator. The full report can be accessed on the Care Inspectorate website at <a href="https://www.careinspectorate.com/east-renfrewshire-joint-insp-children-and-young-people.pdf">East Renfrewshire joint insp children and young people.pdf (careinspectorate.com)</a></p>	<p>ERC – Departments ER HSCP – Health Visiting IOCYP</p>
<p><b>Education Data</b></p> <p>Keeping The Promise means that the Education Department have been taking immediate action to improve the experiences and outcomes for care experienced children and young people. As part of this response, education SEEMIS data was gathered to create an initial overview of all care experienced children and young people within local establishments. As care is one of the five foundations detailed within The Promise, it was important to recognise that behind the data are our children and young people. Therefore, to make the data relevant and meaningful, the Quality Improvement Manager and the Principal Teacher for Inclusive Practice and Whole Family Support planned meetings with every establishment to discuss their individual children and young people identified on SEEMIS as experiencing care.</p> <p>Values-led relationship based practice was a strong feature in every meeting; senior leadership teams spoke confidently about their children and young people, demonstrating detailed knowledge and understanding of how individual lived experience has influenced each young person's achievement and attainment.</p> <p>There is a strong commitment to supporting the wider family network of care experienced children and young people.</p> <p>Some examples of good practice include:</p>	<p>Education Services</p>

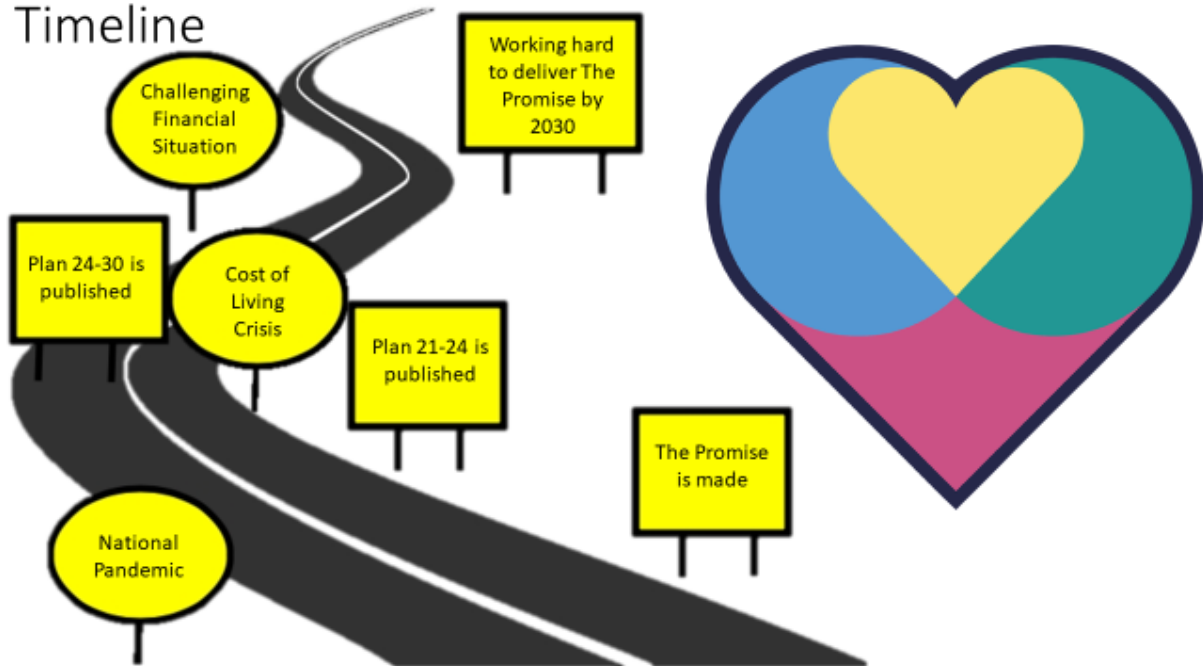


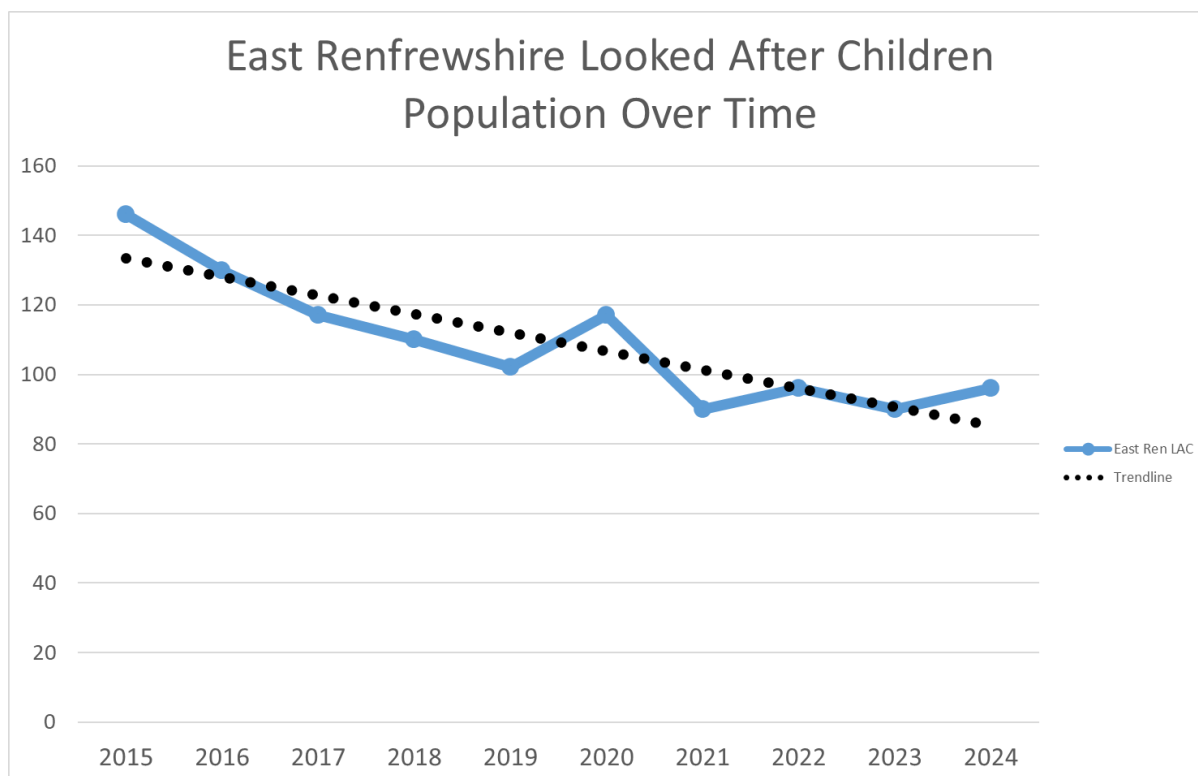
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An early years establishment supporting a young parent and their child, both fostered by the same family, to ensure parental voice is heard when decisions need to be made for the child</li> <li>▪ Schools that continue to monitor the welfare of the non-biological siblings of children living in a long-term foster care and the siblings of children who have previously experienced care</li> <li>▪ Primary and secondary establishments that support the health and wellbeing of parents and carers, known by the establishment to require some additional support by providing regular 'check ins' and by including and involving them in the wider life of the school</li> <li>▪ Schools facilitating informal opportunities for families with care experienced young people to come together to connect</li> </ul> <p>Successful interventions to support care experienced children and young people to support their attainment and achievement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leadership opportunities</li> <li>▪ Bespoke timetables</li> <li>▪ Forest School and play based nurture interventions</li> <li>▪ Vocational opportunities</li> <li>▪ Award schemes such as Duke of Edinburgh</li> <li>▪ Attendance at the Rangers Foundation for secondary learners</li> <li>▪ Work experience within local hairdressing academy to provide unique learning experiences for care experienced young people</li> <li>▪ Work placements within local authority early years establishments, staff taking and collecting young people when required</li> <li>▪ Night school 1:1 lessons provided by senior leadership teams</li> </ul> <p>This has helped shape the understanding of how the lived experiences of care experienced children and young people affects attendance, their involvement and wider participation in the life of the school and their overall achievement and attainment at the appropriate Curriculum of Excellence level, to allow for planning improvement.</p>	
<p><b>HSCP Children and Families Management Information Report</b></p> <p>In addition to our strategic needs assessment, completed to meet the statutory duty under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, the HSCP produce an internal annual and bi-annual management information report. This means that we know the population of children and families who access our services, the relevant legislation, and what their needs are. Our senior management team are well informed about the what, where, when, why, who and how of demand which is vital to our CSWO's decision making.</p> <p>In addition the report is shared with teams in order that they too can analyse activity and demand and shift resources accordingly. This flexibility is important to ensuring children and families' at risk get the help they need when they need it.</p>	<p>ERHSCP</p>

<p><b>The Care Experienced Employability Programme (CEEP)</b>  This programme is open to all care experienced young people from 16-29 years old living within East Renfrewshire or open to East Renfrewshire Youth Intensive Support Services (YISS) Team.</p> <p>It offers holistic, one-to-one support with progression into employment, further education and training. 83% of young people registered with the service over the last five years have been successful in achieving a positive destination. An individualised action plan is created in collaboration with each young person, to reflect their aspirations, abilities and personal circumstances.</p>	<p>ERC – Economic Development</p>
<p><b>Our Promise Journey - Mapping Across the Partnership</b>  We have been keen to hear from our wider partners in relation to their organisation's Promise journey. A template was created and shared with all partner agencies in autumn 2023 to encourage them to think where they are and what their final destination will be.</p> <p>Collating of these has been useful but indicates that many public bodies at this time were still unclear about their journey and this should be an area of focus for The Promise nationally and the Scottish Government. Nonetheless, membership of the Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership, provides a forum for the wider partners to be part of discussions on developments and the new three tier Promise Workforce Learning Programme will be available to them too. Supporting all partners to have 'Voice' at the centre of everything they do is first foundation of The Promise. For those immersed in The Promise, reporting on achievements and crucially their impact is an identified area of focus in response to Plan 24-30.</p>	<p>IOCYP</p>
<p><b>Police Scotland</b>  Campus Police officers work closely with education settings and care experienced young people in East Renfrewshire. Campus officers will engage with young people within the school environment or as part of targeted outreach sessions to address concerns within certain age groups. Our outreach sessions during school holidays have proved successful in past years in engaging with East Renfrewshire's most at risk of being left behind or those engaging in risk taking behaviour. In 2024, 13 children attended the summer wellbeing programme and a further 11 in the October week. Some children attended both, so the total children engaged was 19, a number of whom have experience of care or would be considered on the edges of care. As we look forward to the coming years, we hope to continue providing these bespoke programs of work engaging with more young people in East Renfrewshire.</p>	
<p><b>Access to health services</b>  East Renfrewshire Health Improvement leads worked in partnership with the NHS GGC Improvement Team for Sexual Health to support</p>	

<p>development of the Sandyford Good Practice Guide for Carers and Staff. The consultation exercise in 2021 was supported locally by staff and young people and the toolkit that has been developed provides practical support for young people and those who care for them.</p>	
<p><b>Pathway Planning Project</b></p> <p>This initiative was identified as an area of need due to existing assessment models not being flexible enough for care experienced young people transitioning into adulthood. The initiative was funded by the Corra Foundation for 12 months and was successfully completed in October 2022. Participation and engagement was the foundation for change and four young people worked closely with the project coordinator to design the project's aims and purpose. A test of change was undertaken with the Viewpoint Lifeskills survey and 25 young care leavers completed the survey and provided crucial feedback on their needs and experiences. In addition, the project published our first Aftercare Population Report that we are now using to inform a range of service developments. The report highlighted crucial information in relation to the aftercare populations' age range, gender, geographic location, legislation, housing, economic activity, and where they seek support from.</p> <p>The percentage of eligible young people receiving aftercare services is currently at a five year high at 44%. An updated Aftercare Population Report is currently in development in response to this increase; we want to ensure we anticipate the help they may need as they grow up into young adults.</p>	<p>ERHSCP ERC Housing Services FE Colleges ERC Economic Development</p>

## Timeline

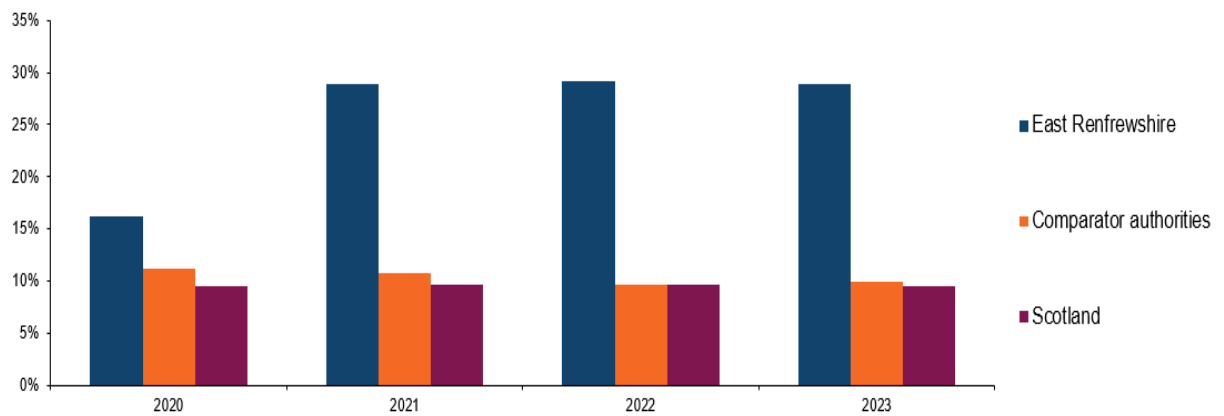




Source: Children's social work statistics - gov.scot\*

\*2024 figures taken from our internal information management system

## Appendix 4 – Percentage of looked after children with a disability



Source: [Looked after children statistics 2023: local authority benchmarking tool - gov.scot](#)