

South Ayrshire
**COMMUNITY
PLANNING**
Partnership



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23



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Introduction

I am delighted to present this Children's Services Annual Report which sets out what the Children Services Planning Partnership has been committed to over the past 12 months.

The past year has been characterised by our response to the pandemic and its aftermath. While there are no longer school closures and mass hospitalisation, the impact of the crisis is still affecting the lives of our children and young people, particularly those from our most deprived communities.

Throughout this last year the Children Services Partnership has continued to function as an effective collaboration of partners from across the whole spectrum of service for children and young people in South Ayrshire. This Partnership has included a number of Council Services, Health Services, Police, Fire and Rescue, Health and Social Care and the Third and Independent Sector. The members of the Partnership have worked together to do our very best to deliver excellent supports and opportunities for our children, young people and their families.

This year we have also taken stock of where we are in terms of service delivery and partnership working. Consequently, we have engaged in a full programme of self-evaluation with Horizons research. By considering the views of children, young people and families, we will be informed how to work together to improve services for communities and Whole Family Wellbeing within South Ayrshire and to co-design our children's services plan for the next three years.

As a Partnership we remain resolute in our commitment to do the best for the children and families in South Ayrshire who need our help most. We will continue to have a strong focus

on mitigating the impact of poverty worsened by the cost of living crisis. We know that this will continue to be challenging work for the next year. Embedding the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child across our services will remain a priority for us as we deliver on the various national initiatives which affect our children, young people and families.

The following report focuses on the collaborative working of the Children's Services Partnership over the past year and the key activities which we have given ourselves to deliver on our strategic objectives. Other areas of focus include: delivering on the Promise, Whole Family Wellbeing and integrating trauma informed practice into how we care for children and young people.

I am profoundly grateful to the members of the Children's Services Planning Partnership for their dedication and tireless work to deliver and improve services for all children and families across South Ayrshire. I strongly hope that together we can help close the gap which will enable all of our children and young people to achieve their potential.



Mark Inglis
Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services

Strategic Outcome 1: Outstanding Universal Provision

Programme of work to deliver the outcomes set out in Children's Service Plan 2020-23

- Improve outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs
- Identify vulnerable pregnancies early and provide support through community/hub/team around the family model
- Review and refresh the Youth Justice Whole System Approach
- Provide intensive family focused support to families who are experiencing crisis and prevent family breakdown
- Police Scotland will deliver a range of activities to support children and young people
- Deliver community and evidence-based parent and family learning programmes
- Improve early education intervention approaches to support the development of children under 5 years old
- Improve educational attainment for all children and young people
- Deliver positive community safety initiatives for young people and their parent/carers
- Continue to develop team around the family/community hub model



Children with Additional Support Needs



The 2022-2023 Educational Services Standards and Quality Report provides the detailed overview of attainment and achievement across this service including for young people with additional support needs. In session 2022-2023 36% of young people across the local authority were identified as having a barrier to learning. A system of staged intervention is in place in all schools to ensure young people receive the appropriate level of support at the right time.

Robust monitoring arrangements are in place for Pupil Equity Fund spending in schools to ensure maximum impact for those young people experiencing hardship. Almost all interventions within schools focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and ensure there is a clear focus on raising attainment and achievement and reducing the poverty related attainment gap.

Vulnerable Pregnancies



Families who require additional support are identified during pregnancy by community midwife's and the Safeguarding midwifery service through assessment and early intervention.

Vulnerable families receive visits by health visitors as part of the Universal Health Visiting Pathway The South Ayrshire Pre-birth screening group ensures a proportionate response is initiated through pathways provided to meet assessed needs. This includes the Team Around the Child approach where services work together to support the family at an early stage led by universal services, or through additional support led by social work services where safeguarding concerns are identified.

The information below shows an increase of 22 Safeguarding referrals and an increase of 31 Safeguarding Midwifery Assessments carried out during this reporting period in comparison to the previous year.

Year	Total: Safeguarding referrals	Total: Safeguarding Midwifery Assessments
2021/2022	367	215
2022/2023	389	251

In addition, the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) provides a person-centred, preventative intervention programme which is now offered to all young first-time parents aged 20 or under. In addition to this, the FNP Programme is also offered to eligible 21 to 25-year olds who have experienced life in care.

The Team Around the child approach continues to address the identified needs of preschool and school aged children through coordinated supported by the named person and lead professionals involved with the family.

Support has also been made available to families by resources provided through the multi-agency hub approach, where services come together to address the short term needs of identified families at an early stage and reduce delay. This has led to additional financial and practical help being provided.

Youth Justice Whole System Approach

The whole system is undergoing review and being refreshed. The case study below shows the journey through the justice system of a 17-year-old female.

CASE STUDY

CS (female, aged 17) was born in England and spent time in foster care before being adopted along with her two siblings when she was 4 years old. CS along with her siblings and adoptive parents then moved to South Ayrshire where she continues to reside.

Initially CS had been allocated to YPST in 2021, this was to offer voluntary support to CS and her adoptive parents as at the time relationships were strained between them and she was coming into conflict with the law. CS then left the family home once she turned 16 and our team struggled to get in contact with her for a period of time. Due to staffing changes, I was then allocated to offer support in early 2022, particularly in relation to her outstanding matters with the police.

It took several weeks to find out where she was staying and it soon became clear she had been staying between different places, which included sofa surfing and also staying with her boyfriend's family. However, due to overcrowding this was not a viable solution in the long term and one of the first times I met with her, I supported her to present as homeless.

CS advised she was very wary of professionals and experienced several different workers throughout her life and felt let down by them. I explained that although I was tasked to support her with diversionary work, I was not here to judge her and wanted to support her. CS over time began to open up and advised of the difficulties she had been facing. She spoke of the constant arguments with her parents, feeling low in mood and struggling to cope with her anger. CS advised she would often run about with the wrong crowd and consume alcohol and drugs several times each week.

I carried out focused work over several months with CS which looked at her emotional wellbeing, triggers and supports/coping strategies. CS also engaged in sessions that covered consequential thinking and victim awareness. Through time she showed good insight into her actions and was able to reflect on her own experiences and how they have impacted her. CS advised she

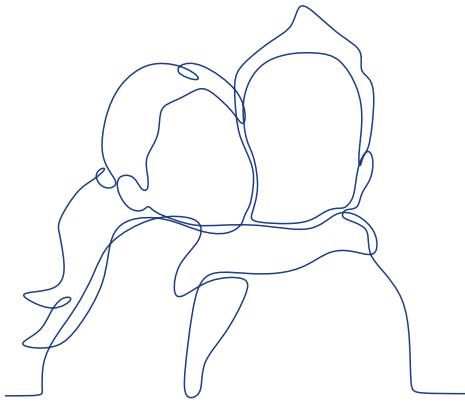
has struggled with her mental health for years and she would self-harm to cope. We spoke in sessions about these feelings and explored alternative and safer coping strategies she could use when she felt low in mood. CS also met with Penumbra on a few occasions who carried out specific sessions around self-harm awareness and safety planning.

CS had originally been referred to the Youth Diversion scheme by the Procurator Fiscal for two separate assault charges, however she had a third assault charge (from the previous year) outstanding and this required CS to attend court. Our team were instructed to compile a court report to provide background information and explore potential sentencing options. Understandably this was a stressful experience for CS as it went on for several months. Additionally, CS and her partner were now expecting a baby and she was due back at court just two months before her due date. I completed the court report for CS and provided information regarding what CS has experienced, context for the offence and how she had engaged in diversion work previously with myself and provided good insight and reflection.

The sheriff agreed with our recommendation and remitted CS' case back to the Children's Hearing. Myself and CS along with her partner and his mum attended the Children's Hearing in May and they agreed for no further action to be taken against CS. They were satisfied with the work CS had engaged in and the insight she provided. She has not come into any further conflict with the law since completing the diversion work last year.

CS gave birth to a baby boy a few weeks ago, both baby and mum are doing really well. Health services and Children & Families Social Work have both commented at how well CS has taken to motherhood. She continues to engage openly with Social Work and Health services, CS and her partner also have good support from his family. CS and her partner have just gotten the keys for their own tenancy this week and the couple are looking forward to having their own place and decorating their new home for their baby.

Intensive Family Support Service



South Ayrshire has an ongoing investment in supporting children to remain at home with specialist support services which aids families at a time of crisis. The Intensive Family Support Service and Functional Family Therapy Team (FFT) are two examples of this.

The Intensive Family Support Service and The Functional Family Therapy Team engage with families at a point of crisis when the likelihood of escalation through the care system is moderate to high. Through direct evidence-based interventions which are family centred and relational, the teams can support families to live together through times of stress and dysfunction towards a more supportive and nurturing family experience.

The Intensive Family Support Service has recently undergone a service review and the outcome of this was that the Outreach Team would join as part of the Intensive Family Support Service. The staffing within the service consists of 7 Intensive Family Support Workers and 1 Senior Intensive Family Support Worker.

The Intensive Family Support Service provides a Whole Family, strength-based approach and offers support with parenting strategies, mediation, improving family relationships, building on existing strengths, community engagement, income maximisation and any other area of need identified by the family. There are plans to begin delivering group work support and a drop-in service to young people and their families in South Ayrshire.

Functional Family Therapy

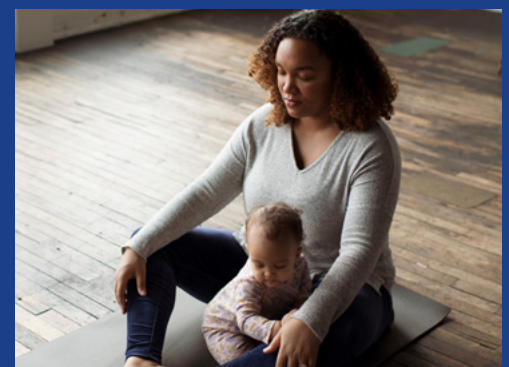
Functional Family Therapy is a short-term, high-quality intervention programme with an average 12 to 14 sessions over a three-to-five-month period. FFT works primarily with 11 – 18-year olds, however, there are occasions when consideration will be given to working with a younger age group. FFT is a strength-based model built on a foundation of acceptance and respect. At its core is a focus on assessment and intervention to address risk and protective factors that occur within and outside of the family.

FFT consists of five major components – engagement, motivation, relational assessment, behaviour changes and generalisation. Each of these components has its own goals, focus and intervention strategies and techniques.

Out of the 38 families referred to the Functional Family Therapy Team between 2022 and 2023, 75% of them engaged completely with the programme. Of those who completed the programme, 86% remained living at home and 93% of those children who completed the intervention are still attending education.

Holistic Therapy

The Intensive Family Support Service has commissioned the services of a holistic therapist who works one day per week within the Family Centre to provide Baby Massage, Baby Yoga, Stress Buster sessions as well as other therapeutic treatments to families. There is ongoing consideration being given to develop the service further to offer wellbeing support to staff.



Police Scotland

Campus officers participate in diversionary work with particular individuals and smaller groups. A lot of this is to do with behaviour and encouraging young people to engage with the school, partners and ourselves. A few have utilised Wossobama and regularly take groups of young people to the gym to promote health and wellbeing and discipline.

They regularly deliver inputs about social media, anti-social behaviour, bullying, 'No Knives Better Lives' as required.

The white ribbon campaign last term was successful in highlighting the issues around domestic abuse, violence against women and controlling behaviour. There were inputs from both South Ayrshire Women's Aid and Moving on Ayrshire.

Campus officers have delivered the S6 New Driver input also. They were engaged in Reckless Driving Wrecks lives in March 23 which was delivered to S5/6 at the Odeon in Ayr.



Parent and Family Learning Programmes

Adult Learning happens in a variety of places, in a range of ways for any number of reasons. We continue to develop and deliver programmes that are relevant and accessible to our communities. We want all learning to be life long, life wide and learner centred. We aspire to establish adult learning as a route into community involvement and personal empowerment. CLD, will facilitate the development of digital skills that adult learners in the community may need, to access all opportunities to further learning, employability, or involvement in their community. We continue to cultivate digital confidence in parents, to ensure that each child thrives in their home, social and school environment. Over the course of the past 12 months, the local authority has delivered a range of interventions to improve outcomes for adults and families. Some of our achievements are noted below:



- 303 learners highlighting an improvement in their skills
- 266 participants have increased knowledge
- 71 people have improved their employability outcomes
- 167 accredited learning places were delivered this year
- In addition, the use of Social Media channels, course bulletins, and posters/flyers as well as open day events and consultations continue to be utilised to increase awareness of opportunities available to our local communities.

ESOL & Literacies



The Adult Literacies team of 6 Literacies Development Officers continue to deliver programmes to adults looking to improve their reading, writing, spelling, numeracy, and IT skills. On our team are Digital Champions, who continue to support individuals benefiting from the Connecting Scotland initiative. Throughout the pandemic we piloted work in 2 primaries, working with parents who were feeling challenged by “home schooling” and promoted confidence in our own learners to continue to learn using a variety of digital platforms. This work has established a profile for the service with education staff and we continue to work with families.

We delivered our own bespoke 12 session training for literacies/ESOL volunteers and currently have over 70 active volunteers on our database. Many of the current volunteers have moved into sessional employment in the Literacies/ESOL team. They have benefited from workforce development and have been supported in achieving the PDA ITESOL at Ayrshire college. This session we trained an additional 13 volunteers.

For ‘New Scots’ recently arrived from Syria and Afghanistan, there were ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes from complete beginner to intermediate. We provided programmes in small groups or one to one with a tutor, to anyone who wanted to build their confidence, improve their chances of employment and at the same time, integrate into the community. The settling families are a small part of the ESOL service, and we continue to work with individuals (39) with 15 different linguistic profiles on our programmes.

Since April 2022, we welcomed Ukrainian learners into the service, engaging with 213 residents in South Ayrshire. The ESOL programme was delivered across South Ayrshire in various venues in Ayr, Girvan, Troon and Maybole. Our focus continues to be to respond to needs as they arise and provide quality and timely community-based adult literacies learning opportunities across South Ayrshire for all.

The Literacies work which covers all core skills (Communications, IT and Numeracy) was delivered to 105 registered learners both in one to one (volunteer support) and group activity. The team also delivered Literacies assessments for the Criminal Justice team to fulfil the requirement for court reports.

The marked increase in ESOL numbers has presented challenges for the team with Ukrainian numbers fluctuating on a weekly basis. We were able to register, assess level and deliver within 7 days of referral. Our class groups delivered at a capacity of more than 35. Furthermore, we provided ESOL support to 202 Ukrainian learners as well as the existing cohort of New Scots (39).

Finally, CLD in SAC are the first in Scotland to develop a community interpreter course. This project in collaboration with WEA is innovative in training a locality based, language support workforce. Fife college completed the SCQF levelling and we will deliver the initial pilot with North and East Ayrshire as part of the Pan-Ayrshire collaborative.



Early Education Approaches to Support the Development of Children Under 5

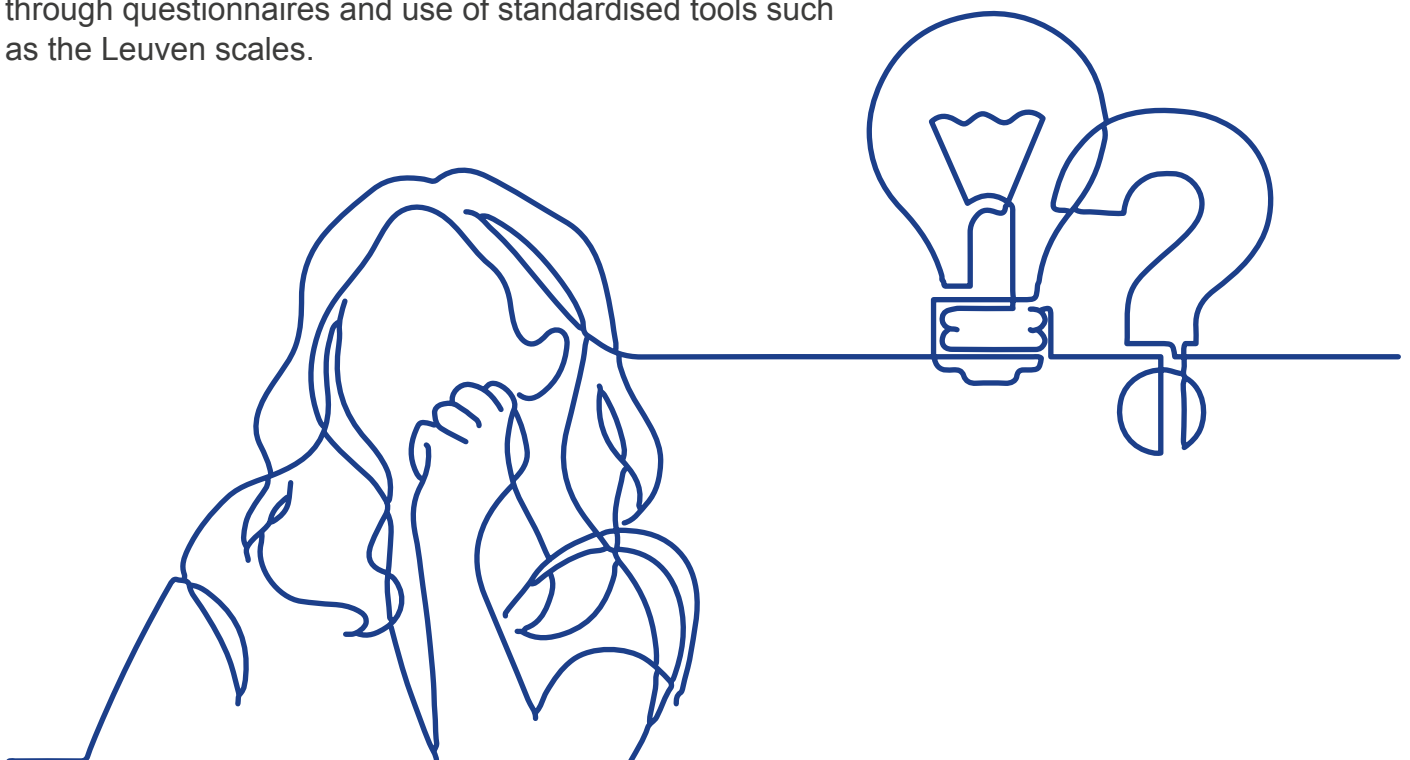
Play on Pedals South Ayrshire

The successful programme in South Ayrshire continues to be supported with over £30,000 of grant funding from Cycling Scotland to purchase bikes, helmets and pumps to enable children to access the equipment they need to develop cycling skills and build confidence. We have 97 staff trained to deliver the programme with at least one member of staff in each of our 35 EYCs. 25% of our 12 funded providers have a member of staff trained. Our PoP 'Ambassadors' support practitioners with 'refresh' sessions and mentoring. 743 pre-school children participated in the programme. We continue to work in partnership and develop links with our cluster secondary schools and Ayrshire College who provide basic maintenance. We continue to build on the success of the programme with some EYCs developing parental engagement with family cycle sessions and bike/helmet loan schemes for children who need to continue to develop their skills at home.



Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

'Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies' (PATHS) is an evidence-based programme that promotes social and emotional competence and can prevent or reduce behaviour problems in children. It is designed to develop and integrate essential skills in emotional literacy, behavioural self-control and problem solving. The early years team in education services have now provided training, support and resources to implement PATHS within approximately 70% of our early year's centres, beginning with those in SIMD areas 1 and 2. We plan to roll the programme out to our remaining EYCs over the next academic year. Following successful implementation in the EYC, some of our centres have now begun to roll the programme forward into Primary one and throughout the whole primary school. Evaluation of impact of the programme is being measured through questionnaires and use of standardised tools such as the Leuven scales.



Block play transition project



Between January and June 2023 twenty-four early level practitioners participated in a block play transition project funded by Community Playthings. Input was delivered by Daniel Spry, an independent consultant who delivers block play training nationally. Over six days practitioners explored the potential of block play and the continuity and progression of learning across the early level. The sessions focussed on the developmental stages of block play, the environment, the role of the adult, potential learning beyond building, storytelling and STEM. All participants undertook a research project and shared their findings with the group. Practitioners reported that they now value block play more highly and could see the positive impact on children in particular in relation to continuity at the point of transition, communication and language, levels of engagement, cooperative play, problem solving and support children with ASN.



"Thank you very much for this course. I have found it very beneficial and have thoroughly enjoyed my time and it's gave me so much joy to see the children flourish and gain confidence whilst playing in the block area."

Education Attainment

Children's Progress in early years

In early years children in their pre-school year are assessed against developmental milestones in three key areas: Health and Wellbeing, Communication and Language, and Maths and Numeracy.

A review of developmental milestones was completed, and the updated milestones have been in place from August 2022. This will ensure that the data and milestones better reflect the high quality of children's experiences and achievements.

The number of children achieving 8 or more developmental milestones in all areas has increased from the previous year. For language and communication and maths and numeracy achievement is exceeding pre pandemic levels.



Consistent approaches to monitoring and tracking progress in the BGE

Originally developed by Dalmillig Primary School, a comprehensive approach to tracking pupil progress in the BGE has been progressed and made available to all primary schools for session 22/23. This will support school leaders to track and monitor the progress of individual pupils and cohorts. It will also enable close monitoring of vulnerable groups such as care experienced children and young people, and those living in the most deprived areas.

Attainment: Achievement of Expected CfE Level or Better

Despite the negative impact of Covid staff focussed on identifying gaps in learning from session 20-21 and put strategies in place to support progress.

Data was collected for P1, 4, 7 and S3 this session.

All measures saw a pleasing increase although levels have not yet returned to pre- pandemic levels. We are confident that children and young people will continue to progress and hope to see pre-pandemic attainment levels return next session.



Attainment: Senior phase

Young people in South Ayrshire perform consistently above the Virtual Comparator* for their achievement of literacy and numeracy qualifications at the point they leave school.

* The VC (Virtual Comparator) is a measure of how similar young people across Scotland are attaining

The attainment of young people in South Ayrshire was strong when compared against similar young people across the country (VC).

The % of young people in S4 achieving 5 or more Level 3 awards and 5 or more Level 4 awards is consistently above the VC. The % of young people achieving 5 or more Level 5 awards is also consistently above the VC.

The % of young people achieving 3 or more Level 6 awards and 5 or more Level 6 awards are generally in line with the VC. These continue to be an area of focus as we move forward.

Community Safety Initiatives

The Targeted Approach to Young People (TAYP) programme is delivered by South Ayrshire Council Thriving Communities Community Safety Team and aims to engage young people who are involved in or are on the periphery of antisocial behaviour / crime in the community or who are not engaging at school in the expected manner. TAYP is an activity-based initiative, including outdoor activities focussed on challenging young people whilst building confidence, self-esteem and teamworking skills.

This is followed up with ongoing support to enable the young people to engage in additional activities and established youth work activities in their local community, further education, and employment opportunities. A range of agency inputs aimed at stimulating discussion around a variety of issues relevant to young people are also included as part of this programme. These include issues such as antisocial

behaviour and its impact on the community, drug and alcohol misuse, addictions/recovery, sexual and mental health, knife crime and domestic violence. This work has been supported by representatives from a range of agencies and departments including, Community Learning and Development, NHS A&A, Police Scotland, South Ayrshire Women's Aid and Recovery Ayr. This reporting period saw the TAYP Xtra programme developed in conjunction with Kyle Academy. Cashback Round 5 funding helped support of a pilot of longer-term engagement with 6 young people that the school had referred due to increased support needs. This engagement was initially planned to be for a 3-year period, however, due to complications around engagement because of the Covid pandemic, we had to shorten the engagement to 18 months. This approach will be evaluated at the end of funding period in March 2023.



Team Around the Family/Community Hub Model

Consultation on the move to a community hub model of support has taken place with a variety of staff during session 22/23. Following interrogation of local data, the hubs will initially focus on those at risk of exclusion, promoting attendance and key points of transition.

Consultation and contact have taken place with other local authorities who have implemented similar models of support. Further consultation and engagement with partners will take place before a move the community hubs are implemented during session 23/24.

Outcome 2: Tackling Inequality

Programme of work to deliver the outcomes set out in Children's Service Plan 2020-23

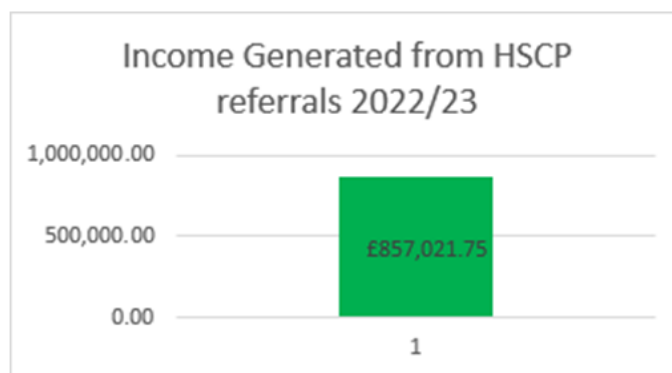
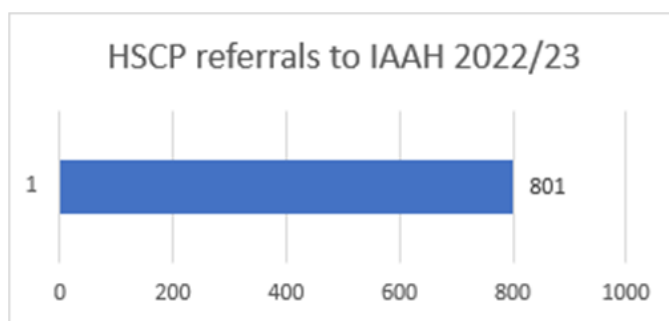
- Ensure every family referred to the HSCP is provided with benefits maximisation and financial advice by referral to hub
- Target our youth work to the most deprived schools and communities in South Ayrshire Work in partnership to improve positive destinations for young people in our most deprived schools and communities
- Implement the Child Poverty Action Plan
- Reduce the poverty related attainment gap through use of targeted interventions and supports – including the use of Pupil Equity Fund and Attainment Challenge programmes
- Deliver holiday meals programmes in targeted areas
- Refresh the Getting it Right for Every Child model and work in partnership to train staff and implement the new processes
- Establish the pilot of the Team Around the Family - Whole Systems Approach in the Belmont Academy cluster



Benefits Maximisation and Financial Advice

The graph reflects that there were 801 families referred for benefit maximisation and financial advice and £857,021 released for families. However due to the significant back log in the DWP, they have not processed or released all the funding so the amount given is probably at least 50% of what it will likely be. Once all the applications are processed it will likely be much higher.

We have completed 56% more financial assessments than last year and we will be confident that this will result in over £2 million pounds being released to families in need, but this requires to be confirmed by the DWP.



NEC free travel



The National Entitlement Card (NEC) is Scotland's National Smartcard, offering access to many public services across the country. A number of young people and families reported on the difficulties applying nationally online, therefore weekly Community NEC information drops have been set up across South Ayrshire Communities ensuring a much simpler process to a free service that reduces monthly costs. Additional sessions put into place for targeted groups such as care experience young people, Ukraine families and Trans young people to provide them with their first official identification.

For many young people this is the first formal application they have completed therefore we provided one to one support with how to answer the questions and provided key support to young people with additional support needs within schools and Ayrshire College.

Finally, at drop in's we have been able provide a range of further information / advice to young people and families on information relating to discounts, various youth groups, local services and access to mental health wellbeing or financial support and information.

“Fast and efficient Service today. Thanks so much to your staff who made a difficult process much easier!”

SA Parent

Youth work in the most deprived schools and communities

Thriving Communities along with partners from the Youth Services Strategic Group delivered a summer programme for young people and their families following funding received from the Scottish Government as part of the Covid Recovery Plan. We were able to deliver

It was important to the partnership that every aspect of Bounce Festival was completely free of charge and that young people could fully experience the event, regardless of their economic circumstances. Hot food was provided throughout the day, along with healthy snacks including fruit, cereal bars, popcorn and water. We were keen that the festival provided a platform for local young people to showcase their talents in front of their peers. Performances ranged from young solo artists to a full fiddle orchestra! We also had headline performances from popular Scottish DJ's, as requested by our young people.



The highlight of the summer programme was the concluding “Bounce” Festival which took place in August 2022.

Bounce Festival was South Ayrshire Council’s first ever Youth Work Festival. The main aim of the event was to provide local young people aged 10 to 16 with an opportunity to engage in and enjoy a wide range of positive activities, including live music, entertainment, street food, health and wellbeing workshops and take part in a Youth Voice consultation. We recognised that engagement levels of young people aged 10 to 14 were lower than expected in our Childcare Hubs when compared to that of young people aged 5 to 10. Anecdotal evidence suggested that older young people were reluctant to participate due to the large age gap and their differing needs hence why we created, developed and delivered #BounceFestival22!



We actively targeted areas in South Ayrshire where young people were experiencing challenging situations in their everyday lives. Thriving Communities staff identified around 300 young people who predominately lived in neighbourhoods recognised as statistically deprived within the health and wellbeing summary and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. We provided free transport across South Ayrshire to eliminate this potential, but highly likely, barrier to participation. Young people were also supported to attend by their Thriving Communities Youth Worker. The event itself took place at Ayr

Academy, which is situated within our most statically deprived community in South Ayrshire.



Over 300 young people attended #BounceFestival22

Whilst attending similar events with young people, our staff reported the high costs of purchasing food and taking part in activities.



The Youth Work Education Recovery Fund was established to enable the sector to engage young people in some of the country’s most vulnerable communities and support their educational, social and emotional recovery in the wake of the pandemic. Projects were awarded funding across all of Scotland’s 32 local authorities and were designed to support effective partnership working between youth work organisations (statutory and third sector) and formal education. In South Ayrshire, we were awarded just over £58,000 to deliver on this initiative. Many projects also included elements of outdoor learning and creative arts. All the projects sought to deliver at least three key outcomes and in South Ayrshire, we focussed on:

- Developing young people’s skills, including interpersonal skills
- Improving young people’s physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Recognising young people’s wider achievement and attainment (e.g. through youth awards)

Outcomes achieved:
Developing skills, including interpersonal skills

Belmont Academy – 16
 Carrick Academy – 12
 Marr College – 9
 Prestwick Academy – 5
 Girvan Academy – 21

Total – 63 young people

Outcomes achieved:
Raising attainment through recognition of wider learning and achievement

Belmont Academy – 20
 Carrick Academy – 22
 Marr College – 16
 Prestwick Academy – 9
 Girvan Academy – 13

Total – 80 young people

Outcomes achieved:
Improved Health & Wellbeing

Belmont Academy – 17
 Carrick Academy – 12
 Marr College – 11
 Prestwick Academy – 12
 Girvan Academy – 21

Total – 73 young people

Improving positive destinations for young people in our most deprived schools and communities.

In South Ayrshire the percentage of school leavers moving into a positive post-school destination has been consistently above the national average. This is also the case for young people living in our most deprived areas. In 2022, 99.1% of young people from our most deprived communities moved into a positive post-school destination. This is significantly above the national average of 93.4%

The Work Out! programme offers pupils in S4-S6 the opportunity to take their first steps into the world of work through a range of supported vocational work placements. Since the programme was established in 2009 over 1,000 pupils have successfully graduated from the programme.

The programme helps participants develop their communication and confidence whilst experiencing the workplace first hand. Equipping young people with the skills they require to not only find employment but to sustain that employment and to thrive.

The programme has been designed to provide a range of experiences for the young person and to help develop them holistically in relation to their employability, communication skills and working with others. In addition to their work placement, young people are supported to achieve their Steps to Work qualification at SCQF Level 3.

Over the past three years South Ayrshire has been in the top two councils across the country for the number of young people achieving a positive destination and programmes such as Work Out! contribute to that success.

We offer **Modern Apprenticeships**, at a variety of SCQF levels, to young people aged 16 to 19 or up to the age of 29 if they are care experienced, a young carer and/or have an additional support need.

We are committed to providing opportunities for all, closing the equality gap and ensuring young people who previously may have struggled to get into an apprenticeship are given the opportunity. To support this, we are committed

to 'ring-fencing' Modern Apprenticeships opportunities for young people who are care experienced or young carer and who are being supported by Thriving Communities to access a range of MA opportunities. 12.7% of apprentices were care experienced (national average 2%)



Our Supported Employment programme uses a range of methods, including flexible, personalised, one-to-one support to help individuals to develop confidence and the relevant skills to progress to our modern apprenticeship programme. In addition, we offer pre-apprenticeship opportunities to allow individuals who may struggle at interview to demonstrate their competence for a modern apprenticeship through a work placement. 36.6% of our apprentices identify as having an additional support need, with the national average being 13.3%.

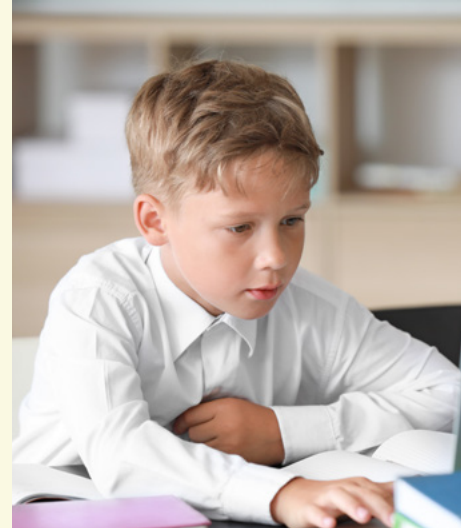
Sustainable employment is the ultimate goal of the Council's employability programmes and therefore we have committed to 'ring-fencing' specific internal vacancies for Modern Apprentices on completion of their qualification. In addition, when an MA completes their qualification and has secured employment with SAC we continue to work with the Service Manager to identify any enhanced training specific to the job role which allows the MA to transition to a new or expanding role within the Council.

Child Poverty Action Plan

A new working group has been established.

Dr Megan Watson, Public Health Intelligence Adviser, Public Health Scotland delivered a presentation on 'A systems and data-driven approach to strategic child poverty planning' to the group.

South Ayrshire will participate in this process, and further workshop sessions will be arranged in due course as part of the process mapped out by Megan to support the development of a new Child Poverty Strategy for South Ayrshire.



Pupil Equity Fund and Scottish Attainment Challenge

During session 2022/23 there have been a number of significant changes to the national Scottish Attainment Challenge programme. Funding previously directed to the four schools in South Ayrshire in receipt of additional funding has now ended. In its place the refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge has introduced a new fund, the Strategic Equity Fund, that allows Local Authorities to develop plans to support work at a strategic level that will support the closing of the poverty related attainment gap. South Ayrshire Council's Educational Services have worked to develop plans to focus on learning and teaching approaches linked to reading and the development of communication friendly environments. These plans will initially target the schools with the highest number of children and young people living Quintile 1 and will support the wider work on improving early language and communication approaches.

The wider work of the Pupil Equity Funding available to schools continues to see Headteachers develop contextual analysis of their school level data to understand the gaps between the most and least deprived children in their school communities. This ensures that all school improvement activity can contribute to the wider closing the gap and ensuring all learners achieve their potential. Initial Curriculum for Excellence data for 2022/23 highlights the following:

P1, 4 and 7 Literacy combined attainment has increased by 8pp (percentage points) compared to 2021-22. The poverty related attainment gap stretch aim has decreased by 7pp and now sits at 19%. This is the narrowest gap recorded to date.

P1, 4 and 7 numeracy combined attainment for all increased from 2021-22 by 3pp. The poverty related attainment gap has reduced in 2022-23 to 16%. This is a 2pp decrease on the previous year.

Approaches to tracking attainment, attendance, exclusions and positive destinations have been further refined this session. This has included changes to the structure and focus of school visits and reviews by the central education team. Ongoing work in relation to The Promise has ensured a clear focus on outcomes for care experienced children and young people. The attainment of care experienced children and young people is tracked at school and local authority level and supports school and service self-evaluation activity. In session 2022/23 the attainment gap for care experienced children and young people reduced by 13% in literacy and 9% in numeracy. Overall, the work underway to support children and young people in the broad general education demonstrates considerable progress.

Holiday Meals Programme

Targeted Holiday Meals were provided in key areas over the last year with provision being facilitated at the Easter, Summer and October Holidays. The main areas of delivery were North Ayr, Kincaidston, Maybole, Girvan Tarbolton and Barassie. Through the Get into Summer Programme, Thriving Communities provided young people with a nutritious lunch when attending their activities. These included canoeing, arts and crafts, summer trips and sports sessions. The Thriving Communities team worked in partnership with community groups such as Kincaidston Action Group, The Carrick Centre and Whitletts Vics in the Community and ensured that holiday programmes run in areas of deprivation were supplied with lunches for the young people attending.

One of the main aims of the Holiday Meal programme is to ensure that no child who is attending our activities feels they cannot come because it is over lunch time and their family cannot afford to provide a lunch which is required for them to attend. As a result, we also link into the Thriving Communities Health and Wellbeing Team to ensure that children attending sports camps which are run in targeted area have provisions so that young people attending can get food provisions as well.

Parents whose children were accessing the summer programme appreciated that the activities and food were free at the point of use and this had a positive impact on their families, some quotes from the parents of children accessing the summer programme were:

'I saved money so we could do other things together'

'Good to do something without having to worry about whether I have enough money'

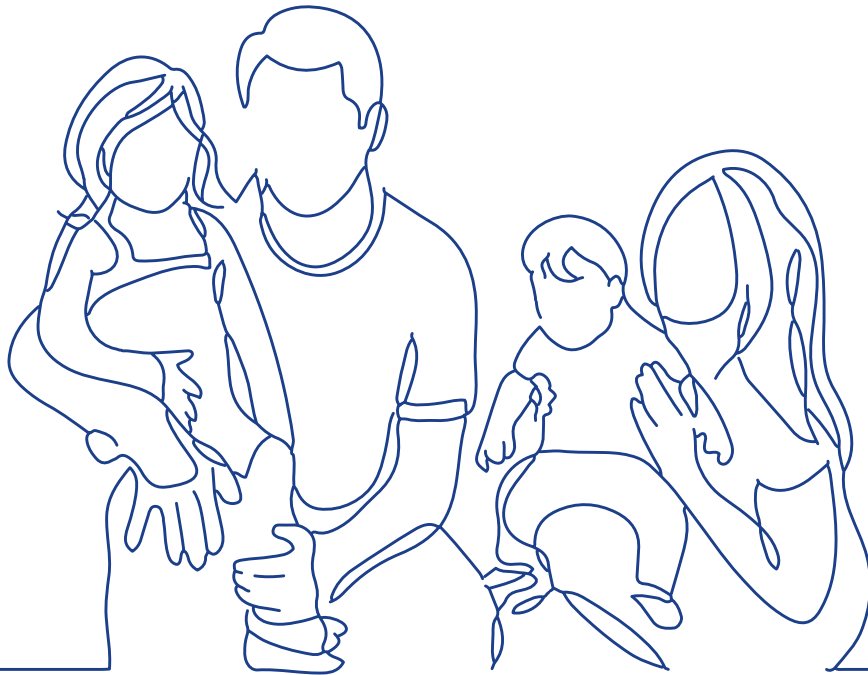
'Things are so expensive £50 for a family to do something... how is that possible?'



Getting it Right for Every Child Model

The Pan-Ayrshire guidance has just recently been agreed and will be presented to the Infant, Children and Young People's Transformational Change Programme Board on the 20 July 2023. It will be ready to roll out to schools returning in August.

A communication plan is the next focus and plans for a Pan-Ayrshire refresh event in September will be progressed. Areas for on-going multi-agency training will also be identified as part of this work and a South Ayrshire GIRFEC group.



Belmont Family First – building resilience, confidence, nurture and connections

Belmont Family First Service was first introduced as part of a pilot project and was developed to support South Ayrshire meet the aspirations of The Promise, Scotland's Independent Care Review and our ambition that Children and Young People of South Ayrshire will Grow Well, Live Well and Age Well. Based on the Ten Principles of Family Support, the team delivers a family centred approach to early intervention and prevention. The service received permanent funding in December 2022.

Belmont Family First Service is based in Belmont Academy and works in partnership with education, health and community partners. The team offers support to young people and their families from Belmont Academy and the cluster primary schools. The aim of the service is to reduce the number of referrals to statutory services by providing early intervention and direct support to families. The support is timely and responsive, empowers families to strengthen their relationships, grow together, develop resilience and reach their full potential. The team embrace a strength based, family

centred approach and utilise a nurturing family-based approach as well as Signs of Safety and Safer Together models. Coupled with this, the service has recruited a Senior Practitioner, 1 Social worker and 2 Nurture Workers. Each member of the Team brings strengths in a variety of professional areas including Leadership, mental health, nurture and experiences of using services as well as care experience.

Belmont Family First Service actively support families who are struggling with the cost of living crisis and associated challenges such as food, fuel, and digital poverty. Since the service commenced the team have supported families to access over £16,410.28 in funding.

In recognition of the strengths and outcomes achieved by the Belmont Family First Team, the service was nominated for the South Ayrshire Outstanding Peoples Awards in 2023. It was to the hard work, dedication and commitment of the Team that they were acknowledged and received the award for Outstanding Team.

Outcome 3:

Love and support for care experienced young people and young carers

Programme of work to deliver the outcomes set out in Children's Service Plan 2020-23

- Develop supports for young people eligible for Throughcare and Continuing Care to ensure that young people can access nurture and care when required to ensure that they feel nurtured and cared for when they most need it
- Implement the recommendations from the Independent Care Review (Scotland)
- Support young people in children's houses in their development, wellbeing and to achieve positive outcomes
- Implement the Champions Board Implementation Plan
- Work with partners to improve positive destinations for your people who have care experience
- Implementation of the Young Carers statement within the Team Around the Child approach and Carers Act
- Develop a Schools' Champions Board to give care experienced children and young people a voice in the decisions that affect them
- Develop continuum of enhanced support for care experienced children and young people at point of transition
- Implement the Stop-Go Charter (superseded by The Promise)



Throughcare and Continuing Care

We continue to develop supports for young people eligible for Throughcare and Continuing Care to ensure that they can access nurture and care when they most need it. The case of young person A is one example:

A is a young person who originates from Afghanistan. A was identified as part of the national transfer scheme and was provided with accommodation within SAC foster carers. A is displaced from his family and at the beginning really struggled with the aspect of living with another family. The foster carers allowed A the space and time that he needed to build trusting relationships with them and settle within their home. The carers were completely child centred and took the lead from A and did not push him into situations that he was not comfortable with but continued to provide and promote opportunities for him to integrate as part of their family and community.

A participated in a family activity in summer 2022 where they all went to the local outdoor swimming pool. The carers also celebrate customs and cultures which are important to A. They have also introduced him to new cultures such as celebrating his 18th birthday.

A wished to travel to London independently to visit a family friend. This was agreed by all involved with As care and supported throughout his stay. A enjoyed his time within London and is hoping to return again in June 2023.

A visited the Mosque in Glasgow as part of an outing with his support worker and another young person. This allowed A a chance to follow his faith and introduce others to his faith.

A has attended education full time since arriving in South Ayrshire in February 2022. A has now secured a place at Ayr college where they will be studying an NC in computing studies. Collaborative work between education, careers services, social work and foster carers have allowed for this to be possible for A. SAC also made a commitment to pay for A's tuition fees as he was not eligible at the time of applying for his course to be funded. A has now gained leave to remain status and is eligible for tuition fees as well as the care experienced bursary from college. A has been attending an ESOL course at Ayr college as part of his education timetable. A is now on track to gain Nat 5 ESOL.

A feels it is now time for him to move on from his foster carers and gain his own accommodation. A is currently on the waiting list for supported accommodation within Quarriers. A, his carers and support worker recognise that A is currently not ready to live completely on his own and would be greatly supported within Quarriers independent living. A will continue to be supported by his foster carers in preparation for his move to his own accommodation. A transition plan will then be implemented which will incorporate A's wishes and views and allow for relationships with Quarriers staff to also be formed. A's foster carers have agreed to still remain in contact with A when he is no longer living within their care.

A's care recently was changed from looked after care to continuing care due to his age. South Ayrshire has provided a commitment to the carers to honour the current payment rate for A to ensure he continues to receive a high level of care and support during his time with his foster carers prior to moving to his own accommodation.



Recommendations from the Independent Care Review (Scotland)

The Promise



The Promise was established following the outcome of the Independent Care Review 2016-2020 and is Scotland's commitment to improving outcomes of young people with care experience. At the heart of The Promise is a commitment to ensure that "Scotland's children and young people will grow up loved, safe and respected." (The Promise-Scotland).

'[The Promise](#)' challenges us to deliver long term improvements across a range of services to bring about lasting change. [South Ayrshires Parenting Promise](#) covering the period 2021 to 2030 is South Ayrshire's Corporate Parenting Plan and forms the basis of our Corporate Parenting commitments until 2030, as we implement the Promise.

We have identified ten South Ayrshire Promise improvement areas 2021-24 with thirty-two associated actions. With the help of South Ayrshires Change Team we have been able to further identify fifty-three benefits (measurable improvements) for which baseline information has been established to allow us to measure the impact of our promise activity. The process of benefit tracking allows us to clearly identify how each benefit will be measured, as well as the data and collection method required to do so.

During Phase 1 the project delivered in line with the project plan. All key milestones were tracked and reported in line with individual plans for the 10 improvement actions. Ongoing and open communication with stakeholders has been central to delivering Phase 1, enabling issues to be resolved with solutions agreed and subsequently implemented.

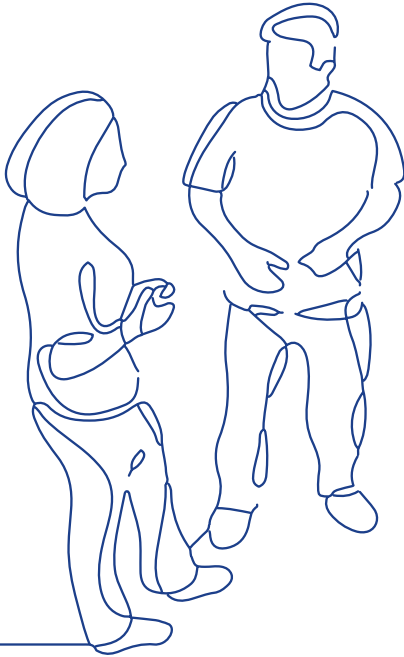
Some of the key areas addressed in this first phase of change include

- Awareness raising around the promise
- Collecting data that is relevant, reflects what's important to children and their families and is used to help us improve
- Using language that is care-based
- A rights-based approach to practice that offers support for whole families
- Broadening our understanding of risk and aligning our local poverty activity with the promise
- Ensuring trauma informed and nurture approaches are standard practice across all our services

In December 2022 South Ayrshire H&SCP in collaboration with Education colleagues were successful in securing £229,937 from the Promise Partnership Fund to collaborate with the wider school community to support the co-production of a tailored curriculum offer with children and young people with care experience.



Young People in our Children's Houses



The Nurture Principles are used to underpin a lot of the work that we do in the Children's Houses: we provide a safe space; understand that language is a vital means of communication; understand that behaviour is communication; understand the importance of transitions in young people's lives. In addition, we strive to ensure that our practitioners are trained in trauma informed care in order to provide the best outcomes for young people.

All of our young people are encouraged to be a part of developing their own care plans so that we can provide individualised strategies to help support them to achieve their goals. Our carers are often the biggest advocates for young people and will support them to meetings where they make sure their voices are heard and their views are always considered.

We hold regular young person's meetings where they are made aware of any changes in the houses but are also given an opportunity to give their opinion on different issues within the houses.

The houses work closely with social work and education to ensure that, as a team around the young people, we can make sure that they are given the best opportunities to reach their potential and offer early interventions when we can see an approach is not working.

CASE STUDY

T has lived at Cunningham Place for a few years now, this year she has turned 18 and has also bought herself a dog as a companion. T decided to move out with a friend to be able to keep the dog, we kept her room open for a couple of weeks to make sure that she could come back if she needed to, which she did. T asked if she could bring her dog back, we don't have any other pets in Cunningham Place but we decided that allowing her to have her dog and support her to learn to care for it properly would provide the best outcomes for T. T is loving having her dog with her and is looking forward to moving into our new flat in 2 weeks.

Positive Destinations for Young People who have Care Experience

In partnership with Skills Development Scotland and Education, Thriving Communities play a significant role in ensuring our young people reach a positive destination on leaving school.

The School Leaver Destination Report confirms 98.6% of our young people progressed to a positive destination on leaving school – our highest performance to date! With 98.3% of care experienced young people reaching a positive destination, that's 59 out of 60 leavers

Once again, we continue to perform above the national average, which for this period was 95.7%. This demonstrates our dedication and commitment to providing young people across South Ayrshire with the right support to help them fulfil their potential.

Champions Board



***“Hundreds of care experienced young people have found a voice through their participation in champions Boards and know they have influenced decision making in areas of real importance to them”
(Scottish Government)***

Champions Boards build the capacity of young people with care experience to influence change, empower them by showing confidence in their abilities and potential, and give them the platform to flourish and grow.

In South Ayrshire, our Champions Board network has grown year on year and now currently supports the participation of 73 young children and young people 8 – 26 years.

In total 126 groupwork sessions took place between 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023 these groups were a mixture of weekly school-based group sessions and community-based evening groups

Young people continue to be involved in the programming of groups building skills consolidating relationships at times volunteering, skill sharing and buddying other new members.

The average age of young people participating in Champions Board activity is 15.

In 2022 the champs team delivered **2 residential**s involving 28 young people. One took place at Dumfries House over 3 days in April 2022 and one at Dolphin House Culzean September 2022. The young people who took



part varied in age from 7- 19 years and the focus of both residentials was **community** and **identity**. The team also supported young people to take part in a South Ayrshire wide youth voice residential.

The Champions Board continue to support young people with care experience to design and steer an Individual Small Grants programme for care experienced young people across South Ayrshire and in 2023 have distributed £25,981.85 to 112 young people aged 14-26 years. Indicating a growth of 180% in young people receiving a small grants payment since phase 1 of small grants in 2019 <https://hscp.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/ShineEvenBrighter>

One champs team member with care experience continues to sit on South Ayrshire's Fostering and Adoption Panel as part of their Participation Assistant role.

Participation Assistants have used their care experience to design and deliver Promise presentations and workshops to over 1000 members of South Ayrshires workforce and

commissioned services

The team continue to use their lived experience of care to promote positive relationships with key corporate parents and decision makers across South Ayrshire through Facebook live chats facilitated by champions board team members

<https://fb.watch/lrGmHJDjwd/>

The Champions Board continues to support care experienced young people from South Ayrshire to link in with national initiatives such as care experience week and care day, delivering local activities and supporting young people to contribute to national activity.

Young Carers



Raising Awareness

Awareness raising sessions have been facilitated for a variety of services and organisations, including Education, Health, Social Work, Thriving Communities, Police and 3rd Sector, as well as whole school staff training in a number of Primary and Secondary schools. We have also arranged marketplace events in secondary schools and one primary school cluster, with a number of other organisations invited to hold a stall (including Women's Aid, Suicide Prevention, Trauma, Ayrshire Cancer Support and more), which improved visibility of services with pupils and staff and helped to challenge stigma.

In addition, a short awareness raising video was created with voiceovers by pupils from Coylton, Dailly & Cairn Primary schools. This will remove barriers due to literacy issues and allow information to be shared in multiple locations (including online, via school apps, in classrooms etc.). The video can also be played with subtitles in a number of different languages, removing any language barriers. The video can be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/OOiguDuiD0Q>

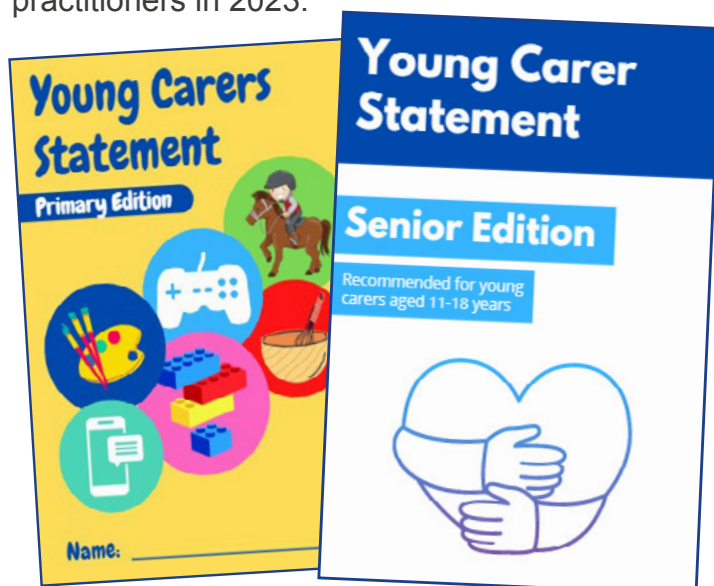
Young Carer Champions

A Young Carers Champion (YCC) has been identified by most schools which has been recognised as best practice at a national level. YCC is the point of contact within the school for HSCP and carers service staff, and a known person for young people to approach for support relating to caring responsibilities. In addition, Cllr Hunter & Cllr Ferry have both agreed to be Young Carers Champions for Elected Members.



Young Carers Statement

Following feedback from young carers and practitioners on the existing Young Carers Statement, we co-produced two new Young Carers Statements and a comprehensive guidance document with young carers and practitioners. These will be launched at a workshop event for practitioners in 2023.



Health & Wellbeing of Young Carers

The recent Scottish Government Health & Wellbeing survey carried out in South Ayrshire showed young people who have a caring role in South Ayrshire had poorer mental and physical health than their peers who did not have a caring role, which is reinforced by national research. We worked with a group of young carers from Girvan Academy, NHS Ayrshire & Arran and Active Schools to develop a package of resources for young carers' mental and physical health and wellbeing. The 'Self-Care Club' is a day of training and information (including a 'train the trainer' session on mental health, ideas for physical activity to fit around caring responsibilities) and package of goodies to support the young person (e.g. bluetooth earphones as young people said listening to music helped them to relax and switch off). This will be launched in 2023.



Access to Leisure

All young carers aged 8 to 18 and registered with our commissioned carers service can apply for an ACTIV8 card which provides free access to gym, swimming, classes and golf. We have worked with our colleagues in Leisure to extend this offer to young carers who choose not to register with the carers service by introducing a new application process. In addition, young carers under the age of 8 will now be able to apply for an ACTIV8+ card which provides the same benefits as the ACTIV8 card, but also allows an additional person (parent/carer/sibling/friend) to join free of charge.



Young Carers Voice Network

Our new Young Carers Voice Network (YCVN) had their first in person meeting in December 2022. 28 young people aged 8 to 17 attended the team building day and the feedback from our young carers is already being actioned. There was an additional in person event for 13 young carers from Marr College who were unable to attend in December. The young people took part in independent team building activities as well as feedback on priorities and actions for young carers in South Ayrshire. Smaller consultations with young carers of all ages have taken place throughout the year in a variety of formats.

Six young carers attended a residential weekend at Dolphin House in November 2022 with other youth groups from South Ayrshire as part of South Ayrshire's Youth Voice. This was a great opportunity for our young carers to find out about other groups and make new friends, as well as have the opportunity to feedback on local priorities and actions.



Peer Support & Respite

Young carers are often unable to participate in extra-curricular activities due to their caring roles. We have partnered with Active Schools to offer a variety of activities during the school day to allow all young carers to participate. Activities have included archery, caving, and first aid sessions. Furthermore, Scottish Rowing have been providing free weekly rowing sessions on the River Ayr. Groups of young carers have been attending each week and developing their skills and knowledge. Rowing is a great sport to relax and enjoy the fresh air.

We have also collaborated with South Ayrshire Council Rangers Service to offer monthly bush craft sessions for our primary aged young carers (including under 8s). These activities have provided fantastic opportunities to try something new, get some exercise and fresh air, as well as make connections with friends in the same or similar situation, offering informal peer support.



We partnered with Thriving Communities and were successful in a funding bid to take whole families to Dolphin House for the weekend where there was a young carer supporting due to a language barrier. In March 2023, 5 Ukrainian families came to Dolphin House for a weekend of fun and adventure. We had

great fun on this busy weekend. Activities included caving under the Culzean Castle, archery, feeding llamas and deer, crafts, campfire, night walk, and rock pooling. As it was Mother's Day weekend, we had extra treats arranged, including making cards and gifts with the children, flowers for the Mums and Gran of the families, and a family photoshoot.



Under 8s



Our young carers under the age of 8 years old are not currently supported by our commissioned carers service. Numbers of identified young carers in this age group were increasing, so we have been arranging activities during schools' hours for fun and adventure, as well as informal peer support. One young carer returned to school and exclaimed to his Head Teacher, 'I have eleven new best friends!'.

Carer Celebrations

The first Troon Carers Day was held in February 2023. This was a very successful event and the first Carers Day that young carers have been invited to. There were a multitude of services with stalls at the event, fantastic entertainment from Marr College and local primary school pupils, including a pipe band, singing and dancing, and a preview showing of our young carer short film, The Weekend. We are now planning for Ayr's first Carers Day and Prestwick Carers Day later in 2023.

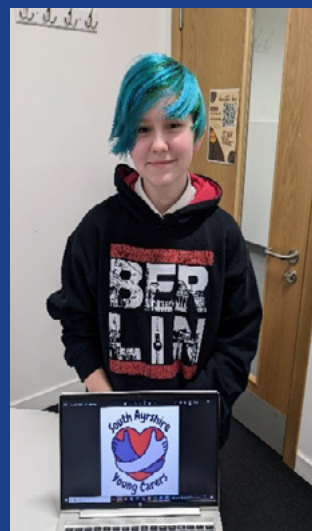
We celebrated Young Carers Action Day on 15th March this year. We had a social media takeover for the day and shared posts including pledges colleagues to support young carers, artwork from young carers and awareness raising information. The Wallace Tower was lit up purple to raise awareness.

Two young carers from Marr College were invited to join a panel in a webinar hosted by Education Scotland and Carers Trust Scotland to launch a new CPD accredited module on young carers (which features our short film!). Craig and Stephanie spoke very well about their experiences and challenges in Education due to their caring role and asked the rest of the panel some tricky questions of their own!

Ayr United kindly provided almost 80 tickets for young carers and their families to attend Somerset Park, with two of our young carers, Lucas and Dylan, as mascots.



We launched a competition, open to all primary and secondary pupils in South Ayrshire, to design a new logo for South Ayrshire young carers. A pupil from Marr won the competition and we are delighted with our new logo!



CASE STUDY

THE WEEKEND

Young carers awareness raising sessions in schools had not taken place since before Covid-19 restrictions. We required a resource to reach all secondary aged young people consistently and chose to work with young carers to create a short awareness raising film. This project utilised existing local partnerships which allowed multi-agency practitioners to contribute their skills and expertise to enhance young peoples' experience. All staff working on the project had lived experience of being a young carer which was invaluable. Staff were able to share their own experiences which helped the young people feel safe and comfortable to share their experiences.



This project was completely led by our young people who bravely shared their own experiences and feelings, then learned how to capture these in story form and convey in film. It provided a very young person-centred access to education which was very contextual, practical and inclusive of personal choice and decision making. This ensured the film was true to life for the young people in South Ayrshire and across Scotland.

The project culminated in a night of celebration of the young people's achievements, A Night at the Oscars, which provided a local platform to raise the profile of young carers. The young carers involved in the project participated in a Question & Answer session. The event was attended by almost 300 people, including the Chief Executive, Elected Members, Police Scotland, colleagues from the Council, Health & Social Care Partnership, Health, 3rd Sector services, and members of the public.

The event was also featured in local press in print and online. Twitter coverage can be found using the hashtag #SAYCMovie.

Through the use of the film production, it provided a unique and memorable opportunity for these young people to



see what success looked like for them and an opportunity to show their positive achievements to others, including an audience of adults and their peers

Since the launch night, A Night at the Oscars, the young people involved in this project have been delivering awareness raising sessions to a range of partners, including South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee and Police Scotland, and, most recently, planned and presented a further event showcasing their film. Their confidence and self-belief have increased beyond measure and they are so proud to share their own personal experiences to help others.

The young people have created a legacy with this short film which will allow us to support young people in this situation for years to come, as well as raise awareness and understanding with practitioners and other organisations.

This film will now be shown across all secondary schools with an accompanying workshop. This means all secondary aged pupils across the authority will have the same input and experience. Already, numbers of known young carers across schools in South Ayrshire have tripled, meaning these young carers are getting the support to ensure they have the same, or similar, outcomes to their peers who are not caring.

Schools' Champions Board

Champions board drop-in groups take place weekly in Belmont Academy and Ayr Academy with 30 young people with care experience regularly attending. The groups are supported by 3 champions board team workers with additional support at points from Thriving communities and the champions board writer in residence through the Gaiety's Culture collective. Care experience leads based in education play a significant role to support young people's participation in groups.

Themes emerging from school-based champs boards over 2022 include

- Peer relationships
- Navigating school
- Mental health
- Family relationships

Champions board team use their lived experience of care to support young people to manage presenting themes, one of the most powerful opportunities is participation in the wider community and 75% of young people attending school-based groups now attend community-based groups.

"I can't imagine what life at school would have been like for me without the Champ Board they know me and have given me opportunities that I would never have, and I know they care about me"

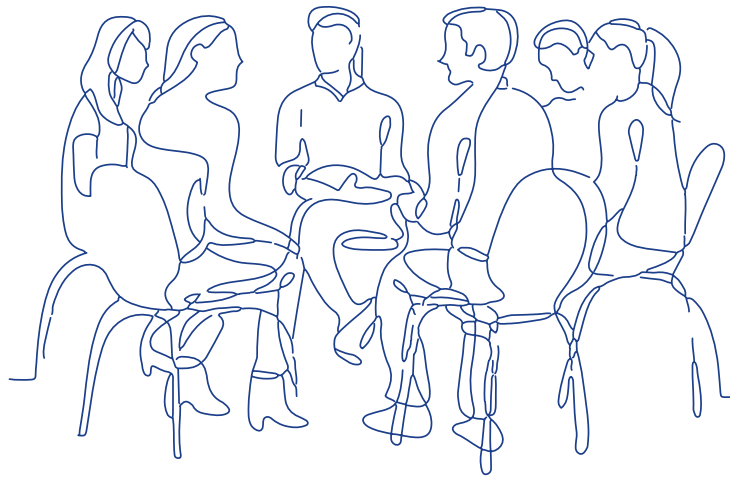
(Ross)

"She [participation Assistant] just listens to me and stands up for me like no one else has it helps me to stand up for myself"

(Kai)

She [participation Assistant] helped me, I can go away for a wee while because of things that are happening in my life and come back to the group at any time...and you know when its honest and they're honest

(Michelle)



I was able to sit on panel as an expert at a huge education Scotland event.... lots of adults couldn't do that I was nervous and proud. The best thing about it was that the champs team knew I could do it and supported me

(Martin)

I wouldn't have known about groups if didn't go to the champs in school now I go to the domain on Thursday nights and have been on residential to Dolphin house

(Chloe)

In addition, Belmont Family First and Small Steps to Wellbeing work across to deliver innovative family centred approaches to early intervention. This work was developed to support South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership meet the aspirations of The Promise. The Promise tells us that families must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community and have scaffolding/ services shaped around the family to help them grow stronger. The teams work in partnership with schools, health, and community partners to support families to identify strengths, assets and resources that may enhance their wellbeing and enable them to reach their own goals. By providing support to children and families at the earliest opportunity it has been proven that this approach provides families with the tools and coping strategies to thrive and avoid the need for future support from statutory services.

Enhanced support for Care Experienced Children and Young People



The Virtual school continues to rigorously track and monitor attendance, exclusions and attainment throughout the year. Monthly reports are collated and tracked, as well as termly reports. This tracking provides timely and responsive support and challenge to schools. This year secondary schools have implemented a Care Experienced Lead Teacher who has responsibility for bespoke and in-depth tracking for all learners with care experience. These trackers include wider achievement, interventions, school life and specifically attainment. This has been a real beneficial implementation across secondary schools, allowing a much better indication of where young people are requiring additional supports and timely interventions.

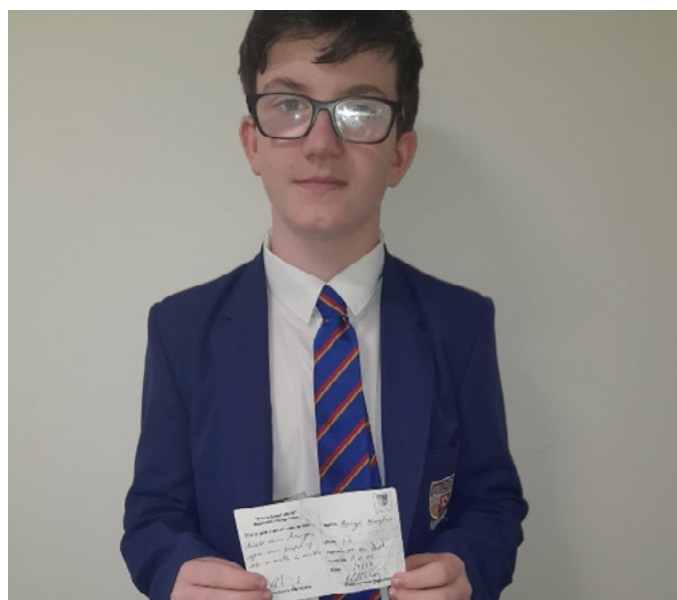
The Virtual School Welfare Officers continue to work one to one with children and young people who require additional support and strategies to allow them to attend school, participate in wider achievement and life of school and also include the families and carers in events, ultimately improving outcomes for the individuals. Wellbeing is closely tracked and monitored by the WFOs to ensure that holistic awareness of the young people is considered. This tracking compliments and directs the targeted area of work that the WFOs implement with the children and young people.

A family residential was held during the Easter Holiday for children, young people and their families at Dolphin House. This event was hosted by Thriving Communities and supported by Welfare Officers, to support families to attend and maximise the enjoyment. There was also a host of activities taking place during all school holidays to allow children and young people to remain in contact with staff with whom they have best relationships, easing the pressure and anxieties that occur following breaks from school. This is proving to be hugely beneficial in terms of effective communication between multi agencies where

Welfare Officers can be the point of contact.

A family fun day was also organised during the Christmas Holidays for children, young people and the family to attend Citadel Leisure Centre, upon the young people's request, following on from the success from previous year's fun day in the same venue. All activities were made available for everyone and food and drink were supplied. This event was supported by Thriving Communities.

A transition group was created in session 2021-22 for a group of young people transitioning from primary to secondary. This group effectively transitioned to their secondary schools with confidence and are being well supported by new school staff throughout this academic year. This enhanced transition allowed secondary staff to build a factual understanding of each individual and build the skills replicated by the Welfare Officer to meet the needs of the individual, as well as the young people themselves gaining confidence in their new learning environments.



Improving housing outcomes for care experienced young people

Work is ongoing to ensure all care experienced young people are provided with the opportunity to improve their life chances by making more positive life choices.

Positive progress is being made in South Ayrshire to support young people leaving care to develop the necessary life skills to live independently, hold down tenancies, avoid homelessness and reach their full potential. The work focused on four key areas – life skills, person-centred housing options, preventing the need to apply as homeless, and appropriate person-centred support – and ensuring these support the young people involved to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Feedback from the young people benefiting from the Council's approach has been positive. Arron who was 21 when he took part in the Housing First pilot – said: **"The programme is absolutely brilliant and has helped me so much over the past few months. If I didn't have the support from the programme, I don't know where I would be"**. This work underpinned the development of the service specification for Quarriers South Ayrshire Youth Support Service which is jointly commissioned between Children's health care and justice services and Housing. The service provides both accommodation and outreach support to young people aged 16-25 years to gain the skills, confidence, and knowledge which to move on to appropriate accommodation and establish themselves as active members of their local community.

"[quarriers support worker] helps me with food banks, housing issues and neighbour disputes. Supports me emotionally and works around me to ensure when we meet and talk it's what I want and need."

"They helped when I needed it but backed off when I became a little more independent"

"When I was really struggling with mental health, they were always a phone call away if I needed them"

"They [quarriers support workers] were the loveliest workers! So helpful, genuine, and down to earth and that's the type of support young people need."

In 2023 the improving housing outcomes group was re-established as part of the redesign of our Children's Service Planning partnership.

Outcome 4:

Good physical and mental health and wellbeing

Programme of work to deliver the outcomes set out in Children's Service Plan 2020-23

- Develop early intervention supports and clear pathways for vulnerable young people experiencing poor mental health
- Increase confidence and capacity in the workforce by providing staff development opportunities in nurture, relationship-based approaches and low-level anxiety management approaches
- Implement the Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan
- Introduction and implementation of school-based counselling services to support mental health and wellbeing
- Identify supports for young peoples' emotional wellbeing through the Say it Out Loud (SIOL) survey
- Ensure appropriate access to Health Visitors and School Nurses and that relevant priorities are implemented
- Implement the Physical Activity Strategy in so far as it relates to children and young people
- Work in partnership to address health and wellbeing inequalities for LGBTI young people



Early intervention supports and clear pathways for vulnerable young people experiencing poor mental health

There are a wide range of services and supports for children and young people experiencing poor mental health. Both new and existing services are clearly identifiable alongside pathways for access within an info-graphic that has been widely shared and is also available on the community mental health website

[South Ayrshire Community Mental Health Support \(southayrshirecmhw.co.uk\)](http://southayrshirecmhw.co.uk).



Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Supports for Children & Young People

Universal Services

- Togetherall
- Bookbug for the home
- Universal wellbeing inputs (e.g. S3 wellbeing day)
- Shelf-help
- Parents & carers videoscribes
- South Ayrshire Youth Forum (SAYF) wellbeing resources
- NHS Ayrshire & Arran self-help resources
- Mental Health charter
- Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) Let's Talk
- Community Learning & Development
- Active Schools
- Young Scot
- SHOUT

Additional Services

- Family Learning Team
- Belmont Family First
- Bloom
- Blether/Bereavement boxes
- LGBT Youth Scotland Worker
- Mind Moose
- Cognitive Behavioural Approaches.
- Three Sixty Ayr
- Barnardo's
- Befriending Service
- Sleep Counselling Service
- Let's Introduce Anxiety Management (LIAM)
- Champion's Board
- Educational Psychology
- Positive Psychology Groupwork
- Family Links Programme

Specialist Services

- School nursing
- Educational Psychology Service
- Autism Outreach Team
- Welfare Officers
- Chestnut Cottage
- School Counselling service
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Womens Aid
- Penumbra suicide bereavement support
- Learning & inclusion Team
- Penumbra self-harm services
- We are With You
- Moving on Ayrshire
- Home Link
- Ayrshire Cancer Support CYP service

Enhanced Services

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Social Work
- Distress Brief Intervention (DBI)



FOR FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT THESE SERVICES, PLEASE SEE PAGE 2. FOR DETAILS AROUND HOW TO ACCESS A SERVICE, SEE PAGE 3. SEE [SOUTHAYRSHIRECMHW.CO.UK](http://southayrshirecmhw.co.uk) FOR MORE

We further remind you to consider any referrals for children, young people and families to new services in the context of the support a family is already receiving, & to ensure informed consent/collaborative working.



Community Mental Health



1412 children and young people accessed support between January & June 2022, whereas 1480 accessed support between July & December 2022.

HEALTH & WB NEEDS

In the last 6 months, the mental health and WB needs mentioned most often by children & young people accessing MH services were: Emotional Literacy, Anxiety and Emotional/Behavioural Difficulties

Our Services

Children, young people & families have been able to access support through 13 services, ranging from 24/7 online support, to early intervention groupwork, to support around self harm.

2982

2982 children and young people aged 5-25 received support through Community Mental Health and Wellbeing services in the last year.

1112

1112 (75%) of the 1480 children & young people accessing mental health services in the last 6 months had improvements in their mental health and wellbeing outcomes.



"It was relieving to talk about my worries with people. It might sound cliché, but I really do think this has helped me."

787

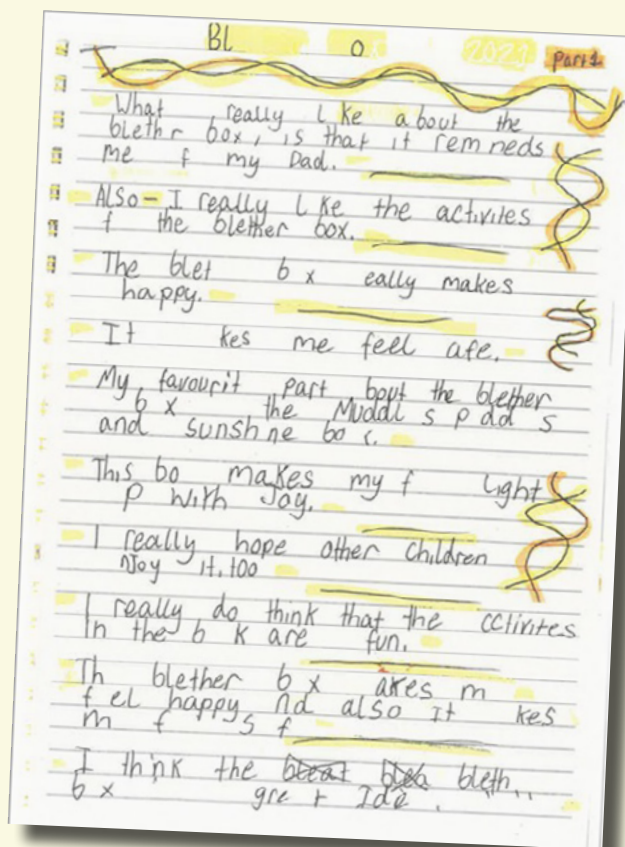
787 family members and carers accessed support through community mental health in the last 6 months.

CASE STUDY

For the Blether Box 1 Year anniversary we received a letter from a pupil regarding how they feel the 'Let's Blether Box' has helped them. The 'Let's Blether Box' is for Primary aged children who have undergone a recent bereavement or loss and need further help to support their grief. Please see below:

"What I really like about the blether box, is that it reminds me of my Dad. Also – I really like the activities for the blether box.
The blether box really makes me happy.
It makes me feel safe.
My favourite part about the blether box is – the – muddles puddles and sunshine book.
This box makes my face light up with joy.
I really hope other children enjoy it too.
I really do think that the activities in the book are so fun.
This blether box makes me feel happy and also it makes me feel safe.
I think the blether box is a great idea"

Figure 1: Primary Pupil's Letter regarding their experience of the 'Let's Blether Box'



Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan



Education, health, social work, CLD, Ayrshire College, parents and young people and third sector organisations created and implemented the children's mental health and wellbeing action plan. This raised awareness of the joint approaches being adopted to improve mental health and well-being across South Ayrshire. Achievements of the joint planning, monitoring and evaluation within this group include:

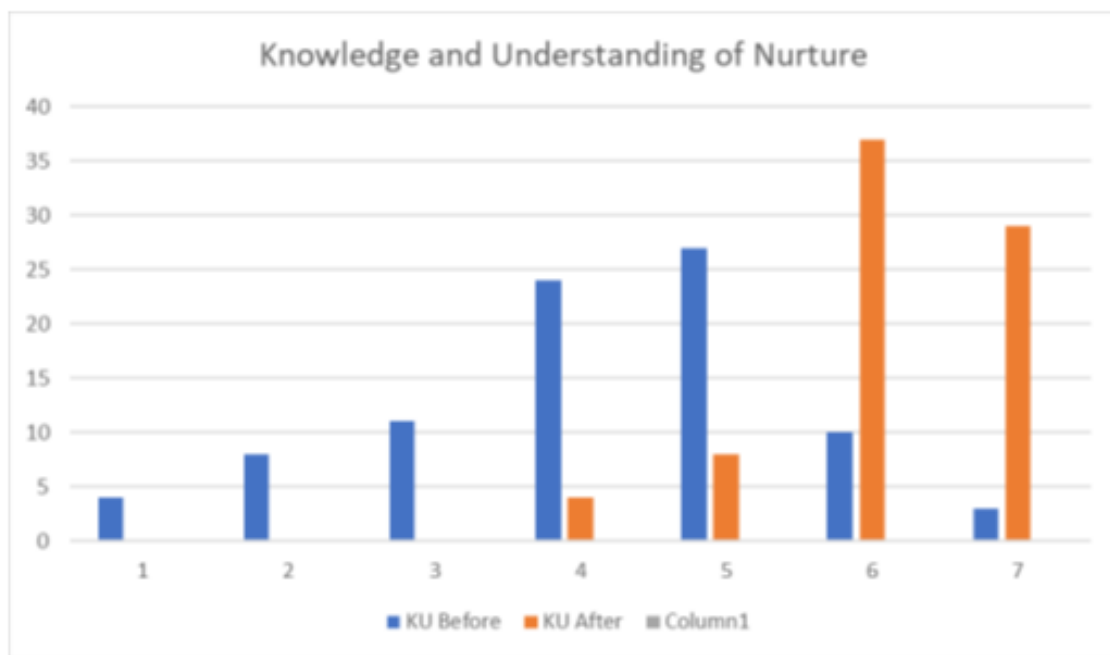
The development & enhancement of existing services – e.g. support services for children with anxiety and low mood.

- The delivery of new services e.g. the Unscheduled Care pathway, low mood groupwork
- Increased signposting to services and increased information on services being circulated
- New training being developed – e.g. education training attended by 365 staff
- Increased support for parents and carers
- Increased use and sharing of data for tracking and monitoring
- Increased use of whole-school approaches
- Increased access to digital supports

Increasing Confidence and Capacity in the Workforce

2 Day Nurture Training

The team have trained 87 staff this year in full nurture training which comprises of Attachment Theory, Early Neuroscience, Nurture Principals, Developmental Trauma and ACES and staff mental health and wellbeing.



The data tracks staff feelings around their improved confidence and

knowledge immediately after the course. However, as the service is relatively new there is no data around the long-term impact upon practice and how this impacts learners. In the next session the team plan to offer continued support through the nurture network programme and create refresher sessions to embed the nurture principles in daily teaching practice.

Many of our schools continue to train staff in “LIAM” to help support children and young people manage low level anxiety.

School-based counselling services

All schools in South Ayrshire now have access to a counselling service.



Counselling in Schools



907

907 children and young people aged 10-18 accessed support through counselling in the last 12 months.

185

185 (54%) children and young people reported an improved outcome following support from their school counsellor between July and December 2022.



63% of young people receiving counselling in the last 6 months identified as female.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Needs

The 3 areas mentioned most often by young people attending school counselling were:

- Anxiety
- Family Issues
- Stress



564

564 children & young people accessed counselling between January and June of 2022

343

343 children & young people accessed counselling between July and December of 2022

340

340 of young people who accessed counselling in the last 6 months were in S1-S6.



All 8 secondary schools in South Ayrshire have a school counsellor



The 11 counsellors in post provide an average of 124 hours per week.

Say It Out Loud (SIOL)

The Say It Out LOUD Mental Health and Wellbeing Award is designed for South Ayrshire Primary and Secondary Schools created by South Ayrshire Youth Forum together with young people, Thriving Communities, NHS Ayrshire and Arran Health Improvement Team and South Ayrshire Mental Wellbeing Strategy Group.

The Award is based on and works alongside the NHS Ayrshire and Arran and Scottish Government Whole School Approach to Support Mental health and Wellbeing Guidance for Schools and mirrors their eight principles.



The Award provides a framework that supports listening to children and young people and considers their views on issues that affect them most. It is inclusive of UNCRRC, How Good is Our School 4 Education Scotland Self-evaluation and of South Ayrshire Council Service Plan.

There are currently 14 Primary Schools and 4 secondary schools within South Ayrshire registered and actively working towards the Say It Out LOUD Award. This contributes to approximately 200 young people taking on active role as MHWB Ambassadors and setting up Say It Out LOUD School Committees with the purpose of having a say on mental health and wellbeing support available within their school.

With the support of local young people, the Award toolkit is now updated to support Schools to get creative and evidence their hard work, this includes the new resource of three good practice videos with pupils sharing their experiences, actions taken and difference made to promote positive wellbeing.

The Award is now delivered within three separate levels Bronze, Silver and Gold and each level is peer assessed by another school participating in the Award. After each level young people receive a certificate and there are opportunities to achieve accredited Youth Awards, take part in a range of mental health and wellbeing training, and have a say or take part in South Ayrshire Youth Voice or Mental Health and Wellbeing developments.

Young people reported that the Award and Mental Health Ambassadors within their school has helped them feel more comfortable to talk to others about their feelings/concerns, have a better understanding of their feelings/emotions, find out what support is available and feel calmer in school environments and hall ways.



Access to Health Visitors and School Nurses

Health Visiting services continue to provide the full Universal Health Visiting Pathway to all families with children from pre-birth to school entry, with developmental reviews provided at key stages. Scrutiny of the data collected at 27 to 30 months has enabled identification of areas for improvement in areas such as children's speech, language and communication and will be taken forward collaboratively during 2023/24.

Infant feeding remains a priority area for the service with exclusive breastfeeding rates at 6 – 8 weeks above the Ayrshire average. The high standard of person-centred care provided to families was recognised through the success in gaining the UNICEF Baby Friendly Gold Standard accreditation. An increase in support for breastfeeding families has also been demonstrated through the addition of a South Ayrshire Infant Feeding support nurse, and funding to continue the Breastfeeding Peer support service across South Ayrshire. It is recognised that there is still work to do to improve breastfeeding duration and drop off rates which will be taken forward during 2023-24.

Looked After Children (LAC)

Children's Health services within the Partnership are actively involved with the NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting taskforce and leading improvement work to support the health needs of care experienced children and young people across South Ayrshire. Lead by South Ayrshire.

Vaccine and Immunisation

Commitment to support delivery of the national Children's Pre-5 immunisation has been demonstrated with the continued high immunisation rates above the national average, and local delivery of the children's flu programme in local communities during 2022/23. Support has been strengthened with the introduction of a Children's Immunisation Coordinator post within the service. The need to improve access for targeted groups and immunisation rates for SIMD areas 1- 3 has been identified, with improvement work planned to test a revised model of service delivery in community settings where rates are lower than the South Ayrshire average. Quarterly reviews

of immunisation uptake are undertaken and monitored through the Children's Immunisation Group.

School Nursing

Investment during 2022/23 has led to an increase of nurses with the Specialist Community Public Health qualification within the service. This has supported the commitment to deliver on the needs of children and young people across ten priority areas identified by Scottish Government in line with the national School Nursing Pathway (2015), with focussed work underway to support the health and wellbeing needs of children and young people who are Looked After and those within the child protection system, and engagement with families. Targeted support is also provided to children and young people who require support with emotional health and mental wellbeing and the identified health needs of young carers. Improvement work is planned for 2023/24 to improve the sexual health of young people in conjunction with NHS AA Public Health services, and also explore opportunities to provide support across all 10 pathway areas.



Implementation of the Physical Activity Strategy

The Health & Wellbeing team continued to deliver on the priorities within South Ayrshire's Physical Activity and Sport Strategy to promote, engage and empower individuals and communities to play an active role in increasing physical activity levels for children and young people.

- Increasing the number of young people walking, wheeling and cycling across South Ayrshire
- Increasing the number of young people accessing physical activity opportunities in their communities
- Promoting the benefits of an active lifestyle to children and young people within schools and further/higher education settings
- Development of local infrastructure to support physical activity within our communities, and utilising the natural environment to promote physical activity.
- Quality Physical Education will be coordinated, planned and delivered across all primary and secondary schools.
- Physical activity and sport will be embedded in all educational settings promoting pathways to participate, volunteer and officiate in sport.



Participation

56,565* Active Schools free activity sessions (3,083* breakfast, lunchtime and after school clubs) were delivered across schools with 6,267* young people participating. This includes:



**52% male,
48% female**



**840 young people
with additional
support needs**



**105 young people
with care experience**



**503 young people
in receipt of free
school meals**



**539 young people living
in SMID 1 and 2 areas**



**22 registered
young carers**



**141 young people from a
black or minority ethnic
group**

Holiday Programmes

A full programme of free and subsidised activities was delivered over the Easter break including:



18 full day multi-sport camps



2 transition camps



8 diversionary village pop up sessions



Holiday programmes provide young people and their families with sustained activity to support physical and mental wellbeing over the school holiday periods, and to promote social connection and inclusion through sport.

Competition

A full programme of Competitive School Sport events resumed this year following restrictions due to COVID.

31* events took place; 20 primary and 11 secondary) with over 2000* young people taking part; 1717 primary pupils and 323 secondary pupils. The competition programme provides various levels of competition from come and try festivals to regional and national qualifying events. This year the following schools qualified to represent South Ayrshire at a range of high-level events:

- Heathfield PS, National Handball Competition
- Kingcase PS, Regional Tennis Competition
- Forehill PS, National Sports hall Athletics Finals
- Heathfield PS, National Primary Team Gymnastics Competition
- Queen Margaret Academy, National Secondary Team Gymnastics Competition

*Data includes term 1 and 2 figures from 22/23. Full year data available from July 2023.



People: Developing Young Workforce

Our newly developed Leadership Academy provides opportunity for young people in secondary schools to learn coaching and leadership skills, and gain a range of valuable sport-related qualifications. During 22/23 164 young leaders were selected to take part in the Active Schools Leadership Academy across all 8 secondary schools achieving 787* qualifications (14 different qualifications) and taking part in a range of non-accredited workshops. Over 1100 Primary 7 pupils also took part in our Junior Coaching Academy providing them with skills and experiences to lead sports clubs within their primary school setting and also creating pathways to opportunities available once they transition to secondary schools.

*Data includes term 1 and 2 figures from 22/23. Full year data available from July 2023.



Outdoor Learning

A wide range of outdoor learning opportunities take place within the Dolphin House and within communities across South Ayrshire. This year has seen an increase in the number of schools and young people who have been able to access our Outdoor Learning residential programme and day visit/outreach programmes as below:

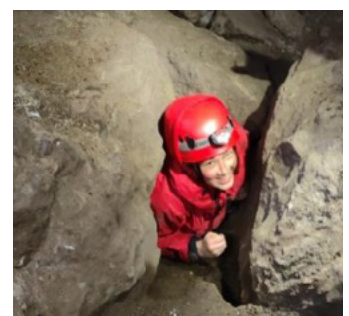
Residential programme

- 24 primary schools accessed the centre with 885 pupils participating
- 8 secondary schools took part in 19 different programmes
- 4 ASN schools/bases took part in 6 different programmes
- 6 different mixed groups took part in 8 different programmes including; Champions Board, Virtual HT group, Ayr North nurture group, Young Carers group and the Youth Voice group.

Day Visit/Outreach programme

31 different groups participated in 65 different outreach and day visit opportunities.

Groups included; Newton PS parent and child group, Girvan Young Carers, Ukrainian family group, Barassie STEM group, SASKA, Young Carers groups and the National 4 support group.





The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a unique programme empowering young people to learn new skills, overcome obstacles, and build confidence and resilience. This year we have worked with schools to support over 600 young people to sign up and work towards achieving their bronze, silver or gold award. 17% of those signing up qualify for support as part of the disadvantaged award programme and are giving additional support and resources to complete.



Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT+)



The local authority continues to support young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). The Local Authority, Education Services and Community Learning Development (CLD) all successfully achieved the Youth Scotland LGBT service charter.

A jointly funded LGBT youth worker between CLD and Education actively provides direct support to the LGBT community. Seven of the eight secondary schools have prioritised Gender and Sexual Orientation Alliance (GSA) groups. Support continued virtually during the pandemic.

From 2022 the Education focus of the LGBT development officer has been to support five of our secondary schools to gain their LGBT schools charter. Prestwick and Girvan Academies have already achieved their silver charter.

All five schools have made some progress including staff training, pupil-led campaigns, and development of anti-bullying policies.

Many of our primary schools continue to deliver age appropriate education and support to both children and families.

In September 2022 Thriving Communities worked with members of the South Ayrshire Youth Forum (SAYF) to plan and lead South Ayrshire's first ever dedicated Young Person's Pride.

LGBT Youth Scotland research shows a reduction of LGBT+ young people feeling safe within their communities and that Pride events and visible displays of ally ship (flags/certificates/inclusivity statements) in public spaces make them feel safe and included. Therefore, this event was requested by local young people to experience their own version of Pride within their local community and meet others and find out about local support available.

SAYF were successful with funding from Police Scotland, and Police Campus Officers and Police Scotland Youth Volunteers came along to help on the night.

There was a range of organisations coming together to support the event, ranging from local teachers/school councillors, LGBT Youth Scotland, Terrance Higgins Trust, Ayrshire College, Thriving Communities, Barnardo's, LEAP Sports.

Local businesses showed their support by displaying flags and Renaldo's kindly offered ice creams and Harley's Ayr prepared an 18's areas with popcorn and soft drinks for the after party.

There was a great atmosphere, and prior to the walk opportunities for face painting and t-shirt design and flags and leaflets were provided for all participants.

There were a total of 90 people attending ranging from young people aged 13 to 25 years to families and their dogs. Due to the success there is a hope of many more youth led celebration events.

"Well done to SAYF Young people for Pride, it was so great to see so MANY people especially young people out in support especially in the awful rain – showed real buy in and support. There was a great vibe on the night which made the wild weather bearable which was magical."

Julie-Ann Lyons Youth Work Manager South LGBT Youth Scotland

"I am really excited and impressed by all the fantastic young people and friends who have come together to show their support for Ayr's first ever pride march. A massive applause to everyone who came, you are all stars."

David Bingham, Co-Chair Pan Ayrshire LGBT Development Group and Scotland Health Promotion Manager Terrence Higgins Trust Scotland

"Made me and all of my friends feel at home and felt like we could just be ourselves"

Ellie 13

"This event says in the name 'Pride' and that is it about being proud of who you are"

Elliot Bisland Ayr MSYP

Outcome 5:

Children's Rights

Programme of work to deliver the outcomes set out in Children's Service Plan 2020-23

- Provide advocacy for children and young people who are care experienced and extend the opportunities for the voice of young people to be heard and inform service delivery
- Continue to increase the number of schools with Rights Respecting School status
- Develop processes that allow in developing individual, school, service and community plans and contribute to service improvement
- Support all young people to achieve and sustain positive destinations
- Increase number of young people successfully engaged in the democratic process
Listening to children and young people's views and taking account of their views on issues that affect them - through the use of youth voice structures such as South Ayrshire Youth Forum / Member of Scottish Youth Parliament
- Develop and deliver training that supports Article 12 of UNCRC
- Increase the number of children and young people participating in and influencing arts and cultural activities



Advocacy for Children and Young People

Advocacy for young people with care experience, those attending Children's hearings or who are part of the child protection process is delivered by two commissioned services these are Who Cares? Scotland and Barnardo's Hear 4.

South Ayrshires advocacy provision for children and young people with care experience is monitored through the SAHSCP commissioning framework with quarterly progress reports provided. In addition, all young people currently looked after aged 5 years and over who have an upcoming Children's Hearing or looked After Review are now offered advocacy support. This happens through monthly meetings between both advocacy providers and the Corporate Parenting Lead Officer.

The process is reviewed on a six-monthly basis with South Ayrshires Quality Assurance Reviewing Officers and the Service Manager for Children's Health Care and Justice Services.

South Ayrshire champions board conducted consultation with young people who use advocacy across South Ayrshire to inform service delivery going forward.

The young people who took part spoke of the relationship they have with their advocate. While this relationship often centred around the advocacy task young people told us that they felt that their

advocate was a support for them in everyday life beyond any formal meetings. Young people valued the length of relationship they'd had with their advocate and there was sense that this relationship 'stayed' with the young people we spoke to irrespective of how many times they moved

in care or where they moved to. This felt unusual to young people, and they saw this as a huge positive in their life.



“She would phone me, or I'd phone her, and we'd speak about things like how I was feeling, she helped me a lot, she helped me get more confident at talking in meetings and it made me feel better”

“There was a time where I was feeling quite worried and she suggested we make a worry box of things that help keep me calm and feel safe, this helped a lot”

“Advocacy's not just about meetings like reviews and hearings it's about helping me make good decisions in my everyday life. I'd still be in sticky situations if I didn't have [name of advocate] to help me.”

Rights Respecting Schools



Despite the pandemic our schools continued with their rights journey.

Our secondary schools have made this a priority for 2022-23.

All of our schools are involved and we have an amazing 15 schools who

have achieved the highest award-Gold. 11 of these have had their Gold Award re-accredited showing their long-term commitment to the rights of children. We have a further 28 schools who have achieved silver.



Children and Young People play an active role in contributing to improvement

Education- the National Discussion

A South Ayrshire/Education Scotland Event took place on 1st December 2022 at County Buildings.

It involved Education Services, Thriving Communities and CLD.

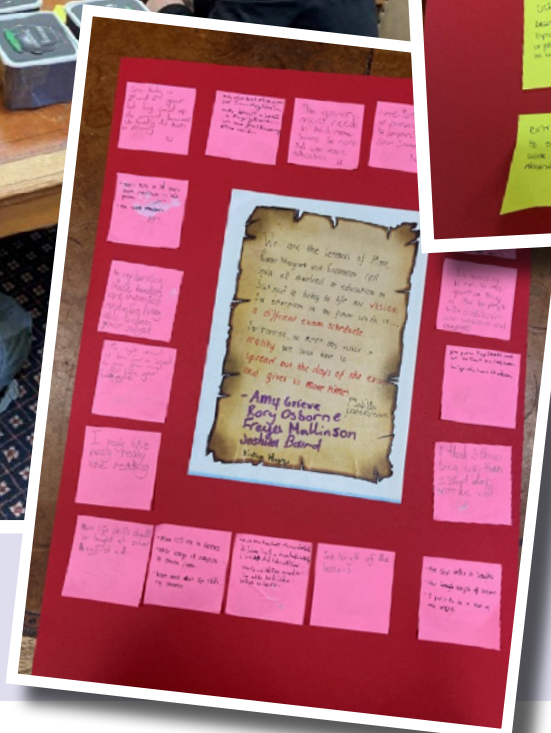
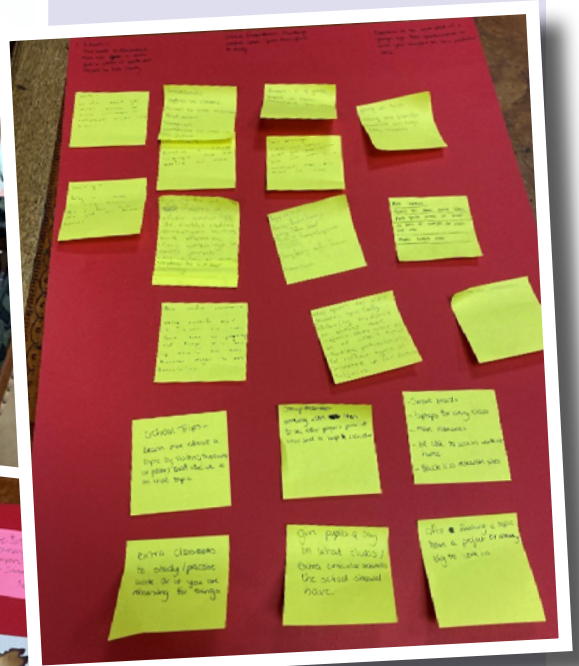
3 Secondary schools, Queen Margaret, Prestwick and Marr and 3 Primary schools, Ayr Grammar, Tarbolton and Ballantrae took part.

They were asked several questions including:

What kind of education will be needed by children and young people in Scotland in the future and how do we make that a reality?

How can we ensure that everyone involved in education in Scotland has a say in future decisions and actions?

All information gathered was be shared with Education Scotland.



Positive Destinations

In February 2023 Scottish Government published figures on the percentage of school leavers (June 2022) who moved on to a positive post-school destination. In South Ayrshire, 98.6% of school leavers progressed from school into a positive destination. This is in line with the figure from February 2022 and sees South Ayrshire placed 2nd of the 32 local authority areas. 100% of care experienced young people and 99 % of young people living in the most deprived areas progressed to positive destinations.

Young people successfully engaged in the democratic process

The Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) is the democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people. Around 160 young people aged 14 – 25 are elected every two years to represent every part of Scotland and campaign for positive change.

A total of seven young people from South Ayrshire stood as candidates for the 2021 Scottish Youth Parliament Elections. Candidates stated that it was important to have their voice heard on a local and national level and that throughout the campaigning and training process they increased confidence and communication skills.

In November 2021, 1700 young people aged 12 to 25 years across South Ayrshire participated in the democratic online Single Transferable Vote, having a say on their preferred MSYP. The elected MSYP's were announced at a small Celebration Event at the Ayr Town Hall with around 40 people attending.



The three successful candidates Elliot Bisland and Monty Saunders for Ayr and RJ McKell for Carrick Cumnock Doon Valley have taken part in a range of SYP training, met with Elected Members, supported various local events and participated with online and in person sittings across Scotland, including one of the sittings within the Scottish Parliament. The local issues they have worked towards are rural transport, UNCRC, Mental Health Wellbeing support and LGBT, and participated in National Campaigns such as The Right to Food, Climate Crisis and Education Attainment.



Registration for the 2023 Elections is now open and promoted across South Ayrshire Schools and Youth Organisations.

Tour of Parliament and FMQ

In April 2023 a total of twenty young people had the opportunity to visit the Scottish Parliament, observe the First Minister Questioning, and meet with local MSP Siobhan Brown. Young people represented a wide range of Youth Voice Groups such as North Carrick Youth Voice, Young Carers, Champions for Change and Queen Margaret Academy Rights Committee. This was a new experience for many, a chance to see democracy in action and to witness first-hand the power of speaking up and being heard. Young people listened to debates around poverty, misogyny and tackling youth violence. Young people also recorded their Rights Respecting School Award evidence with the backdrop of the Parliament.



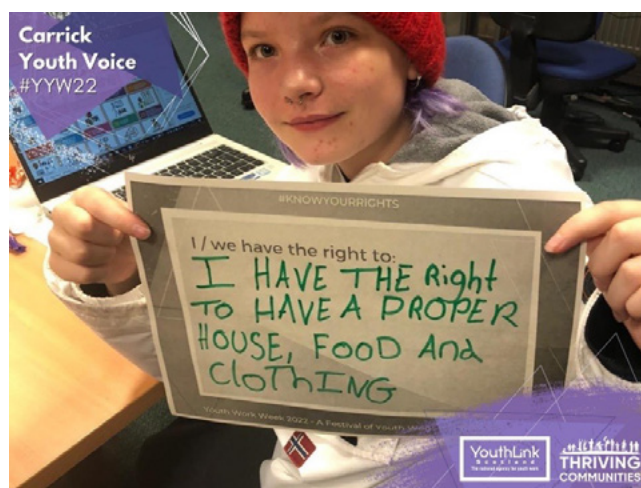
“This was an unforgettable experience to see key decisions taking place and it was great to meet other young people from other Schools and groups”

QMA pupil

Listening to children and young people’s views

UNCRC Article 13, states “I have the right to find out and share information” therefore South Ayrshire Youth Forum created the “Have your Say Survey” to find out the best way to communicate and share information with young people. A total of 300 young people aged 12 to 25 years across South Ayrshire completed the survey.

Young people reported that the best way to share their views and communicate was via School, Youth Groups, online survey’s and social media. The survey also highlighted the need for increased opportunities to have a say and awareness of UNCRC. Therefore, various youth voice events have taken place such Youth Voice Residential, Question Time, the National Discussion, and a Youth Voice Events Planning Group is now in place. There are key developments with communicating to young people via social media, UNCRC video scribes were created and piloted, young people took part in an online Youth Participation Budget Vote to have a say on 2023 Youth Summer Festival and two locality youth voice groups are now in place within the Carrick area.



Question Time

Young people from South Ayrshire Youth Forum, North Carrick Youth Voice and Youth Worker Modern Apprentices planned, delivered and hosted Question Time event with Elected Members. They created questionnaires for young people to direct questions directed to the Leader, Deputy Leader, Director Education, Thriving Communities Service Lead and Health Social Care Head of Children Health, Care and Justice Service on issues they feel effect young people. Young people reported that the event was informative, they felt listened to and it was great opportunity to engage with Elected Members in a natural setting and meet other young people. A total of 37 questions submitted were and key actions discussed have been shared with a range of services and developments made to address key issues around Mental Health and Wellbeing, Community Safety, Education and Cost of Living.



North Carrick Youth Voice

They local youth voice group was a request from young people via detached youth work, the group meet weekly and young people have had a say the design and equipment for local skate park within Maybole. Seven young people lead a consultation with over 200 young people from Carrick Academy and Queen Margaret Academy.

“We get to choose and have a say in what we do. We are improving the skate park, and we get to lead on it, we came up with the questionnaire ourselves and consulted with young people on it”

North Carrick Youth Voice member



UNCRC-training

UNCRC – Progress Report

In 2021, led by the Health & Social Care Partnership, we established the UNCRC Action Group, tasked to create a South Ayrshire Vision Statement and Framework to ensure children's rights are reflected in all our policies and procedures. 7 young people from the South Ayrshire Youth Forum (SAYF) were part of the team that created the Vision Statement.

A subgroup was established, consisting of key frontline staff, a member of SAYF as well as one of our elected members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (Ayr MSYP). This subgroup was initially tasked to develop a consultation lesson plan to support young people to have a say on the UNCRC framework. In addition, we also created informative video scribes.

A total of 30 young people took part in the pilot consultation lesson plan. A further

Youth Survey took place with 300 young people aged 12 to 21 years responding and 53% stated they understood the UNCRC and 47% said they did not. The results and discussion of the actions of the consultation and survey took place with 15 young people at a Youth Voice Survey.

In addition to the consultation, the action group have delivered various workshops raising awareness of the UNCRC within CLD youth groups with a total of 57 young people. In addition, a Mental Health Charter created by SAYF and CLD, which has a specific principle focused on rights, has been delivered to 160 young people. In summary, in 2022 a total of 269 young people have taken part in Thriving Communities group work discussions around the UNCRC and an additional 300 young people took part in a survey around Youth Voice and the UNCRC.

As of August 2022, South Ayrshire Council appointed a Children's Development Officer 0.4. This is a seconded position for 1 year at the moment. The role of the Development Officer (DO) is to support schools across the authority on their Rights Respecting Schools Accreditation journey. This has included offering bespoke training for school staff based on context and need. The DO has also delivered training across the authority to early years staff and is planning further inputs sector wide.

In conjunction with Education Scotland three professional learning sessions for practitioners and leads in all sectors were offered to develop their understanding of the UNCRC and what this means in terms of policy and practice. These sessions supported all schools on their Rights Respecting Schools journey.

Aims of professional learning were:

- To raise practitioner awareness and understanding of the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

- To link rights-based practice to the Scottish legislation and policy context.
- To enable the support of rights-based practice across our schools and other organisations.
- To ensure we fully take the UNCRC into account in all our actions.



Increasing the number of children and young people participating in and influencing arts and cultural activities.

Instrumental Tuition

Free instrumental tuition is offered to young people in P4-S6 across all primary and secondary schools in strings, woodwind, brass, percussion, voice, guitar and highland bagpipe. All instruments and resources are provided free of charge and 1,381 are learning in 2022-23.

Further development is supported through our authority groups which rehearse after school and in the evening. These free activities give young people opportunities to experience the enrichment of live performance and to participate in cultural activities. In 2022-23 these included: Junior String Orchestra, Senior String Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonia, Cello Army, Junior Concert Band, Senior Concert Band, Big Band, Percussion Ensembles and Pipe Band and over 400 young people took part in rehearsals and concerts.



Collaboration with the Benedetti Foundation enabled over 500 primary children to take part in music workshops and a Senior String Residency involved 50 senior players. In partnership with Ayr Arts Guild, over 200 children and families attend concerts by BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra of Scottish Opera in Ayr Town Hall.





Youth Music Initiative (YMI)

This year 2,500 children have taken part in class music-making projects funded by Creative Scotland. Projects take place in all primary and ASN schools. These experiences help children develop musical skill, and they have told us that participating makes them feel “part of the team, successful, more confident excited and happy”. 10 primary schools have achieved the We Make Music Digital Award.



Creative Learning Network

In 2022-23, 38 primary children took part in a film-making project exploring aspiration and dreams for the future. The CLN is funded by Creative Scotland and Education Scotland.

82 children with additional support needs took part in our partnership project with Live Music Now Scotland funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Children are collaborating with musicians and teachers to explore a range of themes using these to inspire creativity and group music-making.

Little Stars Light Up Ayr – Christmas Lights Switch on Ayr 2022

The 2022 Ayr Christmas Lights switch-on focused on engaging children in different performance and cultural activities. This included South Ayrshire School pupils from Queen Margaret, Carrick, Sacred Heart, Wellington, Southcraig, Newton, Kirkmichael, Straiton, Grammar and Heathfield performing on the Wallace town stage. The performances also included the musical talents of the Ayrshire Fiddle Orchestra, RDA Singers, Caitlin Rennie, Katee Kross and the Future Stars of Hipshot Youth Theatre, as well as our local dance schools who also performed, showcasing a variety of styles with dancers aged 2 to 22 years old.



The Grain Exchange and Cutty Sark

The cultural and market venue in the High Street hosted several school choirs to perform over the festive period. It also hosted Jubilee and Coronation arts and crafts activities for children.

The opening day of the Cutty Sark centre delivered a family fun day element. Weaving together activities that would attract family audiences, like face painting and magic, and combining that with music, poetry, live art and spoken word performances.



The Holy Fair and Piped in the Park 2022

The Holy Fair plays host to several children focussed events, including:

- The Children's Dog Show
- Local dance schools' performances
- And a Highland dance competition.

The 2023 Holy Fair had a Children's zone with Book Bug and arts and crafts activities.

Museum & Galleries

For the Henry Moore exhibition in the summer 2022, we brought a class of primary 5's from Girvan to Rozelle to spend the day engaging with the Art and outdoor space. This activity was deliverable because we used external Museum and Galleries Scotland funding to pay for transport to and from Girvan.

We also had visits from Alloway Early Years and Queen Margaret Academy for the same exhibition.



Libraries

Alongside Bookbug and encouraging school and family visits, South Ayrshire Libraries hold various events that attract and engage children in all sorts of cultural and artistic activities. More recent activities include:

- Children's Crafts - these are often themed around specific dates or activities.
- The Girvan Library Young Artist Competition – Girvan Art Festival
- Coding Club
- Win a Book for World Book Day -Drawing Competition
- Halloween Story Time with local Children's author Greta Yorke

This information can be made available, on request, in braille, large print or audio formats and can be translated into a range of languages. Contact details are provided below.

درخواست کرنے پر یہ معلومات ناپینا افراد کے لئے ابھرے حروف، بڑے حروف یا آڈیو میں مہیا کی جاسکتی ہے اور اسکا مختلف زبانوں میں ترجمہ بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ رابطہ کی تفصیلات نیچے فراہم کی گئی ہیں۔

本信息可应要求提供盲文，大字印刷或音频格式，以及可翻译成多种语言。以下是详细联系方式。

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ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਬੋਲ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਣਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਰਪ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਲਈ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ, ਅਤੇ ਇਹਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਹੋਰ ਬੋਲੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ।

Niniejsze informacje mogą zostać udostępnione na życzenie, w alfabecie Braille'a, w druku powiększonym lub w formie audio oraz mogą zostać przetłumaczone na wiele języków obcych. Dane kontaktowe znajdują się poniżej.

Faodar am fiosrachadh seo fhaighinn, le iarrtas, ann am braille, clò mòr no clàr fuaim agus tha e comasach eadar-theangachadh gu grunn chànanan. Tha fiosrachadh gu h-ìosal mu bhith a' cur fios a-steach.

South Ayrshire Council
Contact Centre
0300123 0900

