

West Lothian Children's Services Plan Annual Report 2025-26



Getting it Right for West
Lothian's Children and Families



West Lothian
COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

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In West Lothian we recognise that investment in our children and young people is one of the most valuable long-term investments that we can make.

By investing our resources in the delivery and development of services that focus on prevention and early intervention we can ensure that children's needs are met at the earliest opportunity and children are supported to achieve their full potential.

This Annual Report for 2025-2026 reflects the work and progress of the Children's Services Plan Priorities and Actions

Annual Reporting

As in previous years and in accordance with the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014, local and national partners collaborate to deliver services for West Lothian's children and families in line with the Children's Services Plan 2023 - 2026. The West Lothian Children's Services Plan does not exist in isolation, and this plan aligns with relevant existing plans and strategies across West Lothian and nationally.

This report outlines the key areas of work undertaken by the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group, the key factors that have impacted on this work and the progress made in taking forward the priorities of the West Lothian Children's Services Plan 2023-2026.

Planning Services for Children, Young People and Families

The multi-agency Children's Services Plan 2023-26 sets out the vision and priorities for the children's partnership.

As a product of partnership working amongst the community planning partners, the plan is agreed through the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group, reporting to the Community Planning Partnership.

The partnership listens to the voices of children and ensures that their views are valued and respected.

Partners have a shared commitment to achieving positive outcomes for children, young people and their families through active participation in joint planning for service delivery. The views of children and their families are at the heart of the decision-making process.

Across children's services there is strong focus on supporting whole families, supporting people to remain at home or in homely settings within their own communities as far as is possible, safe and in keeping with wishes and rights.

Children's services are committed to the provision of whole family intensive support to retain children within their own family network and community.

There continues to be significant financial challenges across children's services, with managing demand and making best use of resources both integral to future service delivery.

Innovative approaches in the use of technology are being continually developed and are supporting improvements in service delivery. Opportunities for further innovation will be considered and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Siobhan McGarty
Chair of the Children & Families
Strategic Planning Group



Our Vision

Partners in West Lothian believe that every child should have the best start in life to enable them to: have high aspirations, build the foundations for living well in the future and realise their potential.

This underpins the national programmes of the Curriculum for Excellence and Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), with desired outcomes that all children become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens through being safe, nurtured, healthy, active, included, achieving, respected and responsible.

Partners are committed to providing services that are holistic and developed with families and partner agencies; that tackle inequalities and focus on improved outcomes for children. To ensure that children and young people in need have a head start in life, preventative work with families is valued and promoted, to support with the pressures of parenting and improve overall outcomes. There is a commitment to providing a high standard of statutory and child protection services when needed.

Our Principles

Central to the underpinning principles of the planning and delivery of services for children is targeted support to children and their families early enough whilst recognising that there will always be a need to provide services for the ongoing problems that families may experience.

The West Lothian Children's Services Plan has been developed to encompass the following principles:

- Re-distributing resources towards targeted activities with individuals, groups and communities
- Improved integrated working
- Improved outcomes for the individual child and their family
- Focusing on early intervention by shifting resources from managing crisis to prevention and building resilience.

Partnership Working

The Children's Services Plan confirms the commitment of partners to:

- Actively participate in well-established joint service planning in West Lothian, through: Children and Families Strategic Planning Group, Corporate Parenting Strategic Planning Group, Safer Communities Strategic Planning Group, Child Protection Committee, Anti-Poverty Task Force and the Third Sector Strategy Group.
- Investigate best practice in early intervention and preventative approaches, and implement such approaches across West Lothian.
- Build on previous successes and further demonstrate the added value from cooperative approaches to planning and delivering services and activity.

Our Priorities

The plan defines the key priorities which have been agreed by partners as multi-agency actions and explains the way in which activity relating to each of these priorities will be linked to key outcomes, will be monitored through the use of meaningful performance indicators and will be driven by challenging targets. The following seven priorities are identified by the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group as key areas of work:

- **Protecting Children**
- **Strengthening Corporate Parenting**
- **Raising Achievement and Attainment**
- **Promoting Health and Wellbeing**
- **Promoting Children's Rights and participation**
- **Reducing Harm from Substance Use**
- **Reducing Harm for Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law**

There are themes identified that run through all of the priorities:

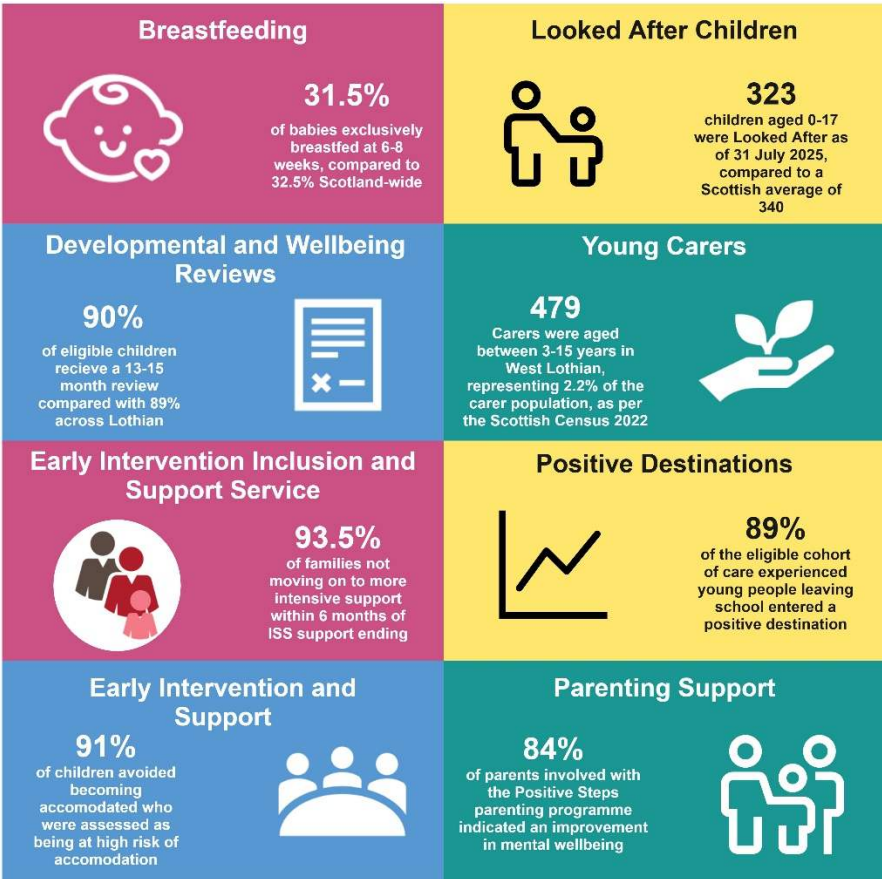
- Early Intervention and Prevention Approaches
- GIRFEC / UNCRC / the Promise
- Partnership working and associated strategies and plans

Profile of Children, Young People & Families in West Lothian

On 30 June 2024, the population of West Lothian was 186,440. This is an increase of 1.2% from 184,270 in 2023, showing faster growth than Scotland overall, driven by higher birth rates and net migration, though with a significant ageing demographic too.

In essence, expect West Lothian's population in 2026 to be comfortably over 180,000 and trending towards 200,000, reflecting strong local growth.

Between 2001 and 2024, the population of West Lothian has increased by 17.2%. This is the 4th highest percentage change out of the 32 council areas in Scotland. Over the same period, Scotland’s population rose by 9.5%. The population of West Lothian is projected to increase from 181,730 to 190,659, between 2022 and 2032. This is an increase of 4.9%, which compares to a projected increase of 4.4% for Scotland as a whole.



Sources for statistics – National Records Scotland www.nrscotland.gov.uk, West Lothian Council Social Policy, West Lothian Council Education , NHS Lothian

Strategic & Legislative Developments

There have been significant strategic and legislative developments during 2025/26 likely to impact on Children and Family Strategic Planning Group Partners service delivery in the future



The [Children \(Care, Care Experience, and Services Planning\) \(Scotland\) Bill 2025](#) includes measures to enhance care and support for children in the care system, or who have left it. It forms a key part of the Scottish Government's work to implement the recommendations of the Independent Care Review, known as The Promise.

The first [Children's Rights Scheme under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024 \(the UNCRC Act\)](#) was laid before the Scottish Parliament in November 2025.



On 6th May 2025, the Scottish Government released its 2025-26 Programme for Government (PFG) detailing its priorities for the coming year. The highlighted areas with commitments made affecting children and families were; Child Poverty & Family Support, Care Experienced Young People and Education & Early Years

The Children's Hearings System Redesign (2025–26) is a Scottish Government initiative to reform child protection, focusing on a trauma-informed, inquisitorial approach based on "The Promise". It aims to implement recommendations from the 2023 "Hearings for Children" report, updating legislation to ensure children's rights are central, strengthening panel member recruitment, and improving system stability.



The [Cross-border Placement of Children \(Requirements, Effect and Enforcement\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2026](#) ('the Regulations') came into force on 9 February 2026. They provide a legal framework for the recognition of certain court orders made elsewhere in the UK which underpin temporary placements into residential care home services and foster care, as well as a framework for giving effect to voluntary arrangements resulting in residential care placements in Scotland.

Section 15 of the [Children \(Care and Justice\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#) (the 2024 Act) relates to the custody of children before the commencement of criminal proceedings i.e. children who have been arrested and are in police custody. The Act amends various sections of the [Criminal Justice \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) (the 2016 Act), with these provisions commenced on 30th March 2026.



Scotland's strategy for addressing violence against women and girls was updated in December 2023. The [Equally Safe Delivery Plan 2024–2026](#) sets out the detailed actions and expected deliverables required to realise the strategy's overarching objective of preventing and eradicating violence against women and children

In 2025, Scotland is advancing a Rights-Based Justice System for children and young people through the full incorporation of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#). Key 2025 initiatives include the Children's Rights Scheme with 41 commitments, implementing the [Children \(Care and Justice\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#), and strengthening a trauma-informed, trauma-responsive approach to minimize detention for under-18s education authorities grant-aided and independent schools in Scotland on the use of physical intervention.



Early Intervention and Prevention

In West Lothian early intervention and prevention has been identified as a strategic theme that runs through all the priorities in the Children's Services Plan and is supported through robust multi-agency partnership working. The benefits of preventing crisis and creating conditions to allow children and young people to thrive is recognised as the best outcome for the individual, the wider family and the community.

Partners have embedded models of support which engage with families with very complex needs and with the most entrenched social issues using asset based, co- production ways of working. This has the benefit of working with families on their own terms, addressing issues that are live and important for the family by building strong and persistent relationships between professionals and families, supporting them to navigate and negotiate services and realise the strengths already present within the family to best improve outcomes.

The Inclusion and Support Service is a prevention and early intervention Education and Social Policy integrated service, providing support to children, young people and their families with additional wellbeing support needs. This service works with children from pre-birth until the age of 18 years old in order to help families meet their individual needs and to thrive by accessing the help they need, where and when they need it.

The service provides educational support for children and young people and a range of other interventions can be put in place including; vulnerable pregnancy service, outreach parenting support and family work, parenting group work and counselling. The service has a holistic approach and has developed interventions informed by assessed need and engagement with families.

West Lothian's Family Assessment and Support Services screening group provides a collective forum for professionals to meet to discuss and resource wellbeing referrals for all children pre-birth and up to the age of 5 by the Inclusion and Support Service.

West Lothian's Wellbeing Recovery Group operates in the same way as the Family Assessment and Support Services screening group but considers referrals for children and young people aged 5 – 18 years old. A wide range of agencies are represented including from the voluntary sector, CAMHS, Practice Teams, Education (ASN) and Domestic and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT). The group operates a needs-led approach which ensures young people have access to the correct supports and resources without delay.

All referrals to the Inclusion and Support Service are screened within a two-week period. Referrals for care experienced children and young people, many of who have trauma-related concerns are prioritised, however the majority of referrals are from universal services.

In West Lothian, a dedicated Mental Health Lead Officer is driving forward the transformation of mental health services. This work is guided by the values and principles of the Community Young People's Mental Health & Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework and is supported by associated funding. Efforts are closely aligned with national developments, including changes in legislation, policy, regulation, and guidance. The work also draws on current research evidence and best practice to ensure a high-quality, responsive approach.

The Mental Health Oversight Group (MHOG) plays a key role in providing multi-agency oversight, monitoring progress against the agreed action plan and performance indicators, and ensuring effective governance. Partners work collaboratively to advance shared priorities and embed a rights-based approach to service delivery.

With the allocation of The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, West Lothian has taken a Public Social Partnership (PSP) approach to help families access the support they need, when they need it to significantly reduce the number of children and young people in care by 2030. It is intended to shift family resources from crisis intervention to early intervention and prevention, with support provided based on individual needs of families in response to a range of issues including, child and adolescent mental health, child poverty, drug and alcohol misuse and educational attainment.

Services are designed around strengths-based models, empowering families to identify what support they need to improve mental health and wellbeing. Families are then connected with the services they choose, ensuring they receive timely and appropriate support when it is needed most.

Protecting Children

West Lothian Child Protection Committee (CPC) is the key local body for developing, implementing and improving child protection strategy across and between agencies and the local community. The CPC performs a number of crucial functions in order to jointly identify and manage risk to children and young people, monitor and improve performance and promote the ethos that "It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright".

The CPC has 3 subcommittees to support its work: Quality Assurance & Self Evaluation (QASE), Practice and Training (P&T) and a Learning Review (LR) subcommittee. The CPC has strong links with the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group with its oversight and leadership of Getting It Right for Every Child in West Lothian.

Main Highlights and Developments in the Period 2025-2026:

- Introduced Multi-Agency GIRFEC Practice Guidance, the step-up/step-down framework co-ordinating support to children and families. The guidance outlines how GIRFEC Child's Plans surround and connect with My Plan and Child Protection Procedures.
- Updated Vulnerable Pregnancy Service (VPS) procedures/pathway, providing a single point of entry and earlier assessment when risks and vulnerabilities are identified early in pregnancy.
- Updated multi-agency IRD guidance to improve the assessment, co-ordination and planning when children protection concerns have been identified.
- Updated Edinburgh and Lothian's Multi-Agency Under-Age Sexual Activity Guidance which balances the freedom and rights of young people to make decisions and access support, while also protecting them from activity that could give rise to immediate harm and/or longer-term adverse consequences.
- Secured funding from the Bairns Hoose Development Fund to introduce Bairns Hoose Recovery Workers to West Lothian. The aim of the Bairns Hoose model is to prevent re-traumatisation caused by delayed and disjointed investigation and court proceedings, to keep children safe, allow them access to fair justice and to help them recover from the trauma of their ordeal. The recovery workers provide support to children, young people, and their families to be prepared for and participate in the justice process, including giving evidence via remote link to court, supporting the evidence by commissioner process, and any other relevant justice processes. The workers also provide flexible follow up assessment and recovery support complimenting or providing an alternative to social work intervention.

Priority Areas for 2026-2027

- The CPC has updated its child sexual exploitation guidance and large scale/organised CSE procedure to include Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).
- Implement face to face IRD pilot.
- Embed learning from Learning Reviews.

Promoting Health and Wellbeing

Good health and wellbeing are key to ensuring that children and young people in West Lothian have the best start in life. Children's health and wellbeing starts prior to conception and is influenced by children's wider social and economic environments. Health and wellbeing includes good physical and mental health, feelings of happiness, satisfaction and successful social functioning. It influences the way children and young people interact in their environment. A strong sense of wellbeing provides children with confidence and optimism which maximise their learning potential and life chances.

Improving health and wellbeing is at the core of what we do and is where we focus the majority of our preventative work intervening and providing support, early enough to prevent deterioration or escalation. We recognise however that for some children and young people specialist help will be required to address more complex needs that impact health and wellbeing. Across the partnership we have a range of services in place to support these young people and ensure that they get the right support at the right time.

Main Highlights and Developments in the Period 2025-2026:

- Maternal and Infant Nutrition
 - Delivering Early Breastfeeding Support (DEBS) is now covering 75% of practices in West Lothian and is permanently funded via SG. We have gained additional funding to extend the project to areas across the other Local Authorities.
 - The Health Visiting and Family Nurse services were accredited by UNICEF GOLD. The first service in Lothian to achieve this award.
 - There are 11 Breastfeeding support groups across West Lothian, covering Monday to Thursday all run by NHS staff within Health visiting services.
 - Using the most recent data, exclusive breastfeeding rate of 51.5% at 10-14 days amongst DEBS project participants, compared to 32.5% in West Lothian as a whole (Public Health Scotland).
 - The drop-off rate of any breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks amongst all DEBS project participants was -25%. West Lothian comparison for the most recent data was -30.5%
- Health Visiting
 - Funding from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF) enabled 20 Health Visitors to complete Safe and Together – Core 4 training. In addition, 14 nursery nurses and school nurses completed a one-day overview session. This has strengthened practitioner capacity to work in partnership with non-offending parents and mitigate the impact of gender-based violence on family life and child health outcomes. Going forward all Health Visitors will be trained in core 4.
 - 30 staff members attended training to enhance their skills in supporting neurodivergent children and families.
 - 15 staff members completed Newborn Behavioural Observations (NBO) training. NBO is an evidence-based, relationship-building tool used with parents and infants from birth to three months, supporting understanding of
- Mental Health Development
 - A coordinated communication and marketing plan has been developed to improve awareness, understanding of services supporting children, young people and families. This will bring together learning from engagement activity and journey mapping to ensure messaging is clear, accessible and targeted effectively. The plan will set out a calendar of events, key messages, audiences, channels and measures of success, with a particular focus on reaching those who are least seldom heard. This approach will support more consistent communication across partners and strengthen engagement with preventative supports.
 - A prevention group has been established and they are prioritising wellbeing for parents and early years and developing an online tool to support staff who are working with families around mental wellbeing.
 - Mental health identified as a core priority within the Children's Rights Network, with a commitment to a rights-based approach and amplifying the voice of children and young people in service design.
 - Journey Mapping of Mental Health Pathways - initial engagement with young people, families, and practitioners to understand real experiences of accessing services.
 - Programme Manager for ND recruited and will take forward strategic plans across CAMHS and Children's Services.
 - Outputs from ND SLWG include NHSL Neurodiversity website; pan Lothian ND request for assistance form; updated Ref Help guidance for GPs; QI tests of change for CAMHS clinical pathways and diagnosis of ADHD in Paediatrics; joint working with Community SLT.
 - 2025-26 has seen an overall improvement in the number of children or young people waiting more than 52 weeks for CAMHS mental health treatment with 0 > 52 weeks as at end April 2026.

Priority Areas for 2026-2027

- Maternal and Infant Nutrition
 - Continuing to identify populations that DEBS staff may benefit from additional support.
 - Put out a tender for Good Conversations model of training for early years workers
- Health Visiting
 - Continuing the implementation of the Universal pathway and the promotion of parenting groups
 - Ongoing initiatives to set up parenting groups in all areas of West Lothian with key objectives of improving speech and language outcomes for children which is measured at the 27–30-month review, to date we have seen an improvement of 6%.
- Mental Wellbeing
 - A subgroup of the Mental Health Oversight Group has been set up and is focusing on prevention. This group is are developing a resource for practitioners focusing on how to support families with mental health and wellbeing.
 - A programme of journey mapping will be undertaken to better understand the experiences of children and young people in accessing mental health services. This will focus on identifying key touchpoints, barriers and delays from initial help-seeking through to receiving support. The process will include engagement with young people, families and practitioners to ensure that lived experience informs service improvement. Findings will be used to highlight gaps, review pathways, and support the development of more accessible, responsive and person-centred services.
 - Continue to strengthen a rights-based approach to mental health across services. This will include promoting participation and ensuring that the voices and experiences of children and young people inform service design and improvement. Activity across the partnership, including developments in early intervention, service access and communication, will contribute to this priority by seeking to reduce barriers, improve access to support, and ensure that services are responsive to the needs of children and families.
 - Focus on increasing uptake of Health Visiting groups as a key preventative intervention supporting wellbeing, attachment, and early child development.
 - Development of a targeted, high-quality video campaign to improve awareness, reduce stigma, and increase engagement with Health Visiting services, particularly among harder-to-reach families.
 - Journey Mapping of Mental Health Pathways - Planned further engagement with young people, families, and practitioners to have a wider understanding of experiences for families of accessing services, identify barriers, and inform service improvement.
 - A coordinated approach to opportunities to share mental health core strategic messages, improve awareness of services and events, using insights from engagement and journey mapping.
 - Continued leadership from the Prevention Group (from April 2026) to drive forward long-term, sustainable approaches to wellbeing.
 - Continue to develop the number of young people involved in mental health focussed work and expand the voice of children and young people and their level of responsibility.

Raising Achievement and Attainment

The Raising Educational Attainment Strategy (2023-2028) is a corporate strategy and coordinates council-wide resources, skills and knowledge to support the delivery of the corporate priority to improve attainment. It has been subject to consultation with the key stakeholders and approval by Education Executive.

All aspects of work outlined in this Children's Services Plan sit within the Raising Educational Attainment Strategy and outcome and performance monitoring are aligned. The Raising Educational Attainment Strategy has been developed in support of the Corporate Plan and the other key plans and strategies.

There are two outcomes in the Raising Educational Attainment Strategy and these are:

- Learning and Curriculum:
 - Ensuring every child and young person experiences varied, vibrant and challenging learning experiences which are built on the provision of high quality and inclusive learning, teaching and assessment. Fundamental to this is the design and implementation of a curriculum that creates the conditions, culture and ethos for all 4 capacities to thrive and be equally valued.
- Wellbeing, Inclusion and Attendance:
 - Improving wellbeing, inclusion and attendance for all children and young people, promoting confidence, independent thinking and resilience. Fundamental to this is working with families and partners to support the highest possible levels of engagement and equity for all.

Main Highlights and Developments in the Period 2025-2026:

- Ongoing development of Inspire pathways to provide Inclusive nurturing support pathways for young people across West Lothian which influence real world employability for improved life choices and chances.
- Ongoing improvements in data collection and analysis for contribution to the Scottish Government development of the 'ASL National Measurement Framework.' This will allow for improved tracking and monitoring of young people with additional needs.
- Progress made with roll out of Trauma-Informed training across all school clusters.
- Greater partnership working across agencies is leading to improvements in positive destination outcomes.

Priority Areas for 2026-2027

- Support all young people to achieve success through the provision of effective and robust support, using a multi-agency approach. This will involve young people in decisions about how their needs should be met.
- Develop professional learning pathways for all staff which enhances their practice in the delivery of high-quality learning experiences in mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Ensure all establishments promote open, positive, supportive relationships across the school community, where children and young people will feel safe and secure.
- Implement an early intervention Early Years, Primary and Secondary Attendance strategy
- Work with schools to ensure the curriculum is co-designed with learners, parents, carers and partners, with engaging and motivating pathways leading to Positive Destinations.
- Work with parents/carers to secure better outcomes through enabling them to support their child's health, wellbeing and attendance.
- The strategic development of the Inclusion and Support Review Group (ISRG) will continue to include ongoing development of flexible and responsive supports for all care experienced learners requiring more intensive intervention to remain connected with their learning.

Strengthening Corporate Parenting

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 defines corporate parenting as "the formal and local partnerships between all services responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers". This includes infants, children, young people and care leavers who are:

- in residential care, including secure care
- in foster care
- in kinship care, who live with a family member other than a parent
- looked after at home
- disabled and who receive overnight respite
- left care – up to the age of 26 years

In West Lothian, the Corporate Parenting Plan is developed by the multi-agency Corporate Parenting Strategic Group and with engagement with children and young people. West Lothian are proactively working in partnership to embed the Promise Scotland Change programme and ensure that children and young people grow up loved, safe and respected.

Main Highlights and Developments in the Period 2025-2026:

- Children's Resource Panel – to support the early identification of children whose care at home or in a care arrangement is vulnerable; referring them to the Children's Resource Panel for review and enhanced planning.
- Re-designed supported accommodation options for care leavers. Ring fencing resource for this population, improving co-ordination and enable planning at an earlier stage, particularly for those young people residing in residential care arrangements.
- Support young people to remain in care arrangements on a continuing care basis where this is assessed to be in their best interests, particularly for those young people residing in kinship and fostering households.
- 100% children contributing to their My Plan Meetings
- Permanence Tracking - children and young people looked after away from home to have their Child's Plan's independently tracked from 3 months with a focus on permanence planning and action.
- Social Policy a pilot site for the Scottish Government's Trauma Response Social Work Services Program. The program focuses on key drivers including organisational culture, leadership, sharing of power with people with lived experience to embed and sustain trauma-informed and response practice within an organisation.
- Transition Policy - This policy ensures a smooth, person-centred transition for young people with disabilities from children's services to adult social work services. It aims to provide continuity of care, promote independence, and support the young person's aspirations while safeguarding their wellbeing.

Priority Areas for 2026-2027

- Align work to Keep the Promise with Corporate Parenting.
- Highlight profile and strengthen care planning and support for children looked after at home.
- Enhance supports to sustain kinship care arrangements.
- Enable and promote children to maintain relationships with their families - including siblings, extended family members, former carers and other care experienced children with whom they have resided.
- Expand the number of fostering households through recruiting activity targeting carers with the right skills to provide care within a family-based setting for children who require to residing temporary or permanently away from home.
- Consistent approach to four-weekly care planning meetings, emergency planning meetings, and unplanned ending meetings across all care arrangements.
- Language to be reviewed to ensure that it is easily understood, positive and not create or compound stigma.
- Develop digital formats to raise awareness and access to Aftercare services in West Lothian.

Promoting Children's Rights and Participation

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 which came into force on 16th July 2024 places a legal duty on public authorities—and those acting on their behalf—to comply with the requirements of the UNCRC when exercising devolved powers, whether through Acts of the Scottish Parliament or common law. Importantly, it provides legal remedies when a child's rights are believed to have been breached and applies to everyone under the age of 18.

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United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) outlines the specific rights that every child is entitled to in order to reach their full potential. These include rights related to health, education, leisure and play, protection from exploitation, and the right to be heard and taken seriously.

The UNCRC contains 54 articles, each setting out a different aspect of a child's rights. These can be grouped into four core principles:

- Non-discrimination
- A commitment to the best interests of the child
- The right to life, survival, and development
- Respect for the views of the child

These rights are interdependent and must be upheld in full. They are indivisible, universal, unconditional, inalienable, and inherent—they apply to every child, everywhere, at all times.

West Lothian demonstrates a strong commitment to embedding children's rights across all children's services. A best-practice approach to participation and engagement continues to develop, with children and young people placed at the centre of planning, delivery and improvement activity.

Participation for children and young people who are least seldom heard is a clear priority in West Lothian. The voice of care-experienced young people has been strengthened through action taken following research into *My Planning Meetings*, alongside ongoing engagement through *Having Your Say* sessions. Young people in residential houses have also been supported to co-create welcoming resources, including a peer-designed presentation for new arrivals at Torcroft.

Engagement with Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) enabled young people to share what was most important to them. While not all issues could be resolved immediately, their views were shared with appropriate decision-makers. In response, a summer programme was offer to the young people led by ESOL staff and partner agencies which supported connection-building and learning.

Child-friendly and interactive communications have been developed to support informed participation and decision-making by children and young people. These include the children services plan, the corporate parenting plan the child protection committee and gender based violence information. Interim improvements have been made to The Children's Rights webpage content and public-facing information.

Main Highlights and Developments in the Period 2025-2026:

- Clear multiagency strategic vision for children's rights in West Lothian, led by the Children's Rights Working Group
- Appointment of a Participation and Engagement Children's Worker to strengthen authentic participation, particularly with least seldom heard groups.
- Ongoing development of the Children's Rights Network and Children's Rights Board, providing rights-respecting spaces and direct links to senior leaders, supported by clear feedback.
- Delivery of Children's Rights Networking Events to share practice, build understanding, and strengthen cross-service collaboration.
- Progress toward a child-friendly complaints process, informed by engagement with children and existing good practice.
- Increased participation of care-experienced young people, including action from *My Planning Meetings* research and engagement through *Having Your Say*.
- Meaningful engagement with Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), informing responsive supports e.g ESOL-led summer programme.
- Development of child-friendly communications, improving website and social media content to increase accessibility and engagement.
- Successful delivery of an initial Promise Celebration Event, co-designed by young people and positively received for its inclusive and welcoming atmosphere

Priority Areas for 2026-2027

- Embedding feedback loops consistently, ensuring children and young people understand how their views influence decisions, including clear explanations where change is not possible.
- Strengthening participation of least seldom heard groups, building on care-experienced, UASC and residential engagement to ensure representation is broad and inclusive.
- Developing child-friendly systems and processes, including continued work on the child-friendly complaints process and ensuring ongoing accessible explanations.
- Building confidence and understanding of children's rights, supporting young people to deepen their knowledge of the UNCRC and provide fun learning opportunities at the Board and Children's Rights Network events.
- Supporting staff capacity and confidence, through a shared learning framework and resources to embed rights-based and participative practice across services.
- Sustaining and expanding partnership working, enabling services and partners to collaborate around children's rights, participation and The Promise.
- Evaluating impact, strengthening how participation outcomes are captured, shared and used to inform service improvement.
- Recognition of young people's contributions, ensuring their time, experience and impact on decision-making are acknowledged and valued.
- Strengthening processes to uphold the Youth Voice Charter, embedding clear expectations for how children and young people are involved, listened to and responded to across services.
- Further development of digital spaces that reflect the strategic vision for children's rights in West Lothian, providing accessible, child-friendly platforms for information, engagement and participation.

Reducing Harm from Substance Use

The West Lothian Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) is a multi-agency partnership responsible for reducing harms associated with alcohol and substance misuse. This work is underpinned by the ADP Delivery Plan 2024-28 and taken forward by seven workstreams. Two of these workstreams – Prevention and Early Intervention and the Whole Family Public Social Partnership – have a particular focus on supporting children and families impacted by substance misuse.

This work has undergone an external evaluation by Figure 8, which will be considered as part of the commissioning of ADP Children and Family services in 2027.

Main Highlights and Developments in the Period 2025-2026:

- Completion of Ash Scotland secondary schools resource pack pilot – a partnership project delivered in Bathgate Academy and with a youth group in Blackburn by West Lothian Youth Action Project and West Lothian Drug & Alcohol Service. Three modules were delivered, work around the Vaping and Young People section contributed to the proposal negotiated with the NHS to develop a Vaping Project for West Lothian – detailed in the key areas for work in 2026-27.
- The successful Stigma Awareness event delivered by members of the Family Matters group supported by West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service. The lived experiences presented provided a powerful message on the importance of reducing stigma associated with substance use.
- The development of the Digital Library Project a partnership project designed by the Early Intervention and Prevention Substance use group, led by the Youth Action Project, funded by the Self-Management Fund, administered by the ALLIANCE on behalf of the Scottish Government. The project provides digital access to information and support services available around substance use. The project was created in response to school pupils and parents surveyed who had said they had little access/information about substances
- Family Journeys West Lothian team hosted an event at our venue in Bathgate inviting local family solicitors to learn more about our services including Family Connection (child contact), mediation, and All About Me. Exploration around collaborative working, how we offer holistic family support, and ensure the voice of the child is communicated to active decision makers including Sheriffs.
- Wraparound Project staff held an excellent network event in January 2026 to raise awareness of the Partnership work carried out by West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service, Circle West Lothian and West Lothian youth Action Project. More than 50 colleagues from the third sector, NHS and the local authority came together to find out more about the project and to share experiences.
- A Living Life to the Full course was successfully completed supported by WLDAS and Circle.
- Circle Fathers group –The Dads Drop-In group has grown into a valued and reliable space for fathers. Feedback has been encouraging, with dads highlighting the informal, welcoming environment and the opportunity to connect with peers. The group has supported fathers to build confidence, share experiences and strengthen their parenting journey in a way that feels accessible and non-judgemental.
- Circle Pregnancy and Post Natal support – additional 0.5 FTE delivered through the Whole Family Approach PSP Additional capacity allowed us to address the waiting list and provide timely support to vulnerable mums during pregnancy and the postnatal period. Early intervention is a key factor in achieving better outcomes for babies and their families. One of the most significant areas of need in this post was supporting younger mums experiencing their first pregnancy, particularly where substance use was having an impact on their lives. This targeted support helped ensure they received the right help at the right time, improving safety, stability, and long-term wellbeing for both mother and baby.

Priority Areas for 2026-2027

- **Vaping Project** - A new exciting project involving the production/development and delivery of a training programme to secondary school staff and other professionals working with older young people, with a focus on SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) 1/2 areas. This project is being led by WLDAS, a part time post will be recruited to focus on addressing the clear disconnect between the ever-increasing prevalence of vaping among children and young people and the workforce's capacity to respond effectively. For example, a lack of confidence in discussing vaping, confusion due to mixed messages between adult and young people's guidance and a need for accurate information and practical tools for behaviour change conversations. This is a fixed-term pilot project for 12 months funded by NHS Lothian. The role will involve partnership working and the formation of a small steering group and programme delivery in a group setting over various locations within West Lothian to multiple agencies engaging with young people as well as, the oversight of sessional staff who will support the roll out of training.

- **Roll out of the Digital Library** - Promotion of the project through information sessions and distribution of materials displaying the QR code linking to accurate information and personal experiences around substance use and the impact. WLYAP and partners to explore the link with WestSpace and to access funding to maintain and update the information as and when it is required.
- **2nd Wraparound Network Event** – following the success of the event held in January another will be arranged to highlight the positive work and to highlight the need to continue the Whole Family Approach and effective partnership working.
- An external evaluation of the Whole Family Approach PSP by Figure 8 has provided a strong foundation for setting future priorities, confirming the significant impact of dedicated father-focused support and the need for continued investment. Key areas include improving engagement with fathers who are often excluded from mainstream services, reducing stigma through trusted relationships, offering practical and intensive support, strengthening parenting skills and father–child relationships, expanding peer networks, and ensuring fathers’ voices are recognised across services. A central priority moving forward is securing additional funding to restore the service to full-time capacity and sustain the progress achieved over the three-year pilot.

Reducing Harm for Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law

Ensuring access to early intervention and prevention services is a key priority for the Youth Justice Service in West Lothian and its community safety partners. The collective aim is to support whole families and reduce harm for children and young people who come into conflict with the law. There is a shared commitment to diverting young people away from formal justice measures by providing the right support at the right time, using rights-respecting, participatory approaches that empower young people to be involved in decisions affecting them.

Preventative measures are essential to improving life chances for children and young people and they play a vital role in promoting community safety and protecting children from the potentially harmful consequences of early criminalisation. Where young people do come into conflict with the Law the collective aim is to promote recovery and reintegration.

Services across West Lothian have been adapting to the changes brought in by The Care and Justice (Scotland) Act 2024 which came into force in June 2024 and introduced several key reforms:

- All children under the age of 18 now have access to the Children's Hearings System, where needed.
- Grounds for referral have been expanded, allowing anyone under 18 to be referred to the Children's Reporter.
- Young people under 18 can no longer be placed in young offenders' institutions on remand or following a custodial sentence being imposed by the Court; secure care is now the standard form of detention.
- Reforms to better support victims have been introduced, including improved clarity around their right to request information from the Children's Reporter, and the establishment of a single point of contact for victims within the Children's Hearing System.

Main Highlights and Developments in the Period 2025-2026:

- Introduction and implementation of ACT (Assess and Connect Team) a Whole Family Welfare Funded service that provides targeted therapeutic supports to enhance and promote early and effective intervention with Children, Young people and their families
- Increased use of Electronic Monitoring (EMO) and Supervised Bail for young people under 18 years to reduce the use of remand to secure care
- Positive and increased use of Prosecution Diversion for young people to prevent escalation through the Justice System
- Positive engagement with Children/Families via the Children's Reporter in terms of Voluntary Engagement to reduce the necessity for Statutory Orders
- Positive development and implementation of the phased response to Children's (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act in line with UNCRC/Rights Based Justice

Priority Areas for 2026-2027

- Further development in terms of Children's (Care and Justice) Act, UNCRC, Right Based Justice
- Increase use of Diversions, Electronic Monitoring and/or Supervised Bail
- Assessments for all children (under 18 years) attending Court that will allow adaptations to Court settings
- Further development of Children's Hearing System for all children, including referrals, age of CSO (Compulsory Measures of Supervision)
- Further/enhanced development in terms of Whole System Approach for Children and Young People (under 21 years) in conflict with the law

Performance Management

The National Children, Young People and Families Outcomes Framework (CYPF), draft Core Wellbeing Indicator Set was developed consisting of 21 indicators covering key aspects of wellbeing. The purpose of the set is to provide a high level and holistic overview of the state of wellbeing of children, young people and families in Scotland, highlighting whether desired long-term outcomes are being achieved and identifying areas where further attention is required. This helps us answer the question: *Is what we are doing making a difference to the lives of children, young people and families in Scotland?* The indicator set is designed to be used within local level reporting across Scotland through annual progress reporting on Children's Services Plans, and at a national level as part of reporting on wellbeing.

Data for the national indicators are mainly collected from questions that were included in the Education pupil ethos survey. No targets were set by the Scottish Government for the wellbeing indicators and further analysis of the first- and second-year results is required to ascertain meaningful targets. All of the indicators data will require analysing to understand the landscape and trend of what these mean for children and young people in West Lothian and how improvements can be made.

West Lothian priorities have been agreed and a robust suite of local indicators using the SMART framework, aligned to the actions agreed in our action plan to ensure we achieve our intended outcomes in meeting Children and Young People's needs to achieve their potential. Indicators are tracked through partner's performance information systems. Performance reports on the progress of the plan and the indicators will be submitted regularly to the Children and Families Strategic Planning Group and Children's Services Annual Reports and the 3-yearly UNCRC progress report will be submitted to the Community Planning Partnership to report progress of our Plan. Reports will be published on the website.

Overall Summary of the Key Performance Indicators

Priority	Total	Green ✓	Amber ▲	Red ●	*Data Only
Protecting Children	11	2	3	0	6
Strengthening Corporate Parenting	14	9	2	2	0
Promoting Health and Wellbeing	9	1	1	1	6
Promoting Children's Rights and Participation	5	0	0	0	5
Raising Achievement and Attainment	5	3	1	0	1
Reducing Harm from Substance Use	4	0	0	0	4
Reducing Harm for Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law	4	4	0	0	0
TOTAL	52	22	4	3	22

*Data only (change since previous year or quarter): Increase in performance  Decrease in performance  Data remains the same 

PROTECTING CHILDREN

These indicators are collected in academic years and as such data for Q4 2025-26 will be available in August 2026

Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
SPPPC_100	Number of child protection re-registrations within 12 months of deregistration	1	0	Q3 25/26		There was 1 re-registration out of 34 new registrations within the 12 month period. There are a range of factors that can contribute to re-registration that are not always possible to predict. Quality assurance and analysis of re-registrations is undertaken by the Child Protection Quality Assurance Sub Committee.
SPPPC_101	Number of children on the Child Protection Register.	89	100	Q3 25/26		There has been a gradual increase in numbers on the child protection register during 2025/26 from 72 in Q1 to 89 in Q3. There is no identified reason to account for the gradual increase. The numbers are small and one large sibling group can change quarterly figures significantly. This follows a period of relatively stability during 2023/24 and 2024/25 with numbers tending to be between 60 and 70. A long-term decrease and then stability to 2024/25 is aligned to the National trend.
SPPPC_102	Conversion rate as a percentage of children subject to pre birth or initial Child Protection Planning Meetings who are subsequently entered onto the Child Protection Register	72%	80%	Q3 25/26		Independent Reviewing Officers chair CPPMs and the decision to place a child's name on the register is a multi-agency one based on an analysis of risk. In Quarter 3 of 2025/26, the conversion rate was 72% (registration at 34 out of 47 CPPM); which is lower than the previous 5 quarters when it has ranged from 77%-97%. The multi-agency Management Information Group that reports to the CPC closely monitors and analyses this indicator.
SPCF200_9a	Percentage of initial Child Protection Planning Meetings held no later than 28 calendar days from Initial Referral Discussion	61%	70%	Q3 25/26		In Q3 of 2024/25, 61% within timescales (20 out of 33 CPPMs) This is an increase in performance from Q2 which was 53% but a decrease from Q1 when it was 87%. The number of CPPMs can impact on achieving timescales. Other reasons include the IRD taking longer to conclude and arranging a time to support family to attend.
P:SPCF230_9a	Percentage of first review Child Protection Planning Meetings held within 6 months of the initial child protection Planning Meeting	83.33%	90%	Q3 25/26		Q3 2024-25: 94.11% held within timescale. This is an increase from the previous quarter at 78.94% and higher than the same quarter from the previous year. Every effort is made to hold review CPPMs within timescales whilst ensuring that times and dates are convenient for children and their families
Data only	Number of children referred to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) on Offence Grounds	9	N/A	Q3 25/26		The Child Protection Committee noted a reduction in the number of offence referrals to the Reporter from 25 in Q3 to 11 in Q2. This has further reduced in Q3; although higher than in the same period the previous year. The multi-agency Management Information Group that reports to the CPC closely monitors and analyses this indicator.
Data only	Number of children referred to Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) on Non-Offence rounds	40	N/A	Q3 25/26		The Child Protection Committee noted a reduction in the number of offence referrals to the Reporter to 45 in Q3 from 49 in Q2. This has further reduced in Q3; although higher than in the same period the previous year. The multi-agency Management Information Group that reports to the CPC closely monitors and analyses this indicator.
Data only	Number of children with Child Protection Orders granted	1	N/A	Q3 25/26		Child Protection Orders are granted when children are at immediate risk of harm. This is lower than Q2 when it was 6 and for Q3 of 2024/25 when it was 3. Numbers can be influenced by sibling groups. The multi-agency Management

PROTECTING CHILDREN

These indicators are collected in academic years and as such data for Q4 2025-26 will be available in August 2026

Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
						Information Group that reports to the CPC closely monitors and analyses this indicator.
Data only	Percentage of initial Child Protection Planning Meetings with parental attendance	95%	N/A	Q2 25/26		This is an improved performance from Q1 of 2025/26 when 86% initial child protection planning meetings had parental attendance. Every effort is made to ensure parental attendance at CPPMs and reduce any barriers to this. Parental attendance has been between 90%-95% in 3 of the 4 most recent quarters.
Data only	Percentage of children's reporter decisions within 50 working days	41.8%	N/A	Q3 25/26		The percentage of decisions made within 50 days has decreased in Q3. The percentage during this previous year has consistently been higher between 52% and 74%
Data only	Number of children subject to interagency Referral Discussions (IRDs)	77	N/A	Q2 25/26		The Child Protection Committee has noted IRDs have been stable over the last 12 months. There has been a small increase from Q1 2025/26 and at Q3 2024/25, there were 74.

CORPORATE PARENTING

Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
SPCF112_9b	Average time taken from point of accommodation for a child under the age of 5 to obtain a permanent placement decision	53.75	52	2025/26		In 2025/26 there a slight improvement in performance with the average time taken reducing to 53.75 weeks from 58 weeks in 2024/25. Delays can be multifaceted and often unpredictable. A number of actions were progressed in 2025/26 which included a dedicated social worker, with management oversight, to focus on tracking and monitoring permanence planning for young children and where required provide support and guidance for practitioners to support earlier assessment and planning.
	Percentage of children who have experienced a placement move	16%	14%	2025/26		This compares to performance of 10% in 2024/25. This is attributed in part to some kinship care arrangements being unable to continue, following a range of support being provided. This is being closely monitored with ongoing work to improve whilst recognising complexities and pressures.
SCHN23	Percentage of children and young people who have experienced multiple placement moves	12%	19%	2025/26		Performance has improved from 2025/26 when it was 13% and from 2023/24 when it was 16.4% The national average 23-24 was 17.8. Closely monitored and ongoing work to sustain improvement whilst recognising complexities and pressures
	Percentage of children and young people attending/contributing views to Children's Hearings	29.6%		2026		During 2025/6 12.7% of children attended their hearing in person and 3.1% attended virtually, 3.8% attended in part. 80.4% did not attend their hearing however their views have been represented by their parents, cares, social worker or other trust adult.

CORPORATE PARENTING						
Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
SPCF008_6a	Percentage of children/young people attending/contributing views to My Planning Meetings (MPMs)	98%	95%	Q4 2025/26		Children and young people are consistently contributing to MPMs. A working group is considering all formal meetings and different approaches that may be supportive to children and young people participating, in the way that will best meet their needs. • 36% attended their meeting and spoke for themselves • 4% children attended, views provided by advocacy worker • 2% provided their views with the use of drawing/ writing/ recording by child • 5% did not attend, gave view via their advocate • 55% did not attend but their views were included reports • 2% did not engage in the process
EDSCH906_9b.1a	Percentage of Looked After Children Achieving Level 5 Literacy	43.3%	50%	09/2025		This performance Indicator was introduced in August 2023 in line with the refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy (2023-2026) Performance measures. It reports on the percentage of S4 statutorily Looked After pupils achieving Level 5 Literacy in each academic year. Whilst we continue to drive improvement locally, performance was significantly above the national average of 32%.
EDSCH907_9b.1a	Percentage of Looked After Children Achieving Level 5 Numeracy	40%	41.4 %	09/2025		This performance Indicator was introduced in August 2023 in line with the refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy (2023-2026) Performance measures. It reports on the percentage of S4 statutorily Looked After pupils achieving Level 5 Numeracy in each academic year. Whilst we continue to drive improvement locally, performance was significantly above the national average of 24.3%
EDSCH909_9b.1a	Percentage of Looked After Children Achieving one SCQF level 6 award	70%	65%	09/2025		This performance Indicator was introduced in August 2023 in line with the refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy (2023-2026) Performance measures. It reports on the Percentage of Looked After Children Achieving one SCQF level 6 award. Performance in this area was significant and well above the national average of 27.8%
SCHN19b_9b.1a	School Attendance rates for Looked After Children (per 100 Looked After Children)	83	91	09/2025		Data updated every 2 years
EDSCH910_9b.1a	Percentage of school leavers (Looked After Children) entering a positive destination	80%	81.7 %	09/2025		As the number of formally looked after children is small within any year group, minor dips in performance for a small number of pupils can affect the overall performance significantly. There was a decrease in performance this year which was just below our internal target and was also below the national average this year

CORPORATE PARENTING						
Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
						(86.6%). The cohort this year was particularly small with a small number of young people experiencing significant adverse circumstances. This has impacted significantly on the overall percentage
P:SPCF124_9b.1c	Percentage of young people eligible for an Aftercare service experiencing one or more episodes of homelessness	3%	10%	2025/26		During 2025/2026 there has been a reduction 7% of young people eligible for Aftercare experienced one or more episodes of homelessness. This performance related to 9 people out of 328 people.
SPCF228_9b.1c	Number of looked after young people in their care placement aged 16 and over	45	30	Qtr 4 2025/26		In Q4 of 2025/26 there were 45 young people in their care placement aged 16 and over. This is a reduction since 2024/2025; explanation includes the increase in the number of care experienced young people who have been able to access Social Policy supported accommodation. The number of children accessing continuing care has remained the same between 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 - 36 young people.
	Number of eligible asylum-seeking young people accessing aftercare services.	67%		2025/26		The UASC population engage well with throughcare support; 28 out of 42 this year) an increase on the previous year. Once they obtain Leave to Remain in the UK and become eligible for Aftercare, most choose to end their engagement with services. This group continue to have access to the duty Aftercare service until the age of 26. Increased understanding of need has allowed resource to be focused in throughcare.
	Percentage of young people eligible for aftercare support accessing support services	40%	30%	2025/26		At the end of Q4, there were 328 young people eligible for aftercare, of which 132 were in receipt - 40%. This compares to Nationally 48% of those eligible receiving support in 2024/25. For those compulsory – 28 out of 38 – 74% For those discretionary – 104 out of 290 – 36%

PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBENG						
Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
Data only	Proportion of children under 16 living in households with at least one person aged 16-64 where all individuals aged 16+ are in employment	51.9%	N/A	2025		Average for Scotland is 63.3%. West Lothian is 3% above the Scottish average. Universal Credit Official statistics. ONS, Workless households for regions across the UK. (Annually). This is a national KPI and will require further group discussion with the relevant partners to review. There has been an increase nationally from 60% to 63.3%

PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBENG						
Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
						and a decrease locally from 60% to 51.9%.
Data only	Percentage of S1-S3 children who agree that their friends treat them well	86.6%	N/A	2024	↑	This is a national wellbeing indicator set by the Scottish Government (SG). No targets have been set by the SG and this will be reviewed in West Lothian. The data is collected in the Education Pupil Ethos Survey. There has been a slight increase in performance from the 2024 figure of 82.6%
Data only	Number of children in temp accommodation at 31 March	455	No target	2025	↓	Numbers of children in temporary accommodation has risen slightly over the last year, with 455 being accommodated as at 31st March 2025 (an increase of 15 since 2024). Supply of affordable social housing remains the biggest challenge. Whilst a number of initiatives target prevention of homelessness and improving throughput the imbalance between demand and supply is so severe. This results in households being accommodated for longer periods of time in temporary accommodation as family sized properties are in short supply.
Data only	Percentage S1-S6 children that had at least 1 hour of exercise 3 or more days per week	84.03 %	N/A	2025	↓	This is a national wellbeing indicator set by the Scottish Government (SG). No targets have been set by the SG and this will be reviewed in West Lothian. The data is collected in the Education Pupil Ethos Survey. This is a small decrease of 1.8% from 2024 (86%).
Data only	Percentage children with a concern at their 27-30 month review (as a % of children reviewed)	17.6%	N/A	2024/25	↓	Early Child Development, PHS. (Annual). West Lothian is sitting slightly higher than the national average of 16.5%. It has a significantly higher number of concerns than the rest of Lothian. Speech, Language and Communications developmental outcomes data is collected at the 27-30 month child health review. The review, introduced in Scotland in April 2013, is a universal assessment offered to every child once they reach the appropriate age. The review records the outcome of a developmental assessment looking at 9 domains (social; emotional; behavioural; attention; speech language & communication; gross motor; fine motor; vision and hearing) and specifically whether there are one or more concerns in relation to the domains mentioned. Speech and language concerns are 3 times as high in the most deprived areas than they are in the least deprived areas.
Data only	Percentage of P5-S6 children who say they <i>always</i> have an adult in their life they can trust and talk to about any problems	89%	N/A	2024	↑	This is a national wellbeing indicator set by the Scottish Government (SG). No targets have been set by the SG and this will be reviewed in West Lothian. The data is collected in the Education Pupil Ethos Survey. This is a decrease of 5% from 2024 (94%)
SCHN17_9 b.1a	Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones at their 27-30 month review	82.7%	84%	2023/24	⚠	The performance in 2023/24 was 82.7% of children meeting developmental milestones at their 27-30month review. This is slightly below the Scottish average of 83.3%. **No update published
	Relative child poverty rate (after housing costs)	24.1%	Interim target 18%	2024/25	⛔	National child poverty rate is 23% and West Lothian is higher at 24.1%
	Breastfeeding drop-off rate vs target for West Lothian at 6-8 week visit	27%	36.6%	2025	✅	Breastfeeding data are collected at routine child health reviews at around 10 days of age (first visit) and around 6 to 8 weeks of age (second/follow up visit) by the

PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBENG						
Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
						public health nurse/health visitor. Breastfeeding data is closely related to SIMD with the lowest number of breastfed babies in SIMD 1 (most deprived) and the highest number of breastfed babies in SIMD 5 (least deprived). Breastfeeding drop off at 6-8weeks for West Lothian is has reduced to 27% in 2025, from 31.2%, this is the lowest it has been and means that West Lothian has met the Scottish Government target for drop off which was 36.6% (which was set in 2017). The Scottish drop off rate is 48%

PROMOTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATION						
Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
Data only	Percentage S1-S6 children who say they feel safe when out in their local area <i>always or most of the time</i>	89%	TBA	2026	↑	This is a national wellbeing indicator set by the Scottish Government (SG). No targets have been set by the SG and this will be reviewed in West Lothian. The data is collected in the Education Pupil Ethos Survey.
Data only	Percentage S1-S6 children who agree their local area is a good place to live	82%	TBA	2026	↑	This is a national wellbeing indicator set by the Scottish Government (SG). No targets have been set by the SG and this will be reviewed in West Lothian. The data is collected in the Education Pupil Ethos Survey. This is a positive trend from 78% in 2023
Data only	Percentage S1-S3 children who say they were bullied in the last year	45%	TBA	2026	↑	This is a national wellbeing indicator set by the Scottish Government (SG). No targets have been set by the SG and this will be reviewed in West Lothian. The data is collected in the Education Pupil Ethos Survey. This is a positive trend of a decrease of 2% from 2023/24 (42%)
Data only	Percentage P5-S6 children who agree adults are good at taking what they say into account	74%	TBA	2026	↑	This is a national wellbeing indicator set by the Scottish Government (SG). No targets have been set by the SG and this will be reviewed in West Lothian. The data is collected in the Education Pupil Ethos Survey. This is a positive trend from 2023 of 69%
Data only	I have opportunities to learn about my rights and these are protected and promoted	81%	TBA	2026	No comparison	This is a national wellbeing indicator set by the Scottish Government (SG). No targets have been set by the SG and this will be reviewed in West Lothian. The data is collected in the Education Pupil Ethos Survey. This is the first collection of this data so there is no comparison.

RAISING ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTAINMENT

Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
Data only	Percentage school leavers in positive destinations at 9-month follow up	91.6%		2023/24		Follow up Positive Destinations performance for 2023/24 was 91.6%. This is a 0.5% increase from 2022/23 but is below the National performance of 93.1%. 24/25 Data not Available Until June 2026
CP:EDSCH 601_9b.1	Percentage of P1, P4 & P7 children achieving expected CfE literacy levels (reading, writing, listening & talking)	79%	79.5%	2024/25		Performance in 2024/25 was 79% which was a decrease from 2023/24 performance and was just below the target of 79.5%. School improvement plans are focussed on ongoing improvements in literacy attainment and an authority focus on building a reading culture has impacted positively on reading attainment.
CP:EDSCH 0819b.1a	Percentage of P1, P4 & P7 children achieving expected CfE numeracy levels	86%	87%	2024/25		The target for this performance indicator is to achieve 87% by 2024/25, and this was set in the development of the council's Corporate Plan. As this indicator is measured across the Academic year then the end of Corporate Plan performance is 2021/22. Performance in 2024/25 was 86% which was an increase from 2023/24 performance of (85%) and below target (87%)
CP:EDSQA 1059b.1a	School Leavers achieving 1 or more Level 6 awards	87%	78%	2024/25		West Lothian - 1966 of 2248 pupils achieving (87%) Virtual Comparator - 14646 of 22490 pupils achieving (65%) National - 38093 of 55779 pupils achieving (68%)
EDSCH504_9b.1c	Percentage Attendance Levels in Secondary Schools	87.4%	87%	2024/25		Possible Openings - 4066164 Attendance Openings - 3554075 Authorised Absence Openings - 295380

REDUCING HARM FROM SUBSTANCE USE

Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
Data only	Percentage of families engaging in drug and alcohol support from the referrals received in the period	90%	TBA	2025/26		31 referrals were received in the period 2025/26 of which 28 engaged with the service. This is an increase in performance from 2024/25 of 83% of families who engaged.
Data only	Percentage of families supported who met all or part of their agreed SHANARRI outcomes where relevant	72%	TBA	2025/26		There were 64 families supported in the 2025/26 period and 72% met all or part of their relevant agreed outcomes to support their needs. The families supported included 105 parents/carers and 114 children. This is a slight decrease in performance from 73% in 2024/25.
Data only	Percentage of Young People engaging in drug and alcohol support from the referrals received in the period	88.5%	TBA	2025/26		There were 61 referrals received in 2025/26 period for the service. Where 54 individuals' needs were supported split between alcohol and drugs. This is a slight decrease from 97.5% in 2024/25.

REDUCING HARM FROM SUBSTANCE USE						
Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
Data only	Percentage of Young People who engaged in support who have met their outcomes and subsequently discharged - Planned	70%	TBA	2025/26		30 young people continued to engage with the service with 20 accessing support for alcohol and 10 accessing support for drugs. During the 2025/26 period 9 young people left the service with 21 having met their agreed outcomes and no longer needing support. This equates to 70% of young people with a planned discharge. This is an increase from 48% planned discharges in 2024/25.

REDUCING HARM FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW						
Code	Key Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Latest Update	Status	Commentary
P:SPCJ103a_9b	Percentage of Early and Effective Intervention (EEI) cases 12 to 17 years who do not become known to the Youth Justice Team within 12 months	95%	95%	2024/25		95% (143 out of 151 referrals) of young people who came to the attention of EEI the previous year have not had involvement with Youth Justice within 2025/26. EEI continues to be a positive method of reducing the probability of offending behaviours progressing in nature, pattern, and severity.
SPCJ104_9b	Percentage of under 21 year olds subject to Community Payback Orders supervised by the Youth Justice Service with a successful termination.	62%	70%	Q4 25/6		There is only a small number of those under 21 who are subject to unpaid work resulting in variations between reporting periods. It should be noted that there are small numbers of those under 21 years old subject to CPO in the context of the overall numbers of CPO. Youth Justice promotes engagement and compliance.
cssp25PE PL11	Percentage of children and young people engaged with the Assess & Connect Team (ACT) who, following intervention, demonstrated improved decision-making and a reduction in involvement in conflict.	100%	90%	Q4 25/26		An initial Youth Star assessment is completed within 4 weeks of involvement in supporting a young person to provide a baseline and then every 3 months thereafter to allow for a comparison. 100% of young people who completed a final Youth Star evidenced an improvement in choices and behaviour. Data is limited for 2025/26 due to staff requiring training in the assessment model. More robust data will be available during 2026/27.
cssp25PE PL12	Percentage of children and young people supported by the Assess & Connect Team (ACT) who, following intervention, showed increased engagement with education.	100%	90%	Q4 25/26		An initial Youth Star assessment is completed within 4 weeks of involvement in supporting a young person to provide a baseline and then every 3 months thereafter to allow for a comparison. 100% of young people who completed a final Youth Star evidenced increased engagement with education. Data is limited for 2025/26 due to staff requiring training in the assessment model. More robust data will be available during 2026/27.



All West Lothian's priorities contribute directly to the Wellbeing Indicators (SHANARRI) and correlate with links to the UNCRC priorities of safeguarding children and young people:

Wellbeing Indicator	Priority	Suggested Links to the UNCRC
Safe Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community	Child Protection	(11) abduction and non-return of children, (19) protection from violence, abuse and neglect, (22) refugee children, (32) child labour, (33) drug abuse, (34) sexual exploitation, (35) abduction, sale and trafficking, (36) other forms of exploitation, (37) inhumane treatment and detention, (38) war and armed conflicts
Healthy Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare and support in learning to make healthy, safe choices	Promote Health and Wellbeing	(3) best interests of the child, (6) life, survival and development, (24) health and health services, (39) recovery and rehabilitation of child victims
Achieving Being supported and guided in learning and in the development of skills, confidence and self-esteem, at home, in school and in the community	Raising achievement and attainment	(4) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights in systems that promote and protect these rights, (18) parental responsibilities and state assistance, (28) right to education, (29) goals of education
Nurtured Having a nurturing place to live in a family setting, with additional help if needed, or, where possible, in a suitable care setting	Corporate Parenting	(4) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights in systems that promote and protect these rights, (5) parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities, (18) parental responsibilities and state assistance, (20) children deprived of a family, (21) adoption, (25) review of treatment in care, (27) adequate standard of living
Active Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, which contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community	Promote Health and Wellbeing	(3) best interests of the child, (23) children with disabilities, (31) leisure, play and culture
Respected Having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them	Children's Rights Corporate Parenting	(2) non-discrimination, (3) best interests of the child, (4) Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights in systems that promote and protect those rights. parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities, (8) protection and preservation of identity, (12) respect for the views of the child, (13) freedom of expression, (14) freedom of thought, belief and religion, (16) right to privacy, (17) access to information; mass media, (18) parental responsibilities and state assistance, (30) the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family
Responsible Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles at home, in school and in the community, and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision, and being involved in decisions that affect them	Reduce Substance Misuse Reduce offending behaviour in Children and Young People	(3) best interests of the child, (12) respect for the views of the child, (14) freedom of thought, conscience and religion, (15) freedom of association, (40) juvenile justice
Included Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities, and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn	Children's Rights Corporate Parenting	(3) best interests of the child, (6) life, survival and development, (18) parental responsibilities and state assistance, (23) children with disabilities, (26) social security, (27) adequate standard of living