

SOUTH AYRSHIRE'S

Parenting Promise

2021-2030



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Foreword

In South Ayrshire we want the very best for all the children and young people in our care. We want them to know that they are important, loved and respected, we want them to feel happy, healthy and supported to be the very best they can be.

When a child comes into our care, we become their ‘corporate parent’ this means that we should know what is important to them, including understanding the relationships that matter most in their lives.

Now, more than ever, we have an opportunity to make the changes we need to make for our children and young people and their families. The work of [The Promise](#) and [Plan 21-24](#) tells us that children staying where they feel loved and are safe must become the standard, while the ways in which families are supported, and children are cared for, is changed.

All of those involved in developing this plan have committed to listening, collaborating and taking action. Collectively we have a critical role to play in achieving the changes we need to make across our communities. By nurturing the hopes and dreams of our children and their families we create a stronger South Ayrshire for us all.

Councillor Peter Henderson
Chair of South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership





What does South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise mean for you?

If you are care experienced South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise is for you. In this plan, we will let you know what you can expect of us as your corporate parents.

The plan will have an action plan which will show you all of the things we are doing in South Ayrshire to make sure that we:

- ♥ Look out for you
- ♥ Understand what's important to you and make sure others know this too
- ♥ Provide you with opportunities to take part in activities that help you feel good.
- ♥ Make sure you get the right support at the right time for you

'Care-experienced' refers to anyone who is currently in care, or anyone who is from a looked-after background or who has been in care at any stage in their life, no matter how short, including adopted children who were previously looked-after by a local authority.

(Scottish Funding Council 2018)

Who are we?

It is important to us that South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise shows how committed we are in South Ayrshire to working together to **#KeepThePromise** to all the children and families that we work with and for.

We have brought together different corporate parents from across South Ayrshire to write the plan. They were also joined by some of our Champions Board representatives who have used their lived experience of care to help us understand what's working well in South Ayrshire and what we need to change.

Corporate parents are 'agencies and organisations of the state' who have statutory duties to collaborate with each other in upholding the rights and securing the wellbeing of 'looked after children'.

We are all real people working together and trying our very best to use the skills and experience we have to make South Ayrshire the best place it can be for children, young people and their families. It matters to us that you get the very best chance to grow up loved, safe, and respected to be the very best you can be.



Here is an introduction to some of our writing group and the services they work for:



Liz: I am a Service Manager in Children's Health, Care and Justice services in South Ayrshire. For me what's important is relationships, engagement, honesty and respect. I think I'm good at listening to what people say. I'm honest and I say things as they are, I don't sugar coat it and I'm quite happy to share bits of myself if it's the right thing and the right time. I also don't ever see myself as better than anyone I'm working with.



Dave: I am a Team Leader in Children and Families Social Work. I'm probably best at forming and maintaining relationships. I think I'm respectful and always take a rights-based view of each family I work with.



Laura: I work as a Supervising Social Worker in the Family Placement Team. I think that I have a calming nature and have developed a skill in ensuring my outward presentation remains calm in a crisis. I have found this very useful throughout my social work career. On a personal note I am good at sewing and being organised, going camping does include the kitchen sink!

Catriona: I am a social worker in the Children with Disabilities Team. I think I'm good at forming good relationships. I work with children for a long time, so we get to know them and fight for their corner. I think this is what I'd do for my own kids therefore that's what I do for them. Yes, I'll have sleepless nights but there's nothing better than watching something come true for somebody.



Fiona: I think that I'm good at building relationships with most people – I'm relatable because I'm quite down to earth and I try really hard to see what young people want rather than what services they need. I am the Quality Assurance Review Officer. This is a fancy title but simply put it is my job to review your plan. This involves bringing together all the people who are important to you. I listen to everyone and hear from them what is working well and what they think could help you and your family. Sometimes I may have to make difficult decisions and when this happens I will always focus on what keeps you safe. I will always make sure I explain these decisions to you and your family.



Ryan: I work as a Community Learning and Development Officer. I enjoy problem solving. I'm pragmatic and this helps me to develop relationships that are nurturing. I think that I'm good at communicating and I'm adaptable.

We deliver programmes that allow you to develop new skills and realise skills you maybe didn't know you already had. We develop our programmes for communities, with communities, as we recognise that you are the experts regarding the decisions that affect your own lives.

Jane: Hi! I am the Looked After and Accommodated Nurse and my role aims to support the Health and Social Care Partnership in meeting the health needs of all care experienced children and young people by contributing to the child's plan.

I will also be able to see you every year to review your health or more often if you wish - the choice is always yours! I always enjoy catching up with you and to hear what is going on in your life! I am also available to talk to your carers for any health advice and support they may need so that they have a better understanding of any health issues you may have and they will then be able to help you too.





Colette: I feel I can understand a lot of the young people through my own experiences. I feel like that has helped me and pushed me towards wanting to work in this role.

If you are between the age of 16 – 25 years and are care experienced extra support is available with Employability and Skills to help you into employment, training or further education.

Emma: I work as a Policy Officer in South Ayrshire Housing Services. I feel that I am a good communicator. I am able to listen and take on board different information and opinions and then share this in the best possible way to try and get the best outcomes for people. I am part of the Corporate and Housing Policy team who work with Housing Services and other partners to ensure that we can provide improved housing outcomes for young people and support them to live within our communities.



Kimberley: My job is Virtual School Head Teacher. I think I'm good at caring about the children and young people I work with. I care about being there for them regardless of awkward situations or difficult meetings.

In South Ayrshire we have recently implemented a Virtual School, comprising of a Head Teacher and four Welfare Officers. If you receive support from the Virtual School you will most likely work with a Welfare Officer who will support you and your family in many different ways. We make sure that you are receiving as much support at school as possible to achieve and improve your educational outcomes, giving you the best opportunities in life for moving on from school.

Kirsty: I work with the Health and Wellbeing team across schools and communities in South Ayrshire. I think we're good at building relationships with young people through sport and physical activity, and building their confidence, resilience and other life skills through active experiences.





Faith: I work as a Participation Assistant with the Champions Board. I care very deeply about the equality between human beings regardless of class, ability, age, skin colour, sexual orientation, faith, or gender.

I am very passionate about justice and doing the right thing. I care deeply that people are treated fairly, equally, and above all else, kindly in this world. I believe that I am a very smart and caring individual. I am good at tapping into people's emotions and recognising there is a problem and/or issue. I'm a real problem solver and try to think as logically as possible about how to reach the best outcome for whatever that scenario may be. I am also a very caring and compassionate person, and deeply want others to feel happy, fulfilled, and loved in their life.

I believe the best corporate parents are those who hold love at the front of their hearts. You must be a caring and kind individual, who is also determined to fight and make positive change for young people in this world. Most importantly you must be selfless and caring, and care for them as if they were your own child. **The best corporate parent, is a kind one.**

Taylor: I work as a Participation Assistant with the Champions Board. I am also a Modern Apprentice in South Ayrshire. I think the fact I have been in care myself motivates me to do my job and support young people to change the failures in the care system. I am good at listening and taking on board what others are saying and find solutions to problems if and when they occur. I am always here to listen and support young people and can relate to some of their problems.



Dawn: My job is Corporate Parenting Lead Officer for South Ayrshire and as part of this role I get to see what everyone's doing to support care experienced young people and I also manage the Champions Board team which I love. I think that I have a kind heart, I care about things being good and fair, I support young people well and I think that I also listen well. I hope I don't patronise because it really bothers me when others patronise me. I think it's important to be honest and genuine.

Champions for Change, South Ayrshire Champions Board, provides a platform for young people with care experience to speak directly to elected members and service providers about the things that are important to them. We support young people to get their points across and influence positive changes in the care system. We employ young people with care experience in our team and encourage people with care experience to be Modern Apprentices within the team too. We believe that the best way to learn how to do things better is to listen to those who have lived experience of care. We are defenders of rights and care deeply about genuine relationships being formed between young people, staff, and Corporate Parents and believe that we should work with and for young people to call out the stigma still faced by many. You can join us if you've been in care at any point in your life that includes kinship care, looked after at home and adopted. We run groups and events and prefer conversations to consultations. Here is a link to our [Facebook page](#)



Danielle: Hi! I'm Danielle. I work as a Planning and Performance Coordinator for South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). I think I'm good at raising the profile of corporate parenting through our governance processes as I'm always promoting this to ensure it goes to the right places and managers too. I believe this will improve outcomes for young people and families.

The Planning and Performance Team work in the background to support services to develop strategies, update policies and procedures, monitor how services are performing and support the governance processes of the HSCP to make sure things are done right.



Brenda: I am a Team Leader in Justice Services. Within my role, I really care about what impact being involved with Justice services can have on people as individuals and their families. I am committed to supporting people to get their lives back on track and to reach their full potential at times when they have made mistakes.

Linda: I am the Strategic Lead for Representation at Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA) and I believe that a good corporate parent should have the same aspirations for a care experienced child or young person as a good parent would have for their own child. I aspire to always work with integrity, compassion and respect for others, building relationships and having impact is why I love the job that I do.



Here are some of the other services that we think it's important to tell you about:

Police Scotland

Police Scotland is committed to supporting young people within our local communities. We recognise our duties as a corporate parent and we continually look at ways to interact with care experienced young people. Within South Ayrshire all Children's Houses have been allocated an officer to act as a single point of contact (SPOC). This officer is the point of contact for the young people and staff within each children's house. They will provide support and advice and look to develop working relationships. Also, all secondary schools and feeder primary schools in South Ayrshire have a Campus Police Officer. Campus Officers hold a unique and important role, working alongside partner agencies to break down barriers with young people and promote positive life choices. Police Scotland continues to work alongside other corporate parents in order to strive to improve life chances for all our young people.

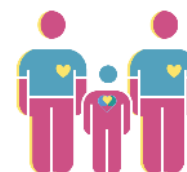
Scottish Fire and Rescue

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is a Corporate Parent who offers a range of opportunities for children and young people across Ayrshire to connect with the service at a local community level. The Fireskills program is designed for children and young people to educate, explore and understand the risks associated with fire. The Youth Volunteer scheme supports young people over three academic years to contribute to their local communities and offers opportunities

to experience a working fire station and gain skills. SFRS has become the first emergency service organisation to sign up to school-based mentoring charity MCR Pathways where fire service employees as mentors, use their experience to help young people realise their full potential. Career Ready mentoring by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, supports young people's transition into employment.

Children's Houses

Our Children's Houses at Cunningham Place and Sundrum View offer 13 young people a loving and caring home when they are unable to stay with parents or carers. Our houses provide a warm welcome and nurturing place for young people to help stay safe, reach their goals and be the best they can be. It is important to us that our children's houses reflect the children and young people who live there and that they are fully involved in decision making about their house and their future. It is also important to us that we help strengthen family relationships and support children and young people to remain at home or return home to their families where this is possible. We also help young people prepare for the time when they feel ready to move their own place. Maintaining contact is important to us, we want to share and celebrate in our young people's success stories and help them when they need us, as they move through adolescence into young adulthood and their first homes.



Young Person's Support and Transitions Team

The Young People's Support and Transition Team will direct its focus towards three areas of practice:

- Vulnerable Young People
- Youth Justice
- Throughcare and Aftercare

The Team works with young people who are placing themselves at risk of significant harm. The team also support young asylum seekers.

Intervention also focus on young people who are involved in offending behaviour and who are at risk of Secure Care. The team also provide Court Services to young people under the age of 18 years.

The Team take support all young people who are in residential care / outwith authority provision and foster care with a focus on engaging young people in their My Future/My Plan and preparing them for the time they are no longer in

care. The team take on care planning responsibility for young people looking to remain in care on a Continuing Care Basis. Young people can self-refer to the Team up to the age of 26 years to receive Throughcare/Aftercare Services.

As well as the services that members of our writing group work for there are also many other services that make up South Ayrshire Council and Health and Social Care Partnership and everyone who works for these organisations is a corporate parent. We all have a responsibility to look out for you, understand what's important to you and make sure you can access the services that you need when you need them. We all need to know how to uphold your rights and help you feel secure and happy.



Key points

- Corporate parents are 'agencies and organisations of the state' who have statutory duties to collaborate with each other in upholding the rights and securing the wellbeing of 'looked after children'.
- The group who developed South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise was made up of lots of representatives from different services and organisations including Social Work, Education, Health, Housing, Employability and Skills, Champions Board, Planning, Third Sector and Police Scotland.
- Other services that would be useful for you to know about are the Children's Houses and the Young Person's Support and Transitions Team.



Why have we developed South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise?

In 2015, the Scottish Government defined Corporate Parenting as:

'An organisation's performance of actions necessary to uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of a looked after child or care leaver, and through which physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational development is promoted.'

As Corporate Parents, under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, it is our role to make sure that our attention and resources are focused on upholding the rights, safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of South Ayrshire's 'looked after children' and 'care leavers.'

Scotland calls the children in its 'care system' **'looked after children.'**

A **care leaver** is a young person who ceased to be looked after on, or at any time after, their sixteenth birthday

The 2014 Act places six duties on us as a Corporate Parent to:

- ♥ Be alert to matters which might adversely affect the wellbeing of 'looked after children and young people'
- ♥ Assess the needs of 'looked after children and young people' for the services and support we provide
- ♥ Promote the interests of 'looked after children and young people'
- ♥ Provide opportunities for 'looked after children and young people' to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing
- ♥ Take appropriate action to ensure 'looked after children and young people' access these opportunities and make use of our services and support
- ♥ Take any other action appropriate to improve our functions to meet the needs of 'looked after children and young people.'

These corporate parenting duties apply equally to all 'looked after children' and 'care leavers'. Also, these duties are not the responsibility of an individual or service and should be delivered jointly as a Community Planning Partnership, embedded into the way we all work together.



The Promise

On 5 February 2020, the [Care Review published seven reports](#), with [‘The Promise’](#) narrating a vision for Scotland, built on five foundations. With cross-party support and broad commitment to **#KeepThePromise**, Scotland, its statutory agencies, local authorities, third sector and thousands of children and families knew that much needed to change to make sure that all Scotland’s children grow up **“loved, safe and respected so they can fulfil their potential.”** The [five foundations](#) which underpin The Promise are:



Children must be listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care, with all those involved properly listening and responding to what children want and need. There must be a compassionate, caring, decision-making culture focused on children and those they trust.



The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to listen and be compassionate in their decision-making and care.



Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties that get in the way.



Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.



Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.



The Promise foundations gave a clear and simple starting point: where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together, to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties they encounter.

The Promise states that children staying where they feel loved and are safe must become the standard while the ways in which families are supported, and children are cared for, is put right. Only once this option has been exhausted can it be determined that it is not possible for children to live with their families. If this is determined, it must be done in a time frame which meets children’s needs for safe, loving care.

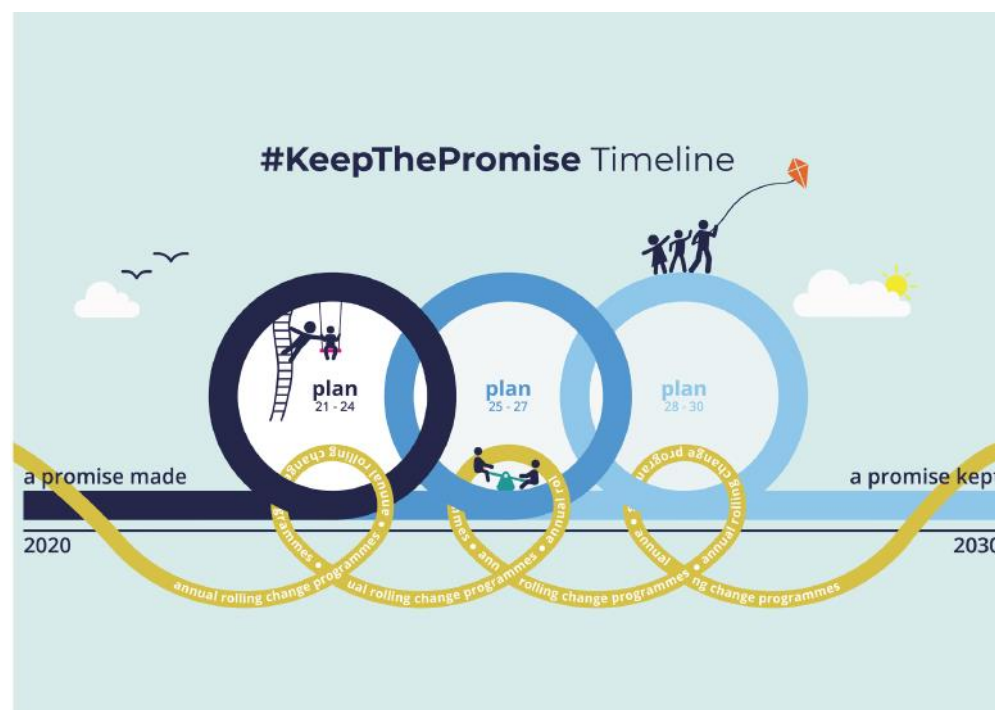
Children must feel they belong in a loving home, stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so, feel loved by their carers or adoptive parents, and be given all the support they need to thrive.

Work to #KeepThePromise between 2021 and 2030 will be shaped by a series of three Plans, each lasting for three years and outlining the priorities and action across that period.

We feel passionate about making sure South Ayrshire can implement The Promise at a local level. South Ayrshire’s Parenting Promise will follow the same timeline as The Promise starting with the [Plan 21-24](#).

Each Plan will build on the progress made by the one before it to make sure transformational change happens across all the Care Review’s conclusions. [Plan 21-24](#) focuses on the period

from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2024. It outlines a set of outcomes that should be concluded by 2024.



The Promise's [Plan 21-24](#) has identified five priority areas for 2021-2024 focus on making significant and substantive changes to the lives of care experienced children, families, and young people:

1. A Good Childhood: Children who have been removed from their family of origin and live in and around the 'care system' will have a good, loving childhood. Ensuring that children in Scotland's 'care system' feel loved, their needs are met, and their rights are upheld is a priority for 21-24. This change is urgent, it must be a focus for all organisations that have responsibility towards care experienced children and young people.

2. Whole Family Support: All families need support at different times of their lives and family support is a crucial emphasis for 21-24. The United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises family as the fundamental group in society and the natural environment for growth and wellbeing. Supporting families is a children's rights imperative.

'Families' means all families including families of origin, kinship, foster and adoptive families. Support will not be predicated on the setting of care. Supporting families to stay together and thrive was an imperative before the pandemic and is of even greater importance now.

3. Planning: There needs be a different approach to investment and planning.

Children and families live in local communities and use local services. It is important that their experiences and outcomes are not determined simply by which local community they live in or local service they use. Planning and investment should be nationally coordinated to ensure that children and families get what they need.

4. Supporting the Workforce: Children experience the 'care system' through people. Support for people who care and continue to care if times get tough, will improve. There will be consistency of approach, values and understanding across Scotland's workforce.

5. Building Capacity: Over the next 3 year, there will be a focus on work that ensures that the structural underpinning of the 'care system' is orientated to the needs of children and families. This work to build capacity and coherence reflects the planned obsolescence of The Promise Scotland. It will not always be there to provide oversight and accountability and the structures need to move to ensure that the scaffolding around the 'care system' facilitates and upholds children's rights.



The fundamentals underpinning the priority areas in the [Plan 21-24](#) are:

♥ **What matters to children and families**

At all stages in the process of change, what matters to children and families must be the focus. Organisations will be able to demonstrate that they are operating from their perspective rather than the perspective internal to the 'system'.

♥ **Listening**

Organisations that have responsibilities towards care experienced children and families, and those on the edge of care will be able to demonstrate that they are embedding what they have heard from children and families into the work that they are doing to #KeepThePromise.

♥ **Poverty**

Scotland will have made consistent improvement in reducing poverty, in line with the definitions and targets in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. Organisations will be able to demonstrate how they are ensuring that they play their part in mitigating the impacts of poverty.

♥ **Children's Rights**

Organisations that have responsibilities towards care experienced children will be able to demonstrate that their rights under the UNCRC are being consistently upheld.

♥ **Language**

Organisations that have responsibilities towards care experienced children and young people will be able to demonstrate that they are embedding destigmatising language and practices across the way they work.

Locally, Community Planning Partners work together to deliver the priorities set out in the [Local Outcomes Improvement Plan](#). A key priority is to 'Improve outcomes for young people who are care experienced and are care leavers.'

The Children's Services Planning Group reports to the Strategic Delivery Partnership Chairs Executive with regular updates provided to the Community Planning Board. The group has developed the [Children's Services Plan 2020-2023](#) and has identified 'Love and Support for our Care Experienced Young People and Young Carers' as a key priority. There is a commitment in our Children's Services Plan to implement 'The Promise.'

We will use South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise to set out our actions to deliver 'The Promise.'



Information about you

We collect lots of information about South Ayrshire's 'looked after children.' A snapshot of this information is taken on 31st July each year.

Social Work

On 31st July 2020, there were 300 'looked after children' in South Ayrshire. The information also told us that 51 'looked after children' have a disability.

We know that most of our 'looked after children' were living with foster carers (125 young people); 60 were living at home with their parents, 74 were living with friends or relatives and 11 were living with people who may go on to adopt them. Some 'looked after children' live in residential accommodation such as our Children's Houses or a residential school. There has been no young people in secure care since May 2019

Employability and Skills

Employability & Skills provided support, in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, to care experienced summer 2020 leavers with 95.7% of leavers progressing to a positive destination.

From August 2020, 95 care experienced young people who are in their senior phase at school have been met by Employability & Skills and Skills Development Scotland to offer early transition support prior to leaving school.

Employability & Skills supported 43 care experienced young people to progress to Ayrshire College in September 2020.

Employability & Skills continued to provide support to these young people and 17 young people withdrew from their course. Officers re-engaged 15 of these young people.

Employability & Skills have been delivering driving theory support, 8 care experienced young people have been participating in the group with the hope to progress driving lessons.

Education

The Virtual School team have directly supported 42 young people. There has been 5 young people supported in returning to South Ayrshire and 3 SAC young people are supported that attend an out-with education provision

42% of young people supported have had Compulsory Supervision Orders terminated since start of work. There has been 5 families returned home to care of parents from foster placements.

There has been 10 young people signed up for Duke of Edinburgh/outdoor activity evening group

Over 80% increase in attendance for looked after at home children between P6 and S2

Housing

There has been 16 young people allocated a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy after leaving care since November 2018.



The number of young people being reviewed by the Youth Housing Support Group (YHSG) - 88 in total (46 were Care Leavers).

During 2019/20, there were 846 Homelessness Applications in South Ayrshire. Of the 846 applications, 28% were from young people/households where the main applicant was aged between 16-25yrs old.

Of the 846 applications 4.7% (40) of applicants declared that they had been looked after as a child by the local authority, 3% less than 5 years ago.

Of the 40 applicants declaring they were previously looked after by the Local Authority 65% (26) were looked after less than 5 years ago.

Of the 40 applicants declaring they were previously looked after by the Local Authority 35% (14) were looked after 5 years ago or more

We know this information does not tell us the full story about what matters to you and your families or what is going on in your lives. The information also doesn't tell us how being in the 'care system' makes you feel. We will make sure that we are collecting broader information on the things that are important to you and how you and are feeling are feeling about what you are experiencing.

Key points

- The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 made it our role to make sure that our attention and resources are focused on upholding your rights, safeguarding and promoting your wellbeing.
- The 2014 Act places six duties on us as Corporate Parents.
- On 5 February 2020, the Care Review published seven reports, with The Promise narrating a vision for Scotland, built on five foundations: Voice, Family, Care, People and Scaffolding.
- Work to #KeepThePromise between 2021 and 2030 will be shaped by a series of three Plans, each lasting for three years and outlining the priorities and action across that period.
- Plan 21-24 focuses on the period from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2024 and has five priority areas: a good childhood, whole family support, planning, supporting the workforce and building capacity. Plan 21-24 is based on five fundamentals: what matters to children and families, listening, poverty, children's rights and language. We will make sure we align with The Promise.
- Our local plans prioritise support and love for you as care experienced young people.
- We collect lots of information about you, but we know it doesn't tell us the full story about your experiences and how they make you feel. We will work to make that better.





What will South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise do?

South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise will focus on the five priority areas set out in The Promise's [Plan 21-24](#):

- a. A good childhood
- b. Whole family support
- c. Supporting the workforce
- d. Building capacity
- e. Planning

A Good Childhood

Children who have been removed from their family of origin and live in and around the 'care system' will have a good, loving childhood.

Ensuring that children in the 'care system' feel loved, their needs are met, and their rights are upheld is a priority for 2021-24.

By 2024:

Support

- Every child that is 'in care' in South Ayrshire will have access to intensive support that ensures your educational and health needs are fully met.
- South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership and South Ayrshire Council will take active responsibility towards you whatever your setting of care, so you have what you need to thrive.

Right to education

- You will receive all you need to thrive at school. There will be no barriers to your engagement with education and schools will know and cherish you.
- Schools will value and recognise the needs of their care experienced pupils with robust tracking of attendance and attainment so that support can be given early.
- You will be actively participating in all subjects and extra-curricular activities in schools.
- The formal and informal exclusion of care experienced children from education will end.
- Schools will support and ensure you go on to genuinely positive destinations, such as further education or employment.



Relationships

- All children living in and around South Ayrshire's 'care system' will be maintaining safe, loving relationships that are important to them.
- There will be no barriers to family time and you will be supported to have time with people they care about.

Brothers and sisters

- South Ayrshire will stop the practice of separating brothers and sisters, unless for reasons of safety.
- Relationships between brothers and sisters will be cherished and protected across decision making and through the culture and values of the people who care for them.

Youth justice

- There will be sufficient community-based alternatives so that detention is a last resort.

Advocacy

- You and your family will have access to independent advocacy at all stages of their experience of care.
- Advocacy provision will follow the principles set out in The Promise.



Moving on

- Decisions about transitions for you as you move onto independent living or need to return to a caring environment, will be made based on individual need.
- You will experience your transition as consistent, caring, integrated and focussed on their needs, not on 'age of services' criteria.
- Housing pathways for care experienced young people will include a range of affordable options that are specifically tailored to their needs and preferences. Youth homelessness in South Ayrshire will be eradicated.

Physical intervention

- You, wherever you live, will be protected from violence and experience the safeguard of equal protection legislation.
- Restraint will always be pain free, will be used rarely, and only when required to keep a child safe.
- There will be well communicated and understood guidance in place that upholds children's rights and reflects equal protection legislation.
- The workforce will feel supported to respond to behaviour in a trauma informed way that reflects a deep understanding of the children in their care.



Whole Family Support

All families need support at different times of their lives and family support is a crucial emphasis for 21-24.

Supporting families is a children's rights imperative. 'Families' means all families including families of origin, kinship, foster and adoptive families. Support will not be predicated on the setting of care.

By 2024:

Family support

- The 10 principles of intensive family support will be embedded into the practice (planning, commissioning and delivery) of all organisations that support children and their families, directly or indirectly.

10 Family Support principles:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ♥ Holistic and relational | ♥ Community-based |
| ♥ Therapeutic | ♥ Responsive and timely |
| ♥ Non-stigmatising | ♥ Work with family assets |
| ♥ Patient and persistent | ♥ Empowerment and agency |
| ♥ Underpinned by children's rights | ♥ Flexible |

Peer and community support:

- There will be a consistent approach to ensure there are places in every community for parents of young children to meet other local parents, to stay and play with their children, and get support and advice.
- We will ensure appropriate support is available for all age groups, all sizes of families and is accessible for families in rural areas.
- We will make sure all services and organisations in South Ayrshire are aware of services available to parents and families.

Service integration:

- South Ayrshire's family support services will feel and be experienced as integrated to those who use them.

Family therapies:

- All families will have direct and clear access to family therapies and specific support across a range of issues, so that accessing support is seen as something that a range of families may need throughout life.



Supporting the Workforce

Children experience the 'care system' through people. Over 2021-24, support for people who care and continue to care if times get tough, will improve. There will be consistency of approach, values and understanding across South Ayrshire's workforce.

By 2024:

Trauma-informed

- South Ayrshire's organisations and services will be able to demonstrate that they are embedding trauma informed practice across their work and within their workforce.

Parenting

- Services and organisations in South Ayrshire will be aware of their corporate parenting duties and opportunities will be available for corporate parents to engage with you.

Support

- People working in South Ayrshire will be encouraged and supported to build meaningful relationships with you and your families.
- South Ayrshire's organisations and services will be able to demonstrate that they are always reflecting and learning from their practice and peers.

Planning

There needs to be a different approach to investment and planning.

Children and families live in local communities and use local services. It is important that their experiences and outcomes are not determined simply by which local community they live in or local service they use.

By 2024:

Planning

- Services in South Ayrshire will explore opportunities for joint commissioning.
- South Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership will identify care experience as a protected characteristic.

Investment

- Investment in the lives of children and families will be considered strategically and holistically in the context of their experiences.

Information sharing

- Organisations, in South Ayrshire, with responsibilities towards you will be confident about when, where, why and how to share information with partners.
- Information sharing will not be a barrier to supporting you and your family.



Building Capacity

Over the next 3 years, there will be a focus on work that ensures that the structural underpinning of the 'care system' is orientated to the needs of children and families.

By 2024:

Policy Coherence

- There will be cohesive alignment in the policy initiatives and frameworks across South Ayrshire. Policy development across South Ayrshire will reflect the realities of people's lives and create a coherent policy environment.

Data mapping and collection

- South Ayrshire will have a cohesive picture of all data on the processes and systems that directly and indirectly impact on you and your family.
- The data picture will have been used to fully align data systems, collection and analysis methodologies to what matters to you and your family, and the needs of those who take decisions on how best to support you.

Governance structures

- The governance landscape around the various Boards, networks and groups that sit around the 'care system' will be rationalised to enable effective and accountable shared working around the lives of children and families.

The **five fundamentals** will form a solid core around which everything operates. The fundamentals will be embedded across the work of South Ayrshire's organisations.

1. What matters to children and families

- We will ensure you and your family contribute to developing and reviewing services.
- Reports will be prepared in plenty of time prior to meetings and will be discussed with you and your family.

2. Listening

- We will ensure you and your family are supported to fully participate in decisions which impact them.
- We will provide platforms for you to influence change.
- We will carry out life story work with you so you have ownership over your own stories and you can understand and influence how your stories are shared.

3. Poverty

- We will ensure South Ayrshire's Child Poverty Action Plan reflects the priorities of South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise.
- We will continue to lobby for access to community-based Wi-Fi.
- Independent advice for energy efficiency and fuel poverty will be easily accessible to all families.
- Housing support and budgeting advice will be available for families who are at risk of or have rent arrears.



- We will support families to maximise their incomes.

4. Children's Rights

- We will take account of the diversity of experiences represented within the 'care community' and careful attention will be paid to the experiences of every child and care experienced adult.
- South Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership will carry out Children's Rights Impact Assessments on all decisions to champion and defend the rights of children.

5. Language

- You will be supported to ensure professionals use the terms, names and words that you prefer, when describing issues that relate to your lives and experiences.
- Information will be written in care-based language to ensure it is easily understood and non-stigmatising to you and your family. For example, we will not describe families using stigmatising language such as vulnerable. We will use language such as under-supported.
- When there are times when statutory language needs to be used, this will be done sparingly and will be explained clearly to you and your family.
- South Ayrshire's organisations will stop using acronyms.

We have a detailed Action Plan which contains all of the actions we will take forward to implement The Promise and Plan 21-24 in South Ayrshire. Some actions will take longer than others to implement than others. There are specific actions which we will need to complete by April 2024 to make sure we are in time with the Plan 21-24. This will be updated and reviewed regularly to make sure we are on track.

Key points

- South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise will focus on the five priority areas set out in The Promise's Plan 21-24. Actions have been identified under each priority area for us to take forward.
- We will also take forward actions to make sure we embed the fundamentals of the Plan 21-24. This is really important as we need to make sure we are finding out what matters to you and your families by listening to what you tell us. We also need to work hard to reduce the impact of poverty for families in South Ayrshire. We need to make sure we are doing everything we can to promote your rights and we also need to change some of the language we use.
- We have a detailed Action Plan which contains all of the actions we will take forward to implement The Promise and Plan 21-24 in South Ayrshire. This will be updated and reviewed regularly to make sure we are on track.



How will we know this Plan is making a difference?

The Promise tells us that to **#KeepThePromise**, the number of children in care should decrease and the resource and opportunities for families to access support if, and when they need it, should increase.

We have set a number of actions and key performance indicators which will tell us if we are making progress to achieving our goals. South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise cannot be delivered in isolation. Meaningful change will only be achieved if organisations and services work together and we are committed to doing that.

The **Corporate Parenting Executive Group** will have direct oversight of this Plan and will support services to make progress towards achieving their goals. The Group will also make sure that any developments or publications from 'The Promise' are included in South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise.

Reports on the progress of South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise will be presented to the **Children's Services Planning Group**, other governance groups and to South Ayrshire's elected members to ensure services and organisations can share the progress they are making and identify areas where services can work together.

Most importantly, we will continue to listen to you on what is working for you and what you would like to change. Implementing South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise will be an ongoing and ever-changing process. We will be flexible to your needs and be there when you need us. We hope our Parenting Promise will show this.

Key points

- We have set a number of actions and key performance indicators which will tell us if we are making progress to achieving our goals.
- South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise cannot be delivered in isolation. Meaningful change will only be achieved if organisations and services work collaboratively and we are committed to doing that.
- We will track and report our progress regularly making sure we are being held to account to deliver our actions.
- We continue to listen to you when you tell us what is working and what is not and we will update our actions accordingly.



What will we do next?

We will work really hard to get your views on South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise. We will be speaking to lots of you over the summer of 2021 and we'll also be speaking to families, staff and other stakeholders to get their feedback on the Plan.

Once we have gathered all of this information, we will make sure the final version represents the views of people who gave feedback.

We will then present the final version of South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise to the Community Planning Partnership Board for approval.

Equalities Impact Assessment

A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been started and will be completed alongside the final version of South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise. This will ensure that we have considered how we will carry out the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) by advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and eliminating discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The Equalities Impact Assessment will also consider the impacts of the proposed actions in South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise on all protected characteristics and will highlight any mitigations that may be required.

Children's Rights Impact Assessment

A Children's Rights Impact Assessment will be carried out on the final version of South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise, in accordance to the [United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (UNCRC).

The Assessment will consider how South Ayrshire's Parenting Promise:

- impacts on the rights of children and young people;
- promotes or inhibits the provisions of the UNCRC; and
- contributes to the achievement of national goals for children and young people.



Appendix 1

Action Plan

1. South Ayrshire's workforce and commissioned services will have a comprehensive understanding of the promise including how to embed the promise values in their approach

	Date	Responsible
♥ South Ayrshire will recruit 3 new promise staff members for 1 year. The new recruits will sit within South Ayrshires Champions Board team and will ensure the voices of those with lived experience are at the very heart of all Promise activity.	September 2022	Corporate Parenting Lead Officer
♥ 6-monthly elected members' briefings will be delivered by South Ayrshire's Promise team and Champions Board ensuring young people with care experience have a pivotal role in designing and delivering the briefings.	Ongoing	Corporate Parenting lead Officer
♥ Promise information sessions and bespoke workshops will be delivered across teams and services including all relevant commissioned services those with lived experience of care will play a major role in designing and delivering all promise sessions target 1,000 participants over 12 months	Ongoing	Corporate Parenting Lead Officer
♥ By March 2022 all Promise resources including local publications workshop materials and briefing notes will be readily accessible on South Ayrshires intranet.	March 2022	Planning and Performance Officer
♥ The workforce will be updated on our implementation of the promise through regular communications and briefings	Ongoing	Corporate Parenting Lead Officer
♥ The Promise branding will be adopted across South Ayrshire	Ongoing	SAC & HSCP Comms
♥ South Ayrshires Parenting Promise will align with The Promise and will hold and monitor the impact of all of South Ayrshires promise actions (December 2021- 2024)	December 2021	Corporate Parenting Lead Officer



2. Services and provision will be designed on the basis of need and with clear data, rather than on an acceptance of how the system has always operated.

	Date	Responsible
<p>♥ South Ayrshire will improve the quality and completeness of its data and consider the potential of data linkage to improve accountability for outcomes rather than inputs alone. We will do this by working with The Promise Data for Children Collaborative towards developing data that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on whole life stories • Has a wide understanding of all impacts and their fit • Flexible, adaptive and interlinked • That has a use beyond reporting • Looks for impact • Focused on avoiding costs occurring • Aims to improve 	July 2022	HSCP Planning and Performance Coordinator

3. Decisions made across South Ayrshire are underpinned by Children’s rights and there will be well communicated and understood guidance in place that upholds children’s rights and reflects equal protection legislation

	Date	Responsible
<p>♥ Introduce Children's Rights training as essential for all SAC Staff to include training on completing Children's rights impact assessments as part of Equality Impact Assessment process</p> <p>♥ South Ayrshire will recognise that children's rights are most often realised through relationships with loving, attentive caregivers</p>	March 2022	South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Practice Development team in partnership with SAC Organisational Development

4. Trauma informed and nurture approaches are standard and widespread practice across South Ayrshire

	Date	Responsible
<p>♥ Expand existing nurture and trauma informed training as part of a rights-based package and include training around care-based language</p>	December 2023	Service Lead – Policy, Performance and Community Planning



5. South Ayrshire recognises that ‘language creates realities’ those with care experience must hold and own the narrative of their own lives

	Date	Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Information will be written in care-based language to ensure it is easily understood positive and non-stigmatising to children and families. ♥ When there are times when statutory language needs to be used, this will be done sparingly and will be explained clearly to children and their families. ♥ South Ayrshire will stop using the word ‘respite’ and rethink the nature of short breaks. ♥ Simple, caring language will be used in the writing of care files. 	December 2024	Head of Children’s Health, Care and Justice Services / Quality Improvement Manager Education

6. 10 principles of intensive family support are embedded into the practice (planning, commissioning and delivery) across all of South Ayrshire’s directorates and commissioned services

	Date	Responsible
♥ The 10 principles of intensive family support will be reflected in the planning, commissioning and evaluation of all support provided for children and their families	December 2024	Head of Children’s Health, Care and Justice Services
♥ South Ayrshire will incorporate ‘quality of relationships’ into local commissioning and monitoring frameworks as standard	December 2022	HSCP Senior Manager –Planning, Performance and Commissioning
♥ We will build on whole family support models introduced by South Ayrshire Alcohol and Drugs Partnership to include intensive family support principles and integrate the work of the Alcohol and Drugs partnership with our Promise activity.	March 2023	ADP Coordinator



7. There must be significant, ongoing and persistent commitment to ending poverty and mitigating its impacts for South Ayrshires children, families and communities.

	Date	Responsible
♥ We will recognise 'Care' as a protected characteristic (and map out the implications of this across services)	March 2023	Service Lead – Policy, Performance and Community Planning
♥ We will aim to secure free travel for care leavers and those with care experience (in line with young carers)	March 2023	Corporate Parenting Lead Officer
♥ Explore free community-based Wi-Fi for Ayr North and Glendoune	December 2022	Corporate Parenting Lead Officer
♥ We will strengthen the relationship between South Ayrshires child poverty activity and our Children's Health Care and Justice Services	December 2022	Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services

8. South Ayrshire must support the workforce to contribute to a broader understanding of risk. South Ayrshire must understand, through its people and structures, the risk of children not having loving supportive relationships and regular childhood and teenage experiences.

	Date	Responsible
♥ The Signs of Safety philosophy and approach is adopted across Children's Health Care and Justice Services and informs a Family Centred Council and Health and Social Care Partnership approach	Ongoing	Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services
♥ We will align broadening our understanding of risk to our Child Protection activity	March 2023	Child Protection Lead Officer
♥ There will be no blanket policies or guidance within South Ayrshire that prevents the maintenance of relationships between young people and those who care for them	December 2023	Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services
♥ Settings of care will be able to facilitate the protection of relationships that are important to children and young people	Ongoing	Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services



9. A framework of support will be in place to ensure people involved in the care of care experienced children and young people feel valued, encouraged and have supportive relationships for reflection with high quality supervision and environmental conditions.

	Date	Responsible
♥ South Ayrshire Health and Social Care partnership will establish a standard for supervision which incorporates a range of approaches including coaching, action learning sets and peer mentoring	December 2022	Chief Social Work Officer
♥ Supervision approaches will nurture our workforce to behave and treat children in a way that is relational rather than procedural and process driven.	December 2024	Chief Social Work Officer/Quality Improvement Manager Education

10. Care experienced children and young people will receive all they need to thrive at school. There will be no barriers to their engagement with education and schools will know and cherish their care experienced pupils.

	Date	Responsible
♥ All South Ayrshire School Improvement Plans will value and recognise the needs of their care experienced pupils with robust tracking of attendance and attainment so that support can be given early.	March 2023	Quality Improvement Manager Education / Virtual School Headteacher
♥ Care experienced young people actively participate in all subjects and extra-curricular activities in schools.	Ongoing	
♥ The formal and informal exclusion of care experienced children from South Ayrshires Schools will end.	January 2024	
♥ South Ayrshire Schools will support and ensure care experienced young people go on to genuinely positive destinations, such as further education or employment.	Ongoing	

