
To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 10 March 2020

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Children's Services Service Improvement Plan 2020- 23

1. Summary

- 1.1 This Service Improvement Plan for Children's Services covers the period from 2020/21 – 2022/23. 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 October 2020.

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 2020; 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 services to the court).
- 3.2 The areas of Children's Services which fall within the scope of the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board are Criminal Justice Social Work and Community Justice. Criminal Justice Social Work comprises fieldwork, the Unpaid Work service; criminal justice Throughcare; Women's Community Justice; Paisley Sheriff Court Social Work Services; and the Drug Treatment and Testing Orders service.
- 3.3 The work of CJSW is focused on managing people with convictions safely in the community whilst they are subject to statutory measures and on preventing reoffending. Community Justice Renfrewshire has a wider multi-agency remit to support all people with convictions and its work is best reflected within the Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan which alongside annual update reports comes to this board for approval.
- 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 2019/20

- 4.1 During 2019/20, key achievements of the service in relation to justice include:

- mainstreaming the Just Learning employability programme which helps people with convictions develop the skills to progress in education, employment and/or training;
- supervising over 40,000 hours of unpaid work
- achieving a sustained increase in the number of young people being diverted from court to Children's Hearings for offending behaviour as a result of the intervention and support of the Whole Systems Team, meaning a reduction in stigma and a greater likelihood of completing community sentences.

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 at various stages of their involvement in the system;
- 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 within the remit of this board are:

- developing the 'Just Learning' model which is supporting people with convictions into training, education and employment;
- developing an 'early help' model of family support which will bring together resources from social work and education as well as from other public sector agencies and the third sector;
- meeting the additional demands on the service arising from the extension of the presumption against short sentences; and
- implementing a new case management system for Children & Families social work in 2020 and for Criminal Justice Social Work in 2021.

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. Monitoring 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 Education and Children's Services Policy Board on a six-monthly basis. A review of progress will be brought to this Board in November 2020.

- 7.2 Children's Services have introduced 5 new performance measures for 2020/21. Performance in relation to complaints has been separated to distinguish between responses to frontline complaints and those which require more investigation; the target for both is 95% compliance. The remaining three indicators relate to services for children and are not within the remit of this board.
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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.

13. Climate Change - none

List of Background Papers: None

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2020-2023



Service Improvement Plan 2020-2023

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1. Introduction

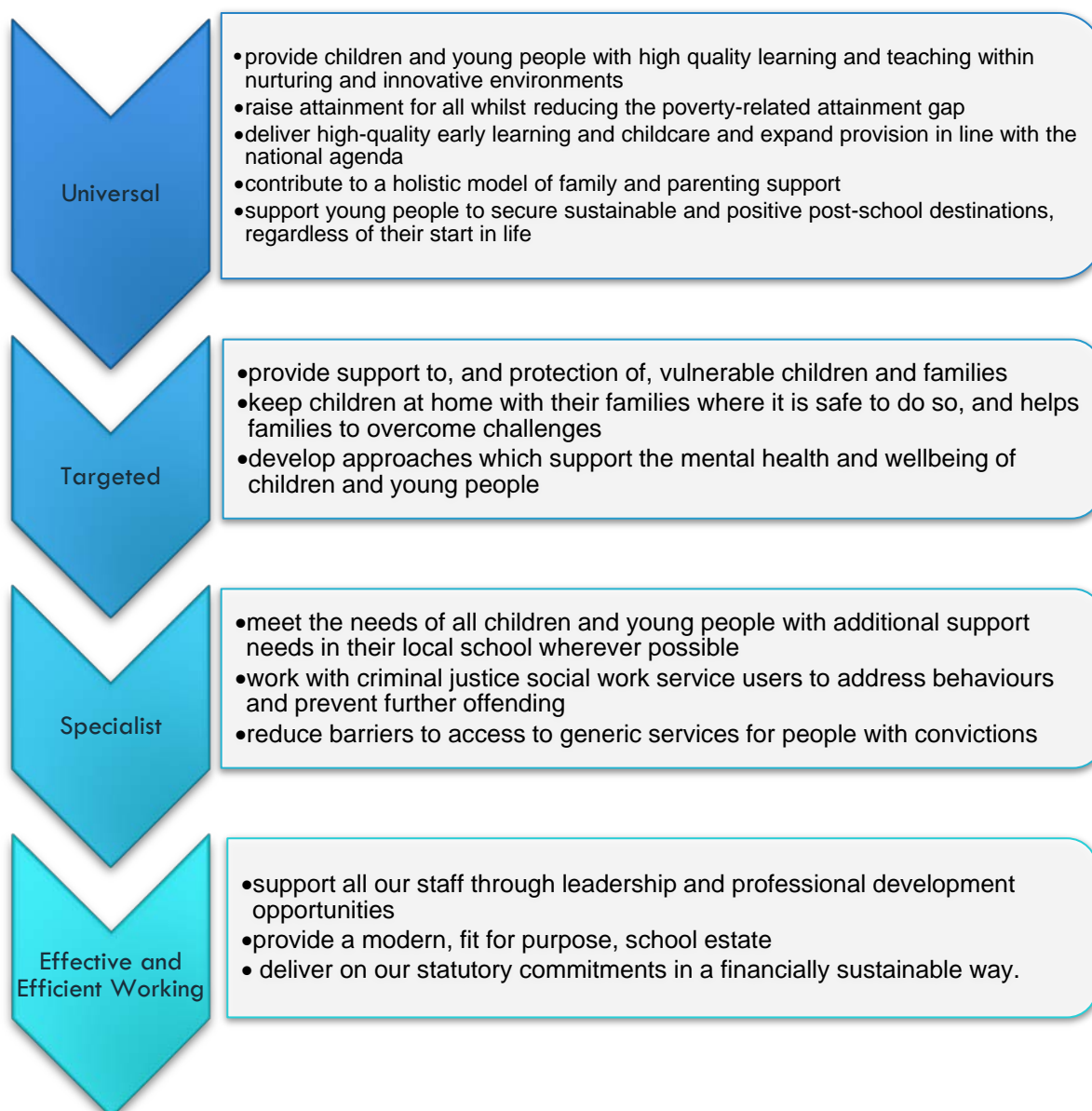
- 1.1 This Service Improvement Plan for Children's Services covers the period from 2020/21 to 2022/23. The plan outlines what the service intends to achieve over the next three years based on the resources expected to be available.
- 1.2 The major factors that this Service Improvement Plan will require 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.

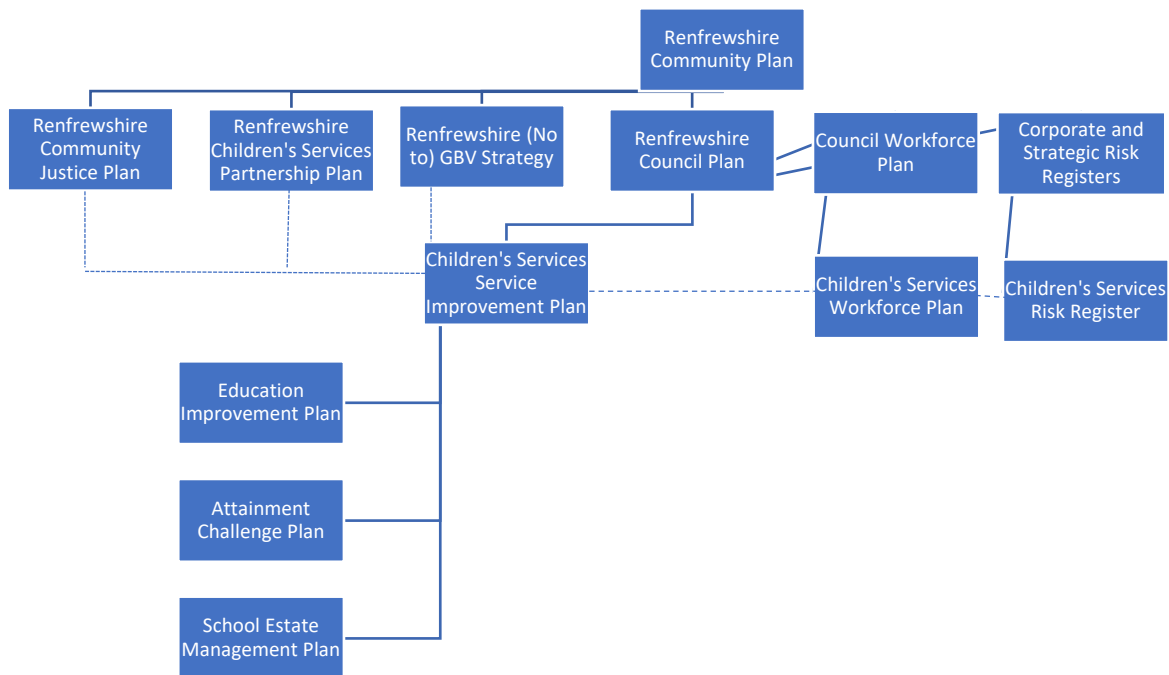
2.2 The Director of Children's Services is the Council's Chief Education Officer and the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice is the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) for the Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership. Each local authority is required to designate a senior member of staff to act as CSWO under the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.

2.3 The objectives of the service are:



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 requirement to increase early years provision per child to 1140 hours annually by August 2020;
- the findings of the Independent Care Review which were published in February 2020 and set a clear national direction for how looked after children should be supported;
- ongoing implementation of the Scottish Attainment Challenge, including Pupil Equity Funding and the Care Experienced Fund;
- the ongoing Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, and the legal duties on local authority services arising from this;
- ongoing implementation of the extension of the right to continuing care and aftercare for care leavers;

- the extension of a presumption against short prison sentences which is generating additional demands on Criminal Justice Social Work to manage community sentences;
- new duties emerging for Criminal Justice Social Work in relation to support for Home Detention Curfews, provision of Bail Supervision, increased intervention in relation to Diversion from Prosecution, Structured Deferred Sentences, support to Electronic Monitoring, and expectations around increasing the uptake of Voluntary Throughcare; 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 an increase in the volume and complexity of community sentences, partly as a result of a national impetus to reduce the prison population;
- 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, particularly senior leadership roles;
- pressures in the recruitment of early years staff to support delivery of 1140 hours;

- a Criminal Justice Social Work grant which has steadily reduced over recent years and continues to reduce at a time of increasing demands on the service; and
- an ongoing need to modernise the school estate.

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 positive work to make public spaces accessible and inclusive. Our schools provide accessible environments and our unpaid work squads regularly carry out environmental improvements which contribute to safe and accessible spaces.
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 current example is schools working towards the LGBT Charter Award.
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.
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, the Renfrewshire Gender Based Violence Strategy Group and joint working with Police Scotland in relation to Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) processes.
- 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 women and children impacted by gender-based violence (including women involved with justice), supporting adults with convictions with their addiction and mental health issues and improving the transition between children's and adult services are reflected in the actions in the strategic plans of both agencies.
- 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. In 2019, the service embarked on a long-term strategic partnership with Barnardos; this has a focus on the mental health of children and young people.

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. Overall progress against the Council's Best Value Audit actions are monitored annually by the Leadership Board. 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
Implementation of new case management system for Children & Families social work	Moderate	Working together to improve outcomes

Continuous Improvement

- 3.12 Children's Services is committed to delivering high-quality services. It has a Quality Improvement Framework for schools and early years establishments. Social work services and educational establishments are subject to considerable, robust, external scrutiny from the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland. Consideration is also being given to how we develop a Quality Improvement Framework which will be applied to Children's Social Work. Reports on every school inspection are taken to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board and from 2020/21 on, that Policy Board will also receive regular updates on the inspection of registered services within Children and Families Social Work. The service contributes to multi-agency self-evaluation work and is currently involved in an evaluation being carried out by the Gender Based Violence Strategy Group.
- 3.13 The service will continue to contribute to the Council's Right for Renfrewshire transformation programme; leading on Early Intervention and Prevention and providing support to other service reviews as required, ensuring the Council continues to deliver the best possible services for our customers/service users now and in the future. More detail on this is provided in paragraphs 3.22, 3.23 and 3.24.

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 Teacher recruitment continues to be a challenge for most Scottish local authorities. The situation regarding non-promoted teachers in the primary sector is improving but there remains a greater challenge in securing secondary staff in some subject disciplines, particularly for supply cover purposes. Renfrewshire's Aspiring Leadership programme continues to support recruitment to promoted vacancies.
- 3.16 Securing the required early years workforce to support the 1140 expansion remains a priority. Professional development opportunities will continue to be progressed to support the development of new and existing staff to maintain the provision of high quality early learning and childcare. A school estate programme of new builds, refurbishments and extensions is providing increased capacity and all eligible children will be able to access their 1140 hours from August 2020.
- 3.17 Professional development remains a priority for the service. A focus on leadership continues and in 2020/21 work will be undertaken on co-coaching, building resilience, empowerment, and the mental health and wellbeing of leaders. The continued development of support for carers, particularly kinship carers, remains a core element of service development and will require additional focus in relation to the recommendations of the Independent Care Review. The Unpaid Work service is participating in a multi-council pilot project developing learning and training for paraprofessionals working in that field. Once the next element of the Scottish Government's child protection improvement plan is published, implementation will become a priority for the service and the wider Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee.

UK Withdrawal from the EU

- 3.18 The UK began withdrawal from the European Union on 31 January 2020. 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.

- 3.19 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.

Climate Change

- 3.20 Following the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in June 2019, the service will continue to contribute to working groups on climate change to develop a range of plans to reduce the Council's own carbon emissions and support partners, businesses and citizens in Renfrewshire to reduce theirs. As part of the development of the school estate, Children's Services works with colleagues in Property Services to deliver sustainable school buildings. At present, 31 Renfrewshire schools and pre-five centres have been awarded the Green Flag as an eco-school, with most others signed up to the scheme and working towards this. One of the focus areas for STEM learning in 2020 will be events themed around climate change in the run-up to the international conference being held in Glasgow in November 2020.

Developments for 2020/21

- 3.21 In light of the publication of the findings of the Independent Care Review in February 2020, Children's Services will consider the implications of this for policy and practice and will develop plans to support the implementation of any changes to national policy and/or legislation arising from the review. It is anticipated that this may include elements relating to continuing care and to preventing siblings being separated in care placements.
- 3.22 Children's Services will continue to work with other council services on the Right For Renfrewshire transformation programme. Children's Services leads on the Early Intervention and Prevention workstream which is focused on delivering services and supports at an earlier stage in people's lives to prevent a need for crisis services at a later date. This aligns with the national agenda outlined in the Independent Care Review which includes a long-term goal to render crisis services obsolete in family social work. It also aligns with the national community justice agenda in taking a more holistic approach to preventing offending behaviour.

- 3.23 Work done in 2019/20 to evaluate Family Group Decision Making as a model for supporting families will be further developed. This will be a key component of a new model of family support which will build on the service's success in reducing overall numbers of children in care over the past decade. The service will also explore opportunities to expand the provision of kinship care and foster care, re-emphasising the commitment to place children in care in a family setting whenever possible.
- 3.24 In order to maximise the benefits of having Children & Families social work services managed alongside education, Children's Services will be developing an 'early help' model which will draw on staff and resources from both areas of the service and will involve partners from the third sector and other universal services. The service will also look at how this model could support the work of criminal justice social work and community justice. The aim of the new model will be early intervention and this will be underpinned by a Family Support Strategy and a Parenting Strategy for Renfrewshire.
- 3.25 The expansion of Early Years provision will continue with a view to meeting the target of 1140 hours for all eligible children by August 2020. Recruiting additional staff and ensuring suitable professional development opportunities remains a priority. A programme of new builds, extensions and refurbishments will continue to ensure that nursery classes and early years centres have the facilities to allow them to provide the additional hours.
- 3.26 The review of Additional Support Needs provision is nearing completion and proposals will be presented to elected members for approval in 2020/21. Three tiers of support will ensure schools are empowered to make decisions which will meet the needs of learners in their establishment wherever possible.
- 3.27 The service has entered into a strategic partnership with Barnardos and the seven-year arrangement will focus on the mental health of children and young people. During 2020/21, consultation with communities will help determine where changes need to be made in order to shape support which tackles the causes of poor mental health as well as the symptoms. One gap that has been identified as a priority is for those whose needs are greater than can be met by counselling services but which don't meet the threshold for specialist health services such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

- 3.28 The service will build on the successes highlighted by Education Scotland and 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 the well-established partnership with the University of Strathclyde on literacy, the service now has a partnership with Stanford University to develop approaches to teaching mathematics. Children's Services will host colleagues from Stanford at a practitioner conference (the first to take place in Europe) in May 2020.
- 3.29 The refreshed narrative launched by Education Scotland in September 2019 and the recently announced national review that will be led by OECD will set the context for the continuing work to strengthen 3-18 curriculum with a view to ensuring it is coherent, flexible and provides appropriate progression and levels of attainment for all children and young people.
- 3.32 Renfrewshire's Alcohol and Drug Commission is due to report its findings in 2020. These will reflect the role of addictions in contributing to multiple disadvantage and vulnerability. Children's Services will work with partners on implementing the recommendations of the commission.
- 3.33 A revised strategy on parental engagement with education was launched in October 2019. During 2020/21, a priority will be developing a professional learning plan on parental engagement which will promote consistency of practice and ethos and set the foundations for collaborative working with parents. A test of change approach is underway in four school clusters looking at how to best support a family learning approach.
- 3.34 Children's Services will support the emerging work on corporate values following on from the large-scale staff consultation during 2019. The four corporate values will be embedded in policies and practice.

4. Our Resources

- 4.1 Local government continues to operate in a challenging financial environment. The financial challenges are expected to continue in 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;
- managing the expansion of early learning and childcare to 1140 hours;
- increasing numbers of children with additional support needs in our schools; and
- 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.

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.

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

5.3.1 Achievements

Key achievements in 2019/20 against this priority include:






- outcomes from school inspections being significantly higher than national averages;
- achieving performance consistently above the national average against expected levels in literacy and numeracy, including particularly strong performance in P7 and S3. This positive trend continues into the senior phase with Renfrewshire Council performing above national average and virtual comparator across key measures;
- offering a range of professional learning opportunities on pedagogical leadership for early years practitioners and leaders, improving knowledge and understanding of how children learn, particularly through play;
- accessing professional training provided by Stanford University on Mathematical Mindsets and having six primary schools participate in an immersive Maths Camp;
- establishing successful partnerships with Glasgow Science Centre and the Scottish Science Education Research Centre (SSERC) to support the delivery of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects;
- continuing work on employability skills in schools facilitating improvement in positive post-school destinations; and
- increase in young people applying for Foundation Apprenticeships as part of the joint delivery of vocational programmes by schools, West College Scotland and the council;
- the introduction of bespoke pathways for a group of young people in construction, manufacturing, and early learning and childcare; and
- the inclusion of St Catherine's Primary in an Education Scotland thematic review as a case study of highly effective assessment practice.


5.3.2 Actions

What we will do	What difference it will make	When we will do it by?	Who will lead on 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	Education Manager (Curriculum)
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	Education Manager (Senior Phase)

What we will do	What difference it will make	When we will do it by?	Who will lead on this?
Develop and strengthen our partnership with the Winning Scotland Foundation and Stanford University in the field of Mathematical Mindsets.	Equipping children and young people with the skills needed in the workplace improves opportunities and life chances for all.	31-Mar-2021	Education Manager (STEM)
Expand the support offered to young people to develop leadership skills and increase levels of pupil participation in schools and beyond.	Equipping children and young people with the skills needed in the workplace improves opportunities and life chances for all.	31-Mar-2021	Education Manager (Professional Development and Leadership)
Review the curriculum for a specific focus on learner pathways (2-18) and the S3 curriculum.	The curriculum will be coherent and flexible and provide progression and levels of attainment for all children and young people.	31-Mar-2021	Head of Curriculum and Quality
Develop progression pathways on literacy and numeracy which align with national expectations but can be tailored to ensure they are relevant to the context of individuals schools.	The curriculum will be coherent and flexible and provide progression and levels of attainment for all children and young people.	31-Mar-2021	Education Manager (Curriculum)
Develop the breadth of choice available to young people by expanding the curriculum offer in the senior phase to include a wider range of accredited achievement opportunities and vocational programmes including the expansion of Foundation Apprenticeships.	Equip children and young people with the skills knowledge and experience to be successful in life beyond schools.	31-Mar-2021	Education Manager (Senior Phase)

5.3.2 Performance Measures

Code	Performance Indicator	Frequency	Status	Current Value	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
CHS/PD/01	% of School leavers in a positive destination	Annual		93.1%	95%	95%	95%	95%
CHS/ATT/01a	% of Leavers attaining literacy SCQF Level 4	Annual		96%	98%	98%	98%	98%
CHS/ATT/01b	% of Leavers attaining numeracy SCQF Level 4	Annual		92%	95%	95%	96%	96%
CHS/ATT/01c	% of Leavers attaining literacy SCQF Level 5	Annual		87%	86%	86%	88%	88%
CHS/ATT/01d	% of Leavers attaining numeracy SCQF Level 5	Annual		76%	75%	75%	77%	77%
CHS/ATT/12	Average Complementary Tariff (S4)	Annual	New for 2018/19: no target	311	313	316	320	322
CHS/ATT/13	Average Complementary Tariff (S5)	Annual	New for 2018/19: no target	546	554	560	565	570

Code	Performance Indicator	Frequency	Status	Current Value	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
CHS/ATT/04	No. of opportunities for young people to achieve through accredited awards	Quarterly		296	282	1200	1200	1250
CHS/PD/02	No of foundation apprenticeships accessed by Renfrewshire school pupils	Annual	New for 2020/21; baseline to be established	New for 2020/21; baseline data to be gathered and targets presented in 2021/22 plan.				

5.4 Strategic Priority 2: Building strong, safe and resilient communities

5.4.1 Achievements






Key achievements in 2019/20 against this priority include:






- successfully delivering 1140 hours to 41% of eligible children as part of the phased implementation, with full roll-out on target to complete by the due date of August 2020;
- being one of the areas to pilot a new trauma-informed approach to joint investigative interviewing for child protection cases;
- forming a multi-year strategic partnership with Barnardos focused on the mental health of children and young people;
- delivering a range of interventions and initiatives to promote improved health and wellbeing in children and young people, including the social and emotional literacy programme PATHS (implemented in 7 early years settings, 27 primaries and 1 ASN school) and the cognitive behavioural therapy programme Living Life to the Full (in 1 ASN and 7 secondary schools);
- expanding the availability of the Mentors in Violence programme in secondary schools as part of a multi-faceted, multi-agency approach to tackling gender-based violence;
- achieving a sustained increase in the number of young people being diverted from court to Children's Hearings for offending behaviour as a result of the intervention and support of the Whole Systems Team, meaning a reduction in stigma and a greater likelihood of completing community sentences;
- contributed to the engagement activity of the Alcohol and Drugs Commission, with over 100 secondary school pupils being supported to take part in focus groups;
- contributed to community projects via the Unpaid Work team, including the creation of mud kitchens for schools, dementia blankets for care homes, ongoing work with the Renfrewshire Environmental Trust, landscaping improvements to a local historic building and painting and decorating projects in the community; and
- continuing to expand the Renfrewshire Nurturing Relationships Approach (which is now in 90% of Renfrewshire schools) and rolling it out to early years providers.

5.4.2 Actions

What we will do	What difference it will make	When we will do it by?	Who will lead on this?
Further explore the opportunities presented by embedding a Family Group Decision Making approach within Children and Families social work.	Early intervention supports families to make positive changes which improve relationships and may prevent compulsory measures.	31-Mar-2021	Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager
Further develop support for and use of kinship care	Families are supported to be able to provide a stable and safe environment for children and young people.	31-Mar-2021	Children's Services Manager
Further develop the fostering service, with a focus on placements for older children.	Families are supported to be able to provide a stable and safe environment for children and young people. Older children are able to remain in a family placement rather than a residential care service.	31-Mar-2021	Children's Services Manager
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-2021	Child Protection Advisor
Work with partners on delivering the recommendations of Renfrewshire's Alcohol and Drugs Commission.	Agencies work together to reduce the impact of addictions on the lives of Renfrewshire residents.	31 Mar 2022	Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice

5.4.3 Performance Measures

Code	Performance Indicator	Frequency	Status	Current Value	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
CHS/CJ/CPO/02	% of NEW unpaid work orders/requirement complete by the required date	Quarterly		77%	72%	72%	75%	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		43%	85%	85%	85%	85%
CHS/CJ/CPO/04	Percentage of NEW unpaid work clients seen within 1 working day of the order	Quarterly		79%	70%	70%	70%	70%
CHS/CJ/CPO/05	Percentage of NEW unpaid work clients receiving an induction within 5 working days of the order	Quarterly		62%	75%	75%	75%	75%
CHS/CJ/CPO/06	Percentage of NEW unpaid work clients beginning work placement within 7 working days of the order	Quarterly		68%	65%	65%	65%	65%

Code	Performance Indicator	Frequency	Status	Current Value	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
CHS/CPR/01	Percentage of children registered in this period who have previously been on the Child Protection Register	Quarterly		28%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
RCPC/01	Number of children on the Child Protection Register at quarter end date	Quarterly		80	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
CHS/LAC/01	The percentage of children made subject to a supervision order that were seen by a supervising officer within 15 days	Quarterly		78%	100%	100%	100%	100%
CHS/LAC/02	Percentage of accommodated Looked After Children placed with families	Quarterly		81%	83%	83%	85%	87%
CHS/LGBF/01	Percentage of Looked After Children cared for in the community	Quarterly		93%	89.9%	89.9%	89.9%	89.9%

5.5 Strategic Priority 3: Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all

5.5.1 Achievements

Key achievements in 2019/20 against this priority include:






- continuing to narrow the poverty-related attainment gap for children in Renfrewshire;
- developing a quality assurance framework for looked after children;
- enhancing the provision of counselling services in all secondary schools and in targeted primary and ASN schools;
- launching a new Parental Engagement Strategy; and
- rolling out the Locality Inclusion Support Network (LISN) approach as a peer support model for those with additional support needs to all schools following two successful pilots;
- delivering activity programmes for young carers during school holiday periods; and
- national recognition for approaches to engaging families and communities, with Todholm Primary winning the Family and Community Learning Award at the 2019 Scottish Education Awards and Mary Russell school highlighted as a good practice example by Education Scotland.






5.5.2 Actions

What we will do	What difference it will make	When we will do it by?	Who will lead on this?
Continue to work towards providing 1140 hours of high quality early learning and childcare for all eligible children in Renfrewshire.	Children are given the best start and are supported to reach their full potential.	31-Jul-2020	Head of Curriculum and Quality
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-2021	Director of Children's Services
Provide high quality education and support to narrow the outcomes gap for children from disadvantaged groups.	Children are given the best start and are supported to reach their full potential.	31-Jul-2021	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-2021	Quality Assurance and Practice Development Manager
Implement the national Health and Wellbeing census and collaborate with the West Partnership to use the results to inform improvement.	Children and young people have increased resilience and are supported in social and emotional development.	31-Mar-2021	Education Manager (Health and Wellbeing)
Develop the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategic Partnership with Barnardos to address the causes and symptoms of poor mental health in children and young people.	Children and young people enjoyed improved mental health and can access appropriate support if and when they need it.	31-Mar-2021	Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice
Provide enhanced educational support to care experienced children and young people through an intensive family supports service, leadership development and a bespoke attainment mentoring programme.	All children in Renfrewshire have the best possible start in life.	31-Mar-2021	Children's Services Manager
Implement the recommendations of the ASN review.	Children and young people are supported to remain in mainstream education with their peers.	31-Mar-2021	Head of Schools

5.5.3 Performance Measures

Code	Performance Indicator	Frequency	Status	Current Value	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
CHS/EY/04	% of entitled 2 year olds accessing 1140 hours of early learning and childcare	Quarterly	New for 2020/21; baseline data to be gathered and targets presented in mid-year update					
CHS/EY/03	% of 3 and 4 year olds accessing 1140 hours of early learning and childcare	Quarterly	New for 2020/21; baseline data to be gathered and targets presented in mid-year update					

CHS/LAC/CL/01	Percentage of care leavers participating in employment, training or education	Quarterly		42%	51%	53%	55%	57%
CHS/LAC/CL/02	Percentage of care leavers who have had a period of homelessness in the last 6 months	Quarterly		4%	0%	0%	0%	0%
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	n/a	2018/19 data not yet available	36%	32%	28%	TBC once 2018-19 data becomes available (expected by end of Feb)
CHS/ATT/08	Average Total Tariff Score of Looked After Children (school leavers)	Annual	n/a	2018/19 data not yet available	310	320	320	TBC once 2018-19 data becomes available (expected by end of Feb)
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	n/a	2018/19 data not yet available	65%	64%	63%	62%
CHS/ATT/14	Percentage Point Gap in % 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		12	9	8	7	6
CHS/ATT/15	Percentage Point Gap in % 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		10	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		18	17	16	15	14

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		14	17	16	15	14
CHS/SCH/07	% of children attending school (Primary)	Annual		94.9%	95.5%	95.5%	95.5%	95.5%
CHS/SCH/08	% of children attending school (Secondary)	Annual		90.3%	91%	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		93%	92%	92%	92%	92%
CHS/SCH/10	% of young people choosing to stay onto S6 (as % of S4 roll at September two years before)	Annual		74%	68%	69%	70%	71%

5.6 Strategic Priority 4: creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy

5.6.1 Achievements

Children's Services did not previously have any actions for this priority. However, the school estate management plan promotes environmentally sustainable and energy efficient practices for new builds and the service works with other council services on this.

5.6.2 Actions

What we will do	What difference it will make	When we will do it by?	Who will lead on this?
Continue to work with other council services to deliver improvements to the school estate which offer a high degree of environmental sustainability and energy efficiency.	Following the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in June 2019, the delivery of this action will make a critical contribution towards Renfrewshire being carbon neutral by 2030.	31 Mar-2021	Education Manager (Resources)
Progress consultation and development work in relation to the priority schools identified in the School Estate Management Plan.	Pupils and staff enjoy a modern, fit for purpose, school estate which supports learning and achievement.	31 Mar 2021	Education Manager (Resources)
Deliver a programme of events in schools related to the COP26 climate change conference in partnership with the West STEM Partnership Hub.	Our children and young people are better informed about the impact of climate change and the importance of sustainability and are supported to develop skills to meet the challenges of a climate emergency.	31 Dec 2020	Education Manager (STEM)

5.6.3 Performance Measures

Children's Services currently has no performance measures in relation to this priority.

5.7 Strategic Priority 5: Working together to improve outcomes

5.7.1 Achievements

Key achievements in 2019/20 against this priority include:



- providing a programme of leadership development activity for school-based staff;
- providing ongoing professional learning opportunities, including certificated qualifications, to new and existing early years practitioners and leaders;
- appointing a number of internal candidates to promoted posts within early years, demonstrating the impact of our professional development programme on leadership skills;
- delivering on a challenging recruitment programme to support early years expansion, with 63% of the staff required to deliver additional hours in August now recruited;
- recognition, through the General Teaching Council of Scotland revalidation process, of the improved outcomes for children resulting in part from high quality professional learning and a positive culture which supports teacher and school empowerment;
- mainstreaming the Just Learning employability programme which helps people with convictions develop the skills to progress in education, employment and/or training;
- introducing a positively received mentoring service to support vulnerable children and families which provides care experienced children with one of our 56 trained mentors to help them reach their potential; and
- identifying external funding to create a post of Addictions Development worker to support the service's community justice work.

5.7.2 Actions

What we will do	What difference it will make	When we will do it by?	Who will lead on this?
Evaluate options and develop a model of joint working through an integrated children's services team which delivers an 'early help' service to families in Renfrewshire.	Families benefit from universal and targeted interventions which help them overcome challenges and supports children remaining at home, cared for by their parents.	31-Mar-2022	Director of Children's Services
Through Community Justice Renfrewshire further develop the Just Learning employability programme for people with convictions.	By addressing some of the factors which lead to offending behaviour, the rate of re-offending can be reduced. People with convictions can be supported to make positive changes.	31-Mar-2021	Criminal Justice Service Manager
Managing the use of Attainment Challenge, Pupil Equity Fund, and Care-Experienced Fund to	Additional funding is deployed effectively to support Children's	31-Mar-2021	Head of Curriculum and Quality

maximise the benefits from additional funding.	Services in delivering the priorities of the Council.		
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	Head of Curriculum and Quality
Implement and embed a new case management system for Children and Families Social Work.	Information systems are fit for purpose and future proofed ensuring all records are robust and support practice and information sharing.	31-Mar-2021	Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice
Roll out the leadership programme for early learning and childcare heads, deputies and middle leaders, including professional learning and qualification opportunities.	Staff at all levels recognise their individual responsibility to facilitate improved outcomes for children and young people.	31-Jul-2020	Head of Schools
Contribute to a pilot and learning exercise on national training for Unpaid Work paraprofessionals.	Staff at all levels have the opportunity for personal and professional development which supports the delivery of good quality services.	31 Mar 2021	Criminal Justice Service Manager
Implement a new programme of leadership development within social work.	Staff at all levels have the opportunity for personal and professional development which supports the delivery of good quality services.	31 Mar 2021	Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice

5.7.3 Performance Measures

Code	Performance Indicator	Frequency	Status	Current Value	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
CHS/CORP/01a	% of Stage 1 complaints responded to within timescales agreed with customers	Quarterly	New for 2020/21	New for 2020/21	New for 2020/21	95%	95%	95%
CHS/CORP/01b	% of Stage 2 complaints responded to within timescales agreed with customers	Quarterly	New for 2020/21	New for 2020/21	New for 2020/21	95%	95%	95%
CHS/CORP/03	% of FOI requests completed within timescale by Children's Services	Quarterly		94%	100%	100%	100%	100%
CHS/SCH/05	Percentage of pupils satisfied with establishments Education Scotland Survey	Annual		82.4%	85%	85%	85%	85%

Appendix 1: Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators

Code	Performance Indicator	Current Value	Last Update	Short Term Trend	Long Term Trend
CHS/LGB F/01	Percentage of Looked After Children cared for in the community	93%	Q3 2019/20	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/02	Gross cost of "Children Looked After" in residential based services per child per week	£3,532.57	2017/18	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/03	Gross cost of "Children Looked After" in community placements per child per week	£438.13	2017/18	↑	↓
CHS/LGB F/04	Cost per pupil for primary schools	£4,753.00	2018/19	↓	↓
CHS/LGB F/05	Cost per pupil for secondary schools	£6,518.00	2018/19	↓	↓
CHS/LGB F/06	Cost per pre-school education place	£5,787.00	2018/19	↓	↓
CHS/LGB F/07	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5	65%	2018/19	↓	↑
CHS/LGB F/08	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6	36%	2018/19	—	↑
CHS/LGB F/09	% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5	45%	2018/19	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/10	% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6	18%	2018/19	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/11	% of adults satisfied with local schools	80%	2016-19	↓	↓
CHS/LGB F/12	% of pupils entering positive destinations	93.1%	2017/18	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/13	Overall average total tariff	911	2018/19	↓	↑
CHS/LGB F/14	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 1	652	2018/19	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/15	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 2	807	2018/19	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/16	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 3	968	2018/19	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/17	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 4	1,062	2018/19	↓	↓
CHS/LGB F/18	Average total tariff SIMD quintile 5	1,215	2018/19	↓	↓
CHS/LGB F/31	% of children meeting developmental milestones	58%	2017/18	↑	↓
CHS/LGB F/32	% of funded early years provision which is graded good/better	96.9%	2018/19	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/33	School attendance (%)	93%	2018/19	?	↓
CHS/LGB F/34	School attendance rates (LAC%)	91.3%	2016/17	?	↓
CHS/LGB F/35	School exclusion rates per 1,000 pupils	21.7	2016/17	?	↓
CHS/LGB F/36	School exclusion rates per 1,000 looked after children	74.36	2016/17	?	↓
CHS/LGB F/37	% participation for 16-19 years olds (per 100)	91.7%	2018/19	↑	↑
CHS/LGB F/38	% of child protection re-registration within 18 months	9.4%	2017/18	↓	↓
CHS/LGB F/39	% LAC with 1 or more placement in the last year (Aug to July)	16%	2017/18	↑	↑