



To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 12 March 2019

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Children's Services Service Improvement Plan 2019- 22

1. Summary

- 1.1 This Service Improvement Plan for Children's Services covers the period from 2019/20 – 2021/22. The plan outlines what the service intends to achieve over the next three years based on the financial and employee resources likely to be available.
- 1.2 The Service Improvement Plan sits beneath the Council Plan, Community Plan, Risk Management Plan and the Workforce Plan to form a suite of documents which provide the strategic direction for the service. The service also produces an annual Education Improvement Plan (a statutory requirement) and makes a major contribution to the delivery of both the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan and the Community Justice Renfrewshire plan.
- 1.3 The plan sets out the priorities being addressed; the key tasks to be implemented; the implementation time-table and our measures of success.
- 1.4 A mid-year progress update on the Service Improvement Plan will be submitted to the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board in November 2019.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board:

- (a) approves the elements of the attached Service Improvement Plan which fall within the remit of this Board;
- (b) agrees that mid-year progress with the Service Improvement Plan be reported to this Board in November 2019; and
- (c) note that this Service Improvement Plan will also be submitted to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board for approval of the elements covered by that Board's remit.

3. Background

- 3.1 Children's Services is responsible for the delivery of social work services to children and families, criminal justice social work, and early years, primary and secondary education. Much of what the service does is statutory; that is, there is a legal requirement for the Council to provide that service. Service delivery is a mix of universal provision (such as education), targeted provision (such as children's houses for accommodated children and young people) and specialist support (for example, criminal justice social work court services).
- 3.2 The service accounts for over half of the Council's overall budget and delivers a range of provisions, such as:
 - 49 Primary Schools;
 - 11 Secondary Schools;
 - 11 Early Years Centres and 24 nursery classes;
 - 2 Schools for children and young people with Additional Support Needs;
 - Social Work Fieldwork Teams;
 - 6 children's houses;
 - Supported accommodation for young people leaving care;
 - Criminal Justice Social Work (Fieldwork, Unpaid Work service; Throughcare; Women's Community Justice; Court Services; Drug Treatment and Testing Orders);
 - Fostering and Adoption services; and
 - Kinship Care.
- 3.3 Children's Services has an approach which is strongly focused on prevention, early intervention and providing additional support for the most vulnerable.

Whilst children's health services sit within the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), a key priority of both organisations will be the continuation of effective integrated working.

- 3.4 The Service Improvement Plan is one way in which elected members are able to scrutinise the work of Children's Services, and to consider and decide upon policy options as necessary. Refreshing service improvement plans annually allows each service to consider the context in which they operate and revise plans where appropriate.
- 3.5 Importantly, the Service Improvement Plan also links the Council Plan and Community Plan priorities to strategic and operational activity within the service, which supports employees to understand how their role contributes to the Council delivering on its objectives. The priority actions set out in Section 5 of the attached Service Improvement Plan detail the specific actions the service will progress in order to support the Council's priorities and help deliver improved outcomes for Renfrewshire children, young people and families.

4. Key Achievements 2018/19

4.1 During 2018/19, key achievements of the service include:

- an exceptionally positive outcome from the recently-published inspection report highlighting sector-leading approaches in Renfrewshire's progress towards raising attainment.
- a very positive set of National Qualifications results by young people in Renfrewshire schools;
- strong early evidence demonstrating that the poverty-related attainment gap in the broad general education is closing;
- progressing plans for the expansion of early years provision;
- continuing our strong partnership working across the public and third sectors in all areas of Children's Services;
- improving links with local businesses and further education providers, supporting more young people to achieve positive and sustainable post-school destinations;
- continuing to invest in our workforce including leadership development training and putting in place innovative recruitment practices to support schools in getting the best teachers and support staff;
- the completion of new build campus for Bargarran/St John Bosco Primary Schools and St Paul's Primary School/Foxlea Pre-5 Centre;
- implementing a revised anti-bullying policy which was developed in consultation with pupils, parents and school staff;

- introduction of additional supports in education settings to support health and wellbeing of children and young people;
- winning a COSLA Silver Award for the Renfrewshire Literacy Development Programme and one of our schools winning UKLA Literacy School of the Year in 2018;
- delivering a programme of work to promote greater parental engagement with schools and in particular with their child's learning;
- supporting the development of a Gender-Based Violence Strategy for Renfrewshire, which was launched during this year's 16 Days of Action;
- a successful funding application to the Life Changes Trust which will fund the Family Firm approach for a further two years;
- introduction of the 'Just Learning' programme to support increased access to employment and training for those with convictions;
- developing, with partners, a new Community Justice Renfrewshire plan;
- completion of the new children's house, which became operational in February 2019; and
- enhancement of the support available to young carers, with a dedicated social worker for young carers now in post.

5. What do we want to achieve?

5.1 The service is working to contribute to the priorities set out in the Council Plan 2017-2022, which was approved by Council in September 2017. Children's Services also contributes to outcomes set out in Renfrewshire's new Community Plan, 'Our Renfrewshire' (2017-2027).

5.2 The service recognises the importance of working together across and beyond Council services with our partners, parents and communities to improve the outcomes for children, families and communities.

5.3 The work of Children's Services is guided by our vision:

'Working together to get it right for children, families and communities - Protecting, learning, achieving and nurturing'.

5.4 The core aims of the service are to:

- provide support to, and protection of, vulnerable children and families and manage offenders in the community;

- provide children and young people with high quality learning and teaching within nurturing and innovative environments;
- improving attainment for all whilst reducing the poverty-related attainment gap;
- value wider achievements as well as traditional attainment so that young people are securing sustainable and positive post-school destinations, regardless of their start in life;
- work with partners to improve life opportunities for children across Renfrewshire; and
- support all services to raise standards through continuous improvement and self-evaluation in line with local and national priorities.

6. Key priorities

6.1 The priorities outlined in the Service Improvement Plan reflect our integrated approach to Children's Services which means that early years, primary and secondary education sits alongside support, protection and care functions all encompassed within one Council service. This approach allows us to best respond to meeting the needs of children, young people and families and provides a sound basis for us to achieve our vision.

6.2 During the lifetime of this plan, specific priorities for the service include:

- continuing the very strong work delivered through our Attainment Challenge plan, including a new academic partnership with Stanford University on numeracy and mathematics;
- expanding our early learning provision to 1140 hours and offering greater flexibility to families;
- working with children and young people, as well as our partner agencies, to develop new approaches to support better mental health and emotional wellbeing, in response to what young people tell us is one of the biggest challenges they face;
- building on existing successes such as Parents in Partnership and Pizza Reading to support parents to become more involved in their child's learning;
- progressing a review of educational support for children and young people with additional support needs based on an assumption that wherever possible, children will attend their local school with additional or specialist support in place;

- working with our partners in Community Justice Renfrewshire on some of the challenges which can lead to re-offending, such as poor mental health, homelessness and lack of employment; and
 - continuing to offer staff opportunities for leadership development, to support succession planning and help us retain high-performing staff.
- 6.3 Greater detail of the specific actions the service will progress can be found in Section 5 of our Service Improvement Plan, included as an appendix to this report.
- 7. Reporting progress**
- 7.1 Progress on the implementation of the Service Improvement Plan is regularly monitored by the Extended Senior Leadership Team every quarter and will be reported to the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on a six-monthly basis. A review of progress will be brought to this Board in November 2019.

Implications of the Report

- 1. Financial** - The Service Improvement Plan highlights resourcing pressures arising from increasing demand for services and the current financial environment.
- 2. HR & Organisational Development** – none
- 3. Community/Council Planning** – the report details a range of activities which reflect local council and community planning themes.
- 4. Legal** – none
- 5. Property/Assets** – none
- 6. Information Technology** – Service developments relating to information technology are key enablers of service improvement and modernisation and support service-level and corporate objectives.
- 7. Equality & Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
- 8. Health & Safety** – none

9. Procurement – none.

10. Risk – Risks related to the delivery and management of services are regularly monitored and included in Renfrewshire Council's Corporate and Strategic Risk Registers.

11. Privacy Impact - none

12. COSLA Policy Position – none.

List of Background Papers: None

Author Lisa Fingland, Service Planning & Policy Development Manager,
Tel: 0141 618 6812; Email: lisa.fingland@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Children's Services

Service Improvement Plan 2019-2022



**‘Working together to get it right for children, families and communities –
Protecting, learning, achieving and nurturing’.**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Service Improvement Plan for Children's Services covers the period from 2019/20 to 2021/22. The plan outlines what the service intends to achieve over the next three years based on the resources expected to be available.
- 1.2 The major factors that this Service Improvement Plan will require to respond to are public sector reform, the challenging financial environment, and delivering the key priorities and outcomes of the Council Plan and Community Plan. The plan sets out the likely impact that these issues will have on the service and our actions to address them.
- 1.3 The Council Plan clearly articulates the Council's priorities for Renfrewshire, and along with the Community Plan, sets out an ambitious programme of work. Children's Services will work together with partners, businesses, local people and communities to target the five strategic outcome areas of the Council Plan, creating opportunities for all. These are:
 - reshaping our place, our economy and our future;
 - building strong, safe and resilient communities.
 - tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all.
 - creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy; and
 - working together to improve outcomes.
- 1.4 The Service Improvement Plan informs the Children's Services Workforce Plan and the Children's Services Risk Register and is the overarching document which sets the programme of development and improvement activity within the service and sets the context for budget decisions. The service is a key partner in the delivery of the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan and the Renfrewshire Community Justice Plan. Services are also directed by the Education Improvement Plan, which is a statutory requirement for local authorities.

2. What we do

2.1 Children's Services are responsible for the delivery of early years, primary and secondary education, social work services to children and families, and criminal justice social work.

2.2 The Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice is the Chief Social Work Officer for the Council and the Acting Director is the Council's Chief Education Officer. Each local authority is required to designate a senior member of staff to fill these roles under the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 and the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 respectively.

2.3 The priorities of the service are to:

- provide support to, and protection of, vulnerable children and families;
- provide children and young people with high quality learning and teaching within nurturing and innovative environments;
- raise attainment for all whilst reducing the poverty-related attainment gap;
- deliver high-quality early learning and childcare and expand provision in line with the national agenda;
- support young people to securing sustainable and positive post-school destinations, regardless of their start in life;
- develop approaches which support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people;
- support all our staff through leadership and professional development opportunities;
- undertake a review of additional support needs provision in schools with a focus on inclusion;
- support people with convictions in the community; and
- provide a modern, fit for purpose, school estate.

Children's Services

What we provide...



49 Primary Schools with over 13,000 pupils,
11 Secondary Schools with approximately 10,000 pupils,
and 2 Schools for children with Additional Support Needs, catering
for 400 pupils



4 Social Work Fieldwork Teams

6 Children's Houses



3,600 children across our
11 Early Years Centres and
24 Nursery Classes



Specialist Social Work Teams including
Fostering & Adoption, Kinship Care,
Pre-Birth, Women & Children First and
Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

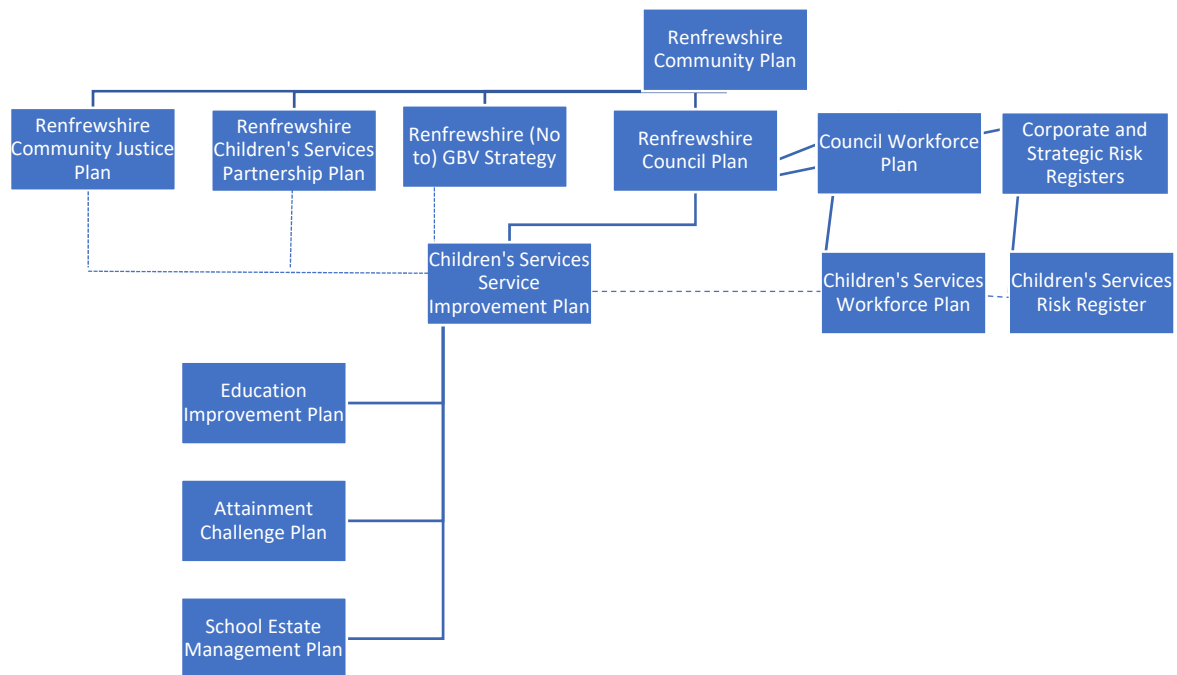


Criminal Justice Service



3. Strategic Context

- 3.1 Children's Services operates in a complex strategic environment and delivers many services on a statutory basis. As such, the service produces and reports on a number of plans, whether to elected members, the Scottish Government, or multi-agency partnership boards. The key plans are set out here:



- 3.2 Service delivery is shaped and influenced by a wide range of internal and external factors. Current drivers impacting Children's Services include:

a. National Policy and Legislative Change

- The Scotland-wide requirement to increase early years provision per child to 1140 hours annually by 2020;
- The potential impact of national reviews relating to child protection and to the care system for looked after children;
- Implementation of the Scottish Attainment Challenge, including Pupil Equity Funding;
- The ongoing Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, and the legal duties on local authority services arising from this;
- Working towards the aims of the National Improvement Framework and the revised strategy on parental engagement in their child's education;
- Implementation of the extension of the right to continuing care and aftercare for care leavers;

- The likely extension of a presumption against short prison sentences which will create additional pressure on Criminal Justice Social Work to manage community sentences; and
 - Preparation for any policy and legislative change arising from the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.
- b. Demographic and Social Change
- Managing the reduction in the number of looked after children from historically high levels, whilst mitigating the impact of deprivation, substance misuse, and parental neglect;
 - Societal inequalities which mean children from poorer areas may not have the same opportunities and life chances as children from more affluent areas;
 - Increasing numbers of care-experienced children and young people accessing continuing care, Throughcare services and other supports;
 - Increasing numbers of children with additional support needs being supported;
 - Managing changing patterns of demand for school places in response to local population migration and new housing provision; and
 - Supporting an increasingly diverse population in terms of ethnicity, including a need for specialist support for some groups of the population, for example refugees and those seeking asylum.
- c. Internal resource factors
- Continuing to deliver high quality services at a time of financial constraint for all local authorities;
 - Pressures in the recruitment and retention of teaching staff, including senior leadership roles;
 - Pressures in the recruitment and retention of residential staff;
 - An ongoing need to modernise the school estate, including ensuring the early years estate can accommodate increased provision.

Equalities

- 3.3 Every area of work within the Council has a role to play in promoting equality and diversity. While this is the right thing to do and has clear advantages for the Council, there are also legal requirements. Equality law (The Equality Act) protects people from unfair treatment and asks public bodies (including Renfrewshire Council) to show how they make a positive difference to equality groups. The Council recognises that equality both needs to be mainstreamed

fully into its policies and procedures and ensure that its equality outcomes are given high priority, by being part of mainstream progress reporting.

- 3.4 All Children's Services' plans and policies support this mainstreaming and contribute to the Council's six equality outcomes. Examples of how this is delivered within the service are given below.

Public spaces improve access and promote dignity for disabled and older people	Our existing programme of new builds and refurbishments supports existing positive work to make public spaces accessible and inclusive.
Our staff and communities fully understand the causes and consequences of gender-based violence and are equipped to respond	<p>The service plays an active role in the Gender Based Violence Working Group and delivers specialist services to support women and children affected by GBV.</p> <p>The service is committed to the Renfrewshire Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) which supports high risk victims of domestic abuse and raises awareness of the issue in Renfrewshire. We continue to embed the Safe and Together approach in our work with families, offer Up2U to individuals who have been through the Court system and deliver CEDAR to children who have experienced domestic violence.</p>
Equalities-led organisations are supported to become sustainable and influential partners	The work of equalities-led organisations informs our policy and practice. A recent example is the service's engagement with RespectMe in the development of a refreshed bullying policy which has a strong focus on prejudice-based bullying.
Council services are responsive to the needs of equalities groups, with well-designed and flexible services	The service will continue to be responsive to equalities groups. A recent example are the actions for Children's Services within the Council's British Sign Language Plan.

Renfrewshire Council promotes itself as and becomes an employer of choice for disabled people	The service adopts all corporate initiatives to support greater inclusion.
Equalities implications are clearly and consistently considered in decision making.	All policy board papers include a statement concerning equalities groups. Our policies promote diversity and equality.

Partnerships and providers

- 3.5 Children's Services maintains close links to other partners through the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership, the Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership and Community Justice Renfrewshire, as well as participating in other partnership work on a thematic basis, such as the Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee and the Renfrewshire Gender Based Violence Strategy Group.
- 3.6 In addition, the service continues to have strong links with Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership which provides adult social work and social care services. There are a number of key areas where Children's Services will work closely with the HSCP. The mental health and wellbeing of young people, tackling substance misuse, promoting physical activity, supporting children impacted by gender-based violence, and improving the transition between children's and adult services are reflected in the actions in this service improvement plan and/or the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership Plan, as well as in the HSCP Strategic Plan 2019-2022.
- 3.7 Children's Services provides a number of services directly, but also commissions from a range of providers across sectors and works with specific partners on the delivery of specialist services.

Best Value

- 3.8 Following the Council's Best Value Audit inspection, Audit Scotland provided direction on areas for improvement, with 7 key recommendations forming an improvement plan. Actions from the improvement plan are embedded within the Council and Community Plans and will be driven at a service level through the Service Improvement Planning process. There are no actions specific to Children's Services; however, we will contribute to the corporate actions

particularly around community engagement, partnership working and workforce planning.

Risk

- 3.9 The Council's risk management arrangements are well established with all strategic, corporate and service risks being reported to the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny (ARS) Board, and all services represented on the Corporate Risk Management Group. Actions related to strategic or corporate risks, where Children's Services are the owner or joint owners of the risks, are reflected in this Service Improvement Action Plan; this ensures an additional layer of monitoring in our management of these risks. Other risks which may occur only for, or within our own service are contained within a service risk register used for operational management purposes.
- 3.10 In terms of strategic risks for the council, Children's Services is the joint lead (with Communities, Housing and Planning Services) for Community Safety and Public Protection. This is considered a High risk but is managed as 'business as usual' through a robust set of policies and procedures and strong partnership working.
- 3.11 At a service level, Children's Services currently has no risks evaluated as Very High or High on the service risk register. Current service risks are listed here:

Area of risk	Evaluation	Council Priority
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	Moderate	Building strong, safe and resilient communities
Integrated service arrangements	Moderate	Working together to improve outcomes
Development of early intervention and preventative services for children, whilst seeking to maximise opportunities for all	Moderate	Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all
Failure of major providers	Moderate	Working together to improve outcomes
Continuous improvement	Moderate	Working together to improve outcomes
Property	Moderate	Working together to improve outcomes

Continuous Improvement

- 3.12 Children's Services is committed to delivering high-quality services. Children's Services has already introduced the Quality Improvement Framework for schools and early years establishments and has plans in place to evaluate the impact of family/parenting support programmes within social work. In addition to internal self-evaluation activity, social work services and educational establishments are subject to considerable, robust, external scrutiny from the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland. Reports on every school inspection are taken to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board, as are reports on any social work service which receives a grading of Weak or Unsatisfactory. The service also contributes to multi-agency self-evaluation work (including case file audits) on adult protection and child protection. Officers are currently contributing to a Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee self-evaluation exercise which will report to that committee in late spring 2019.
- 3.13 Education services were inspected by Education Scotland as part of a national programme of inspection of Attainment Challenge authorities. This will be reported on in February 2019.

Workforce Planning

- 3.14 All council services have a workforce plan based on the six key objectives of the Council Workforce Plan:
- A Strategic Workforce
 - A Flexible Workforce
 - A Modernised Workforce
 - A Skilled Workforce
 - A Developing Workforce
 - A Resilient Workforce
- 3.15 Workforce planning is critical to the expansion of early years provision, and Children's Services have engaged a recruitment firm to establish development centres for all levels of posts within early learning and childcare. These development centres will support the existing workforce and future recruits to the profession, ensuring the recruitment and retention of the workforce, identifying transition levels throughout the career structure and providing support in obtaining qualifications and experience which meet the SSSC registration standards. The company will also support a wider recruitment strategy for catering, cleaning, janitorial and business support staff required for expansion. The development centres and recruitment work will be

supported by a workforce training plan focused on supporting staff through qualifications and maintaining high quality provision.

- 3.16 Teacher recruitment is a challenge for most Scottish local authorities, and Renfrewshire has implemented measures which means it is bucking the trend, particularly in relation to the recruitment of Head Teachers. Leadership development remains a focus within education, with staff being supported through the 'Aspiring' programmes tailored to specific leadership roles. Greater detail is given in the Education Improvement Plan. In addition, changes to the way in which Newly Qualified Teachers are recruited has significantly supported the service to fill more vacancies.

UK Withdrawal from the EU

- 3.17 On 29 March 2019, the UK is expected to leave the European Union. Given the uncertainty which remains around this process, the Council and its partners have developed a range of contingency processes for any incidents which arise in the event of a "no deal Brexit". This is led by the Brexit Readiness Steering Group. Nonetheless, the situation requires continued close monitoring as there may be impacts on, for example, contractual arrangements with third parties, or on legislation impacting on food standards and trading standards. The Council is also cognisant of the fact that some staff are EU nationals and that this is a time of uncertainty for them in relation to their status.
- 3.18 Social work services have a duty to support any looked after children who are EU nationals and wish to apply for settled status in the UK. Processes will also be put in place to support other vulnerable groups through the EU Settlement Scheme.

Developments for 2019/20

- 3.19 During 2019/20 and beyond, specific improvements and initiatives will be progressed, and some of these are outlined below.
- 3.20 The service will continue to focus on raising attainment for all children, whilst closing the poverty related attainment gap through the work of the Attainment Challenge, Pupil Equity Fund, and the Care Experienced Fund, as well as everyday service provision. In addition to continuing the service's focus on literacy, there is now an increased focus on numeracy and mathematics with work being developed with a new academic partner.
- 3.21 The service is progressing plans for the expansion of early years' provision to 1140 hours by 2020. A rolling programme of recruitment, to ensure sufficient

staff, is in place, and staff on term-time contracts are being offered the opportunity to convert these to 52-week contracts. A programme of new builds and refurbishments to the existing estate has been outlined. The expansion plan will result in more flexible provision with extended operating hours.

- 3.22 A review of provision for children and young people with additional support needs is underway. This will ensure the most appropriate support is in place assuming almost all children will attend their local school with targeted and specialist support where required. The review is at a relatively early stage with significant stakeholder engagement being undertaken in the first half of 2019 with a view to phased implementation from academic session 2019/20.
- 3.23 As part of our commitment to innovative approaches which seek to provide the best possible support, and consequently the best possible outcomes, for vulnerable children in Renfrewshire, Children & Families Social Work recently joined a randomised control trial led by the University of Glasgow. The trial compares a multi-disciplinary approach, called 'GIFT', with practice as usual (i.e. the usual parenting capacity assessment undertaken by social workers) and aims to find the best service for infants and pre-school children coming into foster care. The GIFT approach is delivered by NSPCC and follows up a structured assessment with intensive treatment which aims to improve family functioning and child mental health. If there is sufficient improvement, the team can recommend that the child return home rather than seek a permanent fostering or adoptive placement.
- 3.24 Mental health and wellbeing was one of three key priorities identified from an analysis of the All Children Wellbeing study undertaken by Renfrewshire Council. It was also identified as a priority area for the Youth Commission. Children's Services, in partnership with the Dartington Design Lab, has been successful in securing Big Lottery Funding to implement an Early Action System Change programme and will be focusing on the mental health of young people, as well as the issue of coercive control in adolescent relationships. Children's Services and Dartington will seek to co-design new supports and approaches in partnership with children and young people, and developments will align with our Attainment Challenge plans.
- 3.25 Parental engagement in education is being considered in the context of the new national strategy, Learning Together. Children's Services already delivers quality programmes to support parental engagement, such as Parents in Partnership, transition work, and Pizza Reading. There is academic evidence to support the impact these are having on improving outcomes. The new national strategy paper allows the service to look at additional ways of engaging parents and families in learning and further improve outcomes.

- 3.26 The new children's house is now operational and supports up to 4 young people in line with our philosophy of care model. The service will continue to implement the extension of entitlement to continuing care, throughcare and aftercare services to young people leaving care.
- 3.27 Arrangements have been put in place within Criminal Justice Social Work to mitigate the likely increase in demand expected when the presumption against short sentences is extended from six months to twelve months. This extension had been expected during 2018/19 but has not yet been implemented. Consequently, we have carried this action over from the previous Service Improvement Plan to reflect the delay at a national level.

4. Our resources

4.1 Local government continues to operate in a challenging financial environment. The financial challenges are expected to continue to 2020 and beyond. Renfrewshire Council, together with other Scottish local authorities, face a significant financial challenge over the next few years. The Council is taking a long-term view of financial planning on the basis of:

- Reducing resources given the uncertainty over when and at what level sustained budget growth may return;
- Rising cost and demand pressures continuing to be a feature of the Council's financial outlook;
- An increasing and ongoing need for the Council to prioritise spend to focus on the delivery of strategic priority outcomes; and
- Delivering change, transformation and savings continuing to be a necessary feature of the Council's planning arrangements.

4.2 Particular areas of resource pressure for Children's Services include:

- Historically higher than average incidences of child protection cases and looked after children, due in part to parental substance misuse and areas of significant deprivation within Renfrewshire;
- Increasing numbers of young people in continuing care, and those leaving care and accessing throughcare and aftercare services;
- Increasing numbers of kinship carers;
- Managing the expansion of early learning and childcare to 1140 hours;
- Increasing numbers of children with additional support needs in our schools;
- Ongoing annual reductions in the grant payable to Renfrewshire Council to deliver Criminal Justice Social Work services alongside a growth in the number of community sentences to be managed; and
- Ongoing challenges in recruiting supply and permanent teachers.

4.3 A variety of performance measures are applied across the service which includes external suites of indicators. Performance against selected indicators is reported quarterly to the Council's Corporate Management Team. Performance against all indicators in this Service Improvement Plan is reported to elected members in the mid-year monitoring report and the outturn report.

4.4 The following pages provide details of how the service contributes to the delivery of council priorities and includes a list of specific actions and performance measures for each priority.

5. Contributing to the Council's Strategic Priorities

- 5.1 This Service Improvement Plan includes actions and performance measures aligned to four of the five priorities set out in the Council Plan. Whilst Children's Services has no specific actions or indicators under 'Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy', it works in collaboration with other services to support delivery of all Council Plan priorities. This section of the Service Improvement Plan gives a brief outline of how Children's Services contributes to each priority and lists some of the service's key achievements in this area over the last year. An action plan and performance indicators are provided to show the specific detail of how we will contribute to each priority over the life of this plan.
- 5.2 Children's Services also makes use of the indicators in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework to monitor performance. These indicators are included as an appendix to this plan.

Strategic Priority 1: Reshaping our place, our economy and our future

5.3 Children's Services delivers this priority by supporting all our service users, including all our children and young people, to develop skills and qualifications which will help them into positive and sustainable destinations, whether that is employment, training or continuing their education.








5.4 During 2018/19, our achievements included:

- Continued the trend of improvement in attainment across all measures in the Broad General Education;
- a very positive set of National Qualifications results by the young people in Renfrewshire schools;
- an excellent inspection report in respect of our Attainment Challenge work;
- improving links with local businesses and further education providers, supporting more young people to achieve positive post-school destinations;
- a successful funding application to the Life Changes Trust which will fund the Family Firm approach for a further two years; and
- introduction of the 'Just Learning' programme to support increased access to employment and training for those with convictions.

5.5 Strategic Priority 1 Actions for 2019-2022

What will we do?	What difference will it make?	When will we do it by?	Who is leading this?
Develop high quality learning and teaching that leads to improved levels of attainment and achievement in all of our establishments.	Staff are skilled and knowledgeable and able to effectively support children and young people in their learning and development.	31 Mar 2021	Head of Early Years and Broad General Education
Improve employability skills and support all of our young people to enter positive destinations and sustained post-school destinations.	Equipping children and young people with the skills needed in the workplace improves opportunities and life chances for all.	30 Jun 2020	Head of Schools and Education Manager (Senior Phase)
Increase the role of arts and creativity in the school curriculum from early years through to the senior phase	Children and young people benefit from increased participation in cultural activity.	31 Mar 2020	Head of Early Years and Broad General Education
Continue to develop partnership links and collaborative arrangements with the Further Education sector, employers and commerce in line with the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce Report.	A range of programmes delivered through these partnerships enable school leavers to secure a positive post-school destination.	31 Mar 2020	Education Manager (Senior Phase)

5.6 Performance Indicators

Code	Performance Indicator	Frequency	Current Status	Current Value	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
CHS/PD/01	% of School leavers in a positive destination	Annual		92.8%	95%	95%	95%	95%
CHS/ATT/01a	% of Leavers attaining literacy SCQF Level 4	Annual (academic years)		97%	97%	98%	98%	98%
CHS/ATT/01b	% of Leavers attaining numeracy SCQF Level 4	Annual (academic years)		92%	93.5%	95%	95%	96%
CHS/ATT/01c	% of Leavers attaining literacy SCQF Level 5	Annual (academic years)		86%	84%	86%	86%	88%
CHS/ATT/01d	% of Leavers attaining numeracy SCQF Level 5	Annual (academic years)		76%	73%	75%	75%	77%
CHS/ATT/12	Average complementary tariff (S4)	Annual (academic years)		310	New for 2018/19; no target in Yr 1	317	322	330
CHS/ATT/13	Average complementary tariff (S5)	Annual (academic years)		580	New for 2018/19; no target in Yr 1	601	617	630

Strategic Priority 2: Building strong, safe and resilient communities

5.7 Child protection is everybody's responsibility but Children's Services leads on this for the Council. The service also has a leading role in relation to public protection. Our staff are on the frontline delivering services which keep people safe, whether this is children and families or people with convictions being supported not to re-offend and to make positive changes which in turn make our communities safer. The service also promotes positive mental health and wellbeing for all of our children and young people. The Early Action System Change work which commenced in 2018/19 will strengthen the work already being delivered through the Attainment Challenge.

5.8 The management of public protection issues is a significant risk not only for Children's Services but for the wider council. The Council operates robust procedures for the management of child protection and public protection issues and works closely with partners on these, through the Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee, through statutory processes for managing violent and sexual offenders, domestic violence screening and the vulnerable young people's screening group.

5.9 Key achievements in 2018/19 include:





- implementing a revised anti-bullying policy which was developed in consultation with pupils, parents and school staff;
- being cited by Education Scotland as a Good Practice Exemplar for the Renfrewshire Nurturing Relationships Approach, which continues to roll out across our schools;
- supporting the development of a Gender-Based Violence Strategy for Renfrewshire, which was launched during this year's 16 Days of Action;
- developing, with partners, a new Community Justice Renfrewshire plan; and
- completion of the new children's house, which became operational in early 2019.


5.10 Strategic Priority 2 Actions

What will we do?	What difference will we make?	When will we do it by?	Who is leading this?
Embed a consistent approach to supporting children and families affected by domestic violence informed by a strength-based model of intervention.	Children experiencing domestic violence are supported to be safe.	31 Mar 2020	Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice

What will we do?	What difference will we make?	When will we do it by?	Who is leading this?
Implement recommendations flowing from the national reviews of child protection and the care system.	Child protection practice is further enhanced and strengthened in line with recommendations.	31 Mar 2020	Child Protection Adviser
Use the Early Action System Change funding to co-design and develop new approaches in 2 areas – the mental health of children and young people, and coercive control in adolescent relationships.	Children and young people benefit from positive support at an early stage, and from clear messages about safe, healthy relationships.	31 Mar 2022	Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager
Extend the whole-school Nurturing Relationships Strategy (RNRA) in schools across Renfrewshire.	All staff in participating schools have an understanding of attachment theory and nurturing practices to help children develop socially and emotionally.	31 Mar 2020	Principal Educational Psychologist
Undertake evaluation of family support provision within social work services, and consider options for the provision of Family Group Decision Making.	Early intervention supports families to make positive changes which improve relationships and may prevent compulsory measures.	31 Mar 2020	Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager
We will respond to the planned presumption against short sentences.	Extend the opportunities for people with convictions to engage with community-based services to address their offending behaviour.	31 Mar 2020	Criminal Justice Service Manager

5.11 Performance Indicators

Code	Performance Indicator	Current Status	Frequency	Current Value	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
CHS /CJ/ CPO /02	% of NEW unpaid work orders/requirement complete by the required date		Quarterly	73%	72%	72%	72%	75%
CHS /CJ/ CPO /01	The percentage of NEW clients subject to a new supervision order seen by a supervising officer within 1 week		Quarterly	83%	92%	85%	85%	85%
CHS /CJ/ CPO /04	Percentage of NEW unpaid work clients seen within 1 working day of the order		Quarterly	72%	65%	70%	70%	70%
CHS /CJ/ CPO /05	Percentage of NEW unpaid work clients receiving an induction within 5 working days of the order		Quarterly	76%	70%	75%	75%	75%
CHS /CJ/ CPO /06	Percentage of NEW unpaid work clients beginning work placement within 7 working days of the order		Quarterly	69%	50%	65%	65%	65%

Code	Performance Indicator	Current Status	Frequency	Current Value	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
CHS /CP R/O 1	Percentage of children registered in this period who have previously been on the Child Protection Register		Quarterly	22%	Not applicable	n/a	n/a	n/a

Strategic Priority 3: Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all

5.12 Children's Services has a major role in delivering this priority, whether through the work to break the relationship between poverty and attainment, or the work which supports vulnerable children and families, or that which supports people with convictions to make positive changes in their lives. In addition, the service continues to work towards a reduction in the number of children looked after and accommodated through early intervention and preventative work. During 2019/20, the service will review support for children with additional support needs and begin to develop a locality-based model which further promotes inclusion. The plans to support expansion of early years provision will continue to be implemented. Partnership working continues to be critical to addressing the impact of adverse childhood experiences, giving children the best possible start in life, and reducing inequalities. The service will contribute to existing work delivered through the Tackling Poverty Strategy and will actively support the work of the Renfrewshire Commission on Drugs and Alcohol.




5.13 Achievements in 2018/19 included:





- strong early evidence demonstrating that the poverty-related attainment gap in the broad general education and National Qualifications is closing;
- progressing plans for the expansion of early years provision;
- introduction of additional supports in education settings to support health and wellbeing, including a dedicated Health and Wellbeing Development Officer, Place2Be counselling service, Lifelink, and the Active Communities Peer Educators;
- continuing the roll-out of tracking systems and data literacy support to help schools track pupil progress and support next steps in learning;
- winning a COSLA Silver Award for the Renfrewshire Literacy Development Programme and St Anthony's Primary being named UKLA Literacy School of the Year in 2018;
- The expansion of Parents in Partnership in the secondary sector as well as a range of programmes across primary schools and early years establishments to increase partnership working with parents, and the creation of a parental engagement strategy group to allow key stakeholders to contribute to an update of our Parental Engagement Strategy; and
- enhancement of the support available to young carers, with a dedicated social worker for young carers now in post.









5.14 Strategic Priority 3 Actions

What will we do?	Why will it make a difference?	When will we do it by?	Who is leading this?
Expand the provision of early learning and childcare to 1140 hours.	Children are given the best start and are supported to reach their full potential.	30 Mar 2020	Head of Early Years and Broad General Education
Ensure Renfrewshire is a 'Child Friendly' place where children are nurtured and thrive.	All children in Renfrewshire have the best possible start in life.	31 Mar 2022	Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice
Deliver on the Attainment Challenge workstreams.	All children in Renfrewshire have the best possible start in life.	31 Mar 2020	Director of Children's Services
Review support for young carers, identifying opportunities to improve life chances.	Young carers have time away from their responsibilities and are supported to make time for themselves.	31 Mar 2022	Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager
Reduce inequalities and deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people	Children and young people have increased resilience and are supported in social and emotional development.	30 Mar 2021	Education Manager (Quality Improvement)
Develop processes to support service users affected by the EU Settlement Scheme once the UK withdraws from the European Union	Vulnerable service users who are EU nationals are supported to retain their right to live, work and access public services in the UK and are not disproportionately affected by the UK's withdrawal from the EU.	31 Mar 2020	Chief Social Work Officer
Implement a refreshed Parental Engagement Strategy.	Stronger relationships will exist between the school and the home, leading to more successful learning partnerships.	31 Mar 2020	Education Manager (Curriculum)
Support inclusion of vulnerable pupils including those with additional support needs.	Attainment and achievement are increased through access to relevant opportunities and enhanced pathways to success.	30 Mar 2021	Head of Schools
Refine processes to support further improvement in performance in relation to home supervision visits.	Opportunities to engage with families at an early stage are maximised.	30 Mar 2020	Children's Services Manager

5.15 Performance Indicators

Code	Performance Indicator	Current Status	Frequency	Current Value	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
CHS/ATT/04	No. of opportunities for young people to achieve through accredited awards		Annual	1193	1,130	1,190	1,200	1,200
CHS/EY/02	% of entitled 2 year olds accessing 600 hours of early learning and childcare		Quarterly	55%	Not applicable	60%	60%	65%
CHS/LGBF/01	Percentage of Looked After Children cared for in the community		Quarterly	92%	Not applicable	89.9%	89.9%	89.9%

Code	Performance Indicator	Current Status	Frequency	Current Value	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
CHS/ ATT/ 07	Percentage gap in average total tariff score of school leavers resident in SIMD 30% most deprived and those from the 70% least SIMD deprived Renfrewshire areas.		Annual (academic years)	37%	34%	32%	32%	28%
CHS/ ATT/ 08	Average Total Tariff Score of Looked After Children (school leavers)		Annual (academic years)	289	302	310	320	330
CHS/ ATT/ 09	Gap between the Average Total Tariff Score of Looked After Children (school leavers) and that of the total Renfrewshire leavers cohort		Annual (academic years)	70%	67.2%	65%	64%	63%
CHS/ ATT/ 14	Percentage point gap in % of pupils achieving expected level for their stage in literacy between pupils living in 30% most deprived areas and those living in 70% least deprived areas (SIMD)		Annual (academic years)	11 (2017/18)	10	9	8	7
CHS/ ATT/ 15	Percentage point gap in % of pupils achieving expected level for their stage in numeracy between pupils living in 30% most deprived areas and those living in 70% least deprived areas (SIMD)		Annual (academic years)	10 (2017/18)	9	8	7	6
CHS/ ATT/ 16	Percentage point gap in % pupils achieving expected level for their stage in literacy between pupils entitled to free school meals and pupils not entitled		Annual (academic years)	17 (2017/18)	16	15	14	13
CHS/ ATT/ 17	Percentage point gap in % pupils achieving expected level for their stage in numeracy between pupils entitled to free school meals and pupils not entitled		Annual (academic years)	16 (2017/18)	15	14	13	12
CHS/ EY/0 1	% of 3 and 4 year olds accessing 600 hours of early learning and childcare		Quarterly	87%	96.4%	96.4%	96.4%	96.4%
CHS/ LAC/ 01	The percentage of children made subject to a supervision order that were seen by a supervising officer within 15 days		Quarterly	84%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Code	Performance Indicator	Current Status	Frequency	Current Value	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
CHS/ LAC/ 02	Percentage of accommodated Looked After Children placed with families		Quarterly	80%	83%	83%	83%	83%
CHS/ LAC/ CL/0 1	Percentage of care leavers participating in employment, training or education		Quarterly	49%	47%	51%	53%	55%
CHS/ LAC/ CL/0 2	Percentage of care leavers who have had a period of homelessness in the last 6 months		Quarterly	2%	n/a	0%	0%	0%
CHS/ SCH/ 07	% of children attending school (Primary)		Annual (academic year)	95.3%	94.9%	95.5%	95.5%	95.5%
CHS/ SCH/ 08	% of children attending school (Secondary)		Annual (academic year)	90.6%	90.3%	91%	91%	91%
CHS/ SCH/ 09	% of young people choosing to stay onto S5 after January (as % of S4 roll at September previous year)		Annual (academic year)	86.1%	90%	92%	92%	92%
CHS/ SCH/ 10	% of young people choosing to stay onto S6 (as % of S4 roll at September two years before)		Annual (academic year)	65.1%	67%	68%	69%	70%
RCPC /01	Number of children on the Child Protection Register at quarter end date		Quarterly	99	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a



Strategic Priority 5: Working together to improve outcomes



- 5.16 Renfrewshire Council has a strong track record in managing its resources effectively, even in recent years when financial constraints have been considerable. Children's Services is experiencing increasing demand for services at a time when fewer resources are available. Strong partnership working and innovation in service delivery will help the service support this priority. This includes partnership arrangements with providers such as our partner nurseries and third sector organisations like Barnardo's and Aberlour. It also includes our specific arrangements in education, such as our ongoing links with the University of Strathclyde and the regional improvement activity delivered through the West Partnership.
- 5.17 Partnership working includes meaningful engagement with communities as well as statutory agencies. The service already has a range of mechanisms to do this, including pupil and parent councils, the Children's Champions Board, and the Youth Commission. Our workforce is at the heart of this, and we will continue to provide opportunities for learning and development. The service is already realising benefits from bringing together education with social work functions and will continue to look for opportunities for greater integrated working across the service. In 2019/20, Children's Services will work closely with Renfrewshire's Commission on Drugs and Alcohol, a group set up in response to the high levels of substance misuse in Renfrewshire. The impact of parental substance use on children and young people continues to be challenging.
- 5.18 Achievements during 2018/19 included:
- Strong partnership working across the public and third sectors in all areas of Children's Services;
 - continuing to invest in our workforce and put in place innovative recruitment practices to support schools in getting the best teachers in front of pupils;
 - embedding data literacy within schools, allowing rigorous monitoring of individual pupil progress which is informing next steps in learning;
 - delivery of an extensive programme of leadership development training for head teachers resulting in high quality recruitment; and
 - the completion of new build campus for Bargarran/St John Bosco Primary Schools and St Paul's Primary School/Foxlea Pre-5 Centre.

5.19 Strategic Priority 5 Actions

What will we do?	What difference will it make?	When will we do it by?	Who is leading this?
Support and strengthen the professional capacity of staff through leadership and professional development.	Staff at all levels recognise their individual responsibility to facilitate improved outcomes for children and young people.	31 Mar 2020	Head of Schools
Implement the service's workforce plan.	The service will have the right mix of staff, in sufficient numbers, and with the knowledge and skills to do their job effectively.	31 Mar 2020	Head of Schools
Through Community Justice Renfrewshire take forward national and local priorities, including housing for prison leavers, improved mental health and employability for persons with convictions.	By addressing some of the factors which lead to offending behaviour, the rate of reoffending can be reduced. People with convictions can be supported to make positive changes.	31 Mar 2021	Criminal Justice Services Manager
Produce a refreshed School Estate Management Plan	Schools are modern environments with facilities that allow more opportunity for activities and innovative learning and support a more positive experience of learning.	30 Jun 2019	Education Manager (Resources)
Progress opportunities for greater integration and joint working within Children's Services	Outcomes for children and young people are improved by child-centred, joined-up working.	31 Mar 2020	Director of Children's Services
Managing best use of Attainment Challenge, Pupil Equity Fund, and Care-Experienced Fund to maximise the benefits from additional funding	Additional funding is deployed effectively to support Children's Services in delivering the priorities of the Council.	31 Mar 2021	Head of Schools
Support and challenge staff in more effective use of data to understand children's needs and drive further improvements.	Staff are comfortable using data to support their understanding of local needs and use this to inform service delivery and support improvement.	31 Mar 2021	Director of Children's Services

5.20 Performance Indicators

Code	Performance Indicator	Frequency	Current Status	Current Value	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
CHS/ SCH/ 04	Percentage of parents satisfied with establishments Education Scotland Survey	Annual		88.8%	100%	100%	100%	100%
CHS/ SCH/ 05	Percentage of pupils satisfied with establishments	Annual		83.4%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Code	Performance Indicator	Frequency	Current Status	Current Value	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
	Education Scotland Survey							
CHS/CORP/01	% of complaints responded to within timescales agreed with customers	Quarterly		88%	100%	100%	100%	100%
CHS/CORP/03	% of FOI requests completed within timescale by Children's Services	Quarterly		98%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Appendix: LGBF Performance Indicators

Code	Performance Indicator	Current Value	Last Update	Short Term Trend	Long Term Trend
CHS/L GBF/01	Percentage of Looked After Children cared for in the community	92%	Q3 2018/19	➡	⬇
CHS/L GBF/02	Gross cost of "Children Looked After" in residential based services per child per week	£4,365.85	2016/17	⬆	⬇
CHS/L GBF/03	Gross cost of "Children Looked After" in community placements per child per week	£444.21	2016/17	⬇	⬇
CHS/L GBF/04	Cost per pupil for primary schools	£4,478.00	2017/18	⬇	⬇
CHS/L GBF/05	Cost per pupil for secondary schools	£5,910.00	2017/18	⬇	⬇
CHS/L GBF/06	Cost per pre-school education place	£3,628.00	2017/18	⬆	⬇
CHS/L GBF/07	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5	66%	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/08	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6	36%	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/09	% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5	43%	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/10	% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6	16%	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/11	% of adults satisfied with local schools	80%	2017/18	⬇	⬇
CHS/L GBF/12	% of pupils entering positive destinations	92.8%	2016/17	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/13	Overall average total tariff	930.62	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/14	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1	618	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/15	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2	770	2017/18	⬇	⬆
CHS/L GBF/16	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3	964	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/17	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4	1,198	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/18	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5	1,273	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/31	% of children meeting developmental milestones	51%	2016/17	⬇	⬇
CHS/L GBF/32	% of funded early years provision which is graded good/better	87.7%	2017/18	⬆	⬇
CHS/L GBF/33	School attendance (%)	93.3%	2016/17	⬇	⬇
CHS/L GBF/34	School attendance rates (LAC%)	91.3%	2016/17	⬇	➡
CHS/L GBF/35	School exclusion rates per 1,000 pupils	21.7	2016/17	⬆	⬇
CHS/L GBF/36	School exclusion rates per 1,000 looked after children	74.36	2016/17	⬆	⬇
CHS/L GBF/37	% participation for 16-19 years olds (per 100)	91.6%	2017/18	⬆	⬆
CHS/L GBF/38	% of child protection re-registration within 18 months	5.7%	2016/17	⬆	⬇
CHS/L GBF/39	% LAC with 1 or more placement in the last year (Aug to July)	18.1%	2016/17	⬇	⬆

