

## Members' Library Service Request Form

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Designation	Head of Children's Services
Date	07/06/22

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**REPORT TO:** Members' Library Service  
**MEETING DATE:** June 2022  
**BY:** Head of Children's Services  
**SUBJECT:** Children and Young People Services Plan Annual Performance Report 2020/2021

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To note the content of the Children and Young People Services Plan Annual Performance Report 2020/2021.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the key priorities within the Children's Services Plan 2020/2021 and progress made with implementing improvements.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The East Lothian Children and Young People's Services Plan 2020 to 2023 has been our partnership commitment to every child and young person in East Lothian. We wanted our children and young people to be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected and responsible and included.
- 3.2 An annual report on the implementation of Children's Services Plans is required under the Scottish Government Statutory Guidance on Part 3 (Children's Services Planning) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The annual report was published jointly by East Lothian Council and NHS Lothian.
- 3.3 The overarching priority in East Lothian is to reduce inequalities both within and between our communities. This places a 'prevention and early intervention' approach (along with the promotion of equality and respect for diversity) at the heart of our partnership working, to address both individual and "whole system" wider structural issues affecting the lives of children and families.
- 3.4 The Children's Strategic Partnership agreed a Partnership Vision that applies to all of our work affecting the lives of East Lothian's children and young people, particularly those who experience isolation because of

disability, looked after status, sexual orientation, cultural background or religion.

3.5 The vision states that “We will work together to ensure East Lothian’s children, young people and families are confident and resilient, and fully included as valued contributors within their schools and communities”.

3.6 The following overarching commitments were made in our Children and Young People Services plan 2020-23:

- Our Plan will align with the recommendations of the Independent Care Review
- We will place children and young people at the heart of our work to deliver the Plan
- We believe that our three priorities\* fit well with a primary prevention/early intervention approach
- Flexibility and driving innovation will be crucial to the implementation of our CSP and we recognise that we will need to change ways of working in order to deliver on these commitments

3.7 Cross cutting themes were recognised as being essential in underpinning our partnership work. These include:

- Engagement and participation
- Reducing child poverty
- GIRFEC

3.8 In 2020, the Children’s Strategic Partnership identified three priority areas based on evidence, trends and outcome data for East Lothian.

3.9 The three priority areas are:

- We will improve children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing
- We will support parents, carers and families to be more resilient
- We will reduce inequalities for our children and young people within and between communities.

3.10 The Children’s Services Plan Annual Report 2020-21 summarises progress made in relation to these priorities.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 2020/2021 was planned to see the full implementation of the new integrated education and children’s services department and the work to re-launch our approach to Getting it Right for Every Child in East Lothian.

This was during the COVID pandemic. A transformation of services for children programme was begun to progress a better joined up response of all providers of services to children, young people and their families.

## **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and no negative impacts have been identified.

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – none.  
6.2 Personnel – none.  
6.3 Other – none.

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 None.

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<b>DATE</b>	7 July 2022

# East Lothian Children's Strategic Partnership – Annual Performance Report 2020-2021

## Introduction

The East Lothian Children and Young People's Services Plan 2020 to 2023 has been our partnership commitment to every child and young person in East Lothian. We wanted our children and young people to be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected and responsible and included.

This is our fourth annual report and details performance on the implementation of the plan for the year 2020/2021. An annual report on the implementation of Children's Services Plans is required under the Scottish Government Statutory Guidance on Part 3 (Children's Services Planning) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This annual report is being published jointly by East Lothian Council and NHS Lothian.

Our Partnership Vision and Values, overarching commitments as well as the broad East Lothian context can be found in the Plan.

## Our three priorities

### 1. WE WILL IMPROVE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

#### Key objectives

#### a) Develop a workforce that is equipped and skilled to provide effective support for children's mental health and wellbeing

The development of a tiered framework outlining the offer of mental health training across East Lothian to improve the consistency of workforce development is in progress. Consultation has taken place with key organisations to gain a clear understanding of staff roles, the challenges in regard to capacity and capability of the future workforce, and the skills, knowledge and confidence needed across the workforce. In addition, a working group is in place to consider the implement trauma-informed practice across the East Lothian workforce through the development of an implementation strategy. The strategy will follow the National Trauma Training Plan and run alongside the

CYP MH Training Framework, with a view that each will complement the other. NES trauma training resources will be included within the MH Training Framework at the appropriate level.

b) **Ensure our services enable us to intervene at an early stage and prevent difficulties from worsening, within a tiered model of support.**

A number of key actions have been undertaken to improve the supports and interventions in place to enable early intervention for those children and young people that need Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHWB) support, within a 'tiered model' including:

- **School Counselling Service:** A school based counselling service is now in place for children aged 10 and above. This service is delivered by MYPAS and to date 140 children and young people, across all schools, have been accepted for support. Remote drop in sessions are in place.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Youth Work team:** Six Mental Health Youth Workers are now in post and are working closely with schools and colleagues to deliver a range of interventions and projects. The youth workers are linked to an associated school group and aim to raise awareness and understanding of mental health and wellbeing and the importance of prevention and early intervention; support whole school policy and practice in schools to build capacity in pupils and staff to manage mental health and wellbeing concerns; coordinate and signpost pupils and staff to relevant support; and deliver targeted interventions to pupils requiring additional support for anxiety (e.g. Low Intensity Anxiety Management (LIAM)), resilience (e.g. Blooms resilience group work) and bereavement (e.g. Seasons for Growth).
- **Single Point of Access:** A one door, single point of access is now in place to accept requests for assistance from professionals who have concerns about a child or young person's mental health and wellbeing. To date, 407 requests have been made to the Single Point of Access and provided with advice and support. Interventions and services accessed in this way include school counselling, LIAM, NHS art therapies, or support from a mental health youth worker, which is adapted to meet individual needs. Within the next few weeks, sessions with school staff and GP's to increase understanding of this new process, the services involved and how best to access them.

- **Mental Health and Wellbeing pandemic grant funding:** We received a pandemic response grant of £220, 500 from the Scottish Government to support interventions for children and young people impacted disproportionately from COVID 19. This funding was allocated to 10 third sector partners to deliver a range of supports and interventions including, an S2 football engagement programme delivered by Hibs Community Football Trust, a S3 outdoor education programme delivered by Venturing Out, a family support and befriending programme delivered by People Know How and support for care experienced children and young people through Who Cares Scotland. We are currently requesting feedback as to how this funding is being used to support children, young people and families.

### **C) Develop and implement a community mental health and wellbeing support service.**

In 20/21 we received an allocated on £73K from the Scottish Government to support the development of the community mental health and wellbeing framework. This was allocated to Children's 1st to deliver a pilot mental health family support service. This service commenced in April 2021 and there are currently 7 families involved. In addition to this service, joint work is planned with CAMHS and GP's to ensure that children and young people are referred to the most appropriate service, at the right time and that the pathways are clear. Planning has also begun to support the particular needs of 16-18 year olds in the transition period, particularly those no longer in education. We received an allocation of £294K for session 21/22 to develop and support the progression of the community framework and work is taking place to continue the progress made and identify gaps in service provision.

## 2. WE WILL SUPPORT PARENTS, CARERS AND FAMILIES TO BE MORE RESILIENT

### Key objectives:

#### **A: Develop a workforce that is equipped and skilled to build parenting and family resilience.**

*Scotland must develop a new way of thinking about our workforce from definition, learning and training, and recruitment through to supervision and retention - (The Promise 2020) The Promise asks us to ensure that the workforce have access to...initial and lifelong learning that is grounded in attachment theory, trauma responsive care and the clear understanding and application of children's rights. Child development should be part of the essential foundation for anyone working with children*

Work is underway to identify which practitioners in Health, Education, Social Work, Connecting Communities and the Third Sector are trained in universal and targeted parenting interventions such as PEEP, Stay and Play, Raising Children (and Teenagers) with Confidence, PPP, and the Incredible Years. The idea, is that when groups run again, these can be streamlined across the county, and ensure all families are being offered evidence based support when and where needed.

Midlothian Surestart is running A Good Start, a new-born parenting group in Prestonpans and Tranent. The course is accredited by the Association of Infant Mental Health UK. As well as equipping parents with skills to look after their children, the trainers are also running Warwick University approved training for volunteers, who would like to learn to become Good Start trainers, so that the course can be rolled out across the county.

Children First and Children's Services are currently hoping to train more workers in Family Group Decision Making, and to target families at an earlier stage, so they can widen their networks to increase family resilience.



A Parenting and Family Support Co-ordinator came into post at the end of May 2021. The purpose of this role is to ensure that there is accessible parenting and family support county wide, to ensure families are given skills to grow, develop and deal with challenges, ideally without statutory involvement.

In October 2020, NHS Lothian offered HENRY training to 30 early years professionals in East Lothian in Musselburgh East, Port Seton and Gosford and Fa'side. This training is aimed to help tackle obesity in children under 5. Information is being gathered about which organisations undertook the training and whether if Covid prevented this, it will be rolled out again.

Information is also being sourced about how Health have supported its early years workers to undertake Solihull Training.

### **B: Redirect our resources and focus our collective spend towards early intervention and prevention.**

*We want to review our approach to how we manage and fund family support as a Children Service's Partnership. We need to align our funding and external funding to ensure sustainable universal, early intervention and intensive family support services are available to our families. We will work at both a strategic and local level to ensure funding streams align*

Collective spend is being invested in the early years to ensure children are given the best start in life. Programmes such as Grow Together, a Good Start and Aberlour are now running ante and post-natal parenting services across the county. Home-start East Lothian, along with their volunteer led parenting support, is also running an ante natal Dad's Group in partnership with Dads' Work. The hope is that these groups will support a more secure attachment between the parent and child and help children become more resilient. Outcomes from these groups will be monitored and evaluated for impact by the service providers and shared with funders.

There are already a number of good parenting supports in East Lothian and work is being done to look at how workers supporting families at additional and targeted levels use support appropriately and do not offer families, for e.g. two types of the same support such as Home-start East Lothian and Safe Families. The hope is that there will then be a greater pool of support available for families.

Money has been invested in testing a new way of multi-agency working through the Our Families Project in Musselburgh East. This project is run by Children First and the oversight review board includes members of the local council. It focusses on families with additional needs in relation to parenting, poverty, employment and education. The hope is that the support provided prevents families from needing to access more targeted and statutory support later. Outcomes for the project are being monitored and evaluated by Capital City Partnerships and Edinburgh University.

The project was set up with a remit of supporting 19 families. One year in, it is currently supporting 26 families, but has supported 38 in total. Out of these 38 families, 16 have received support for income maximisation and money advice; 30 families have received family wellbeing and support advice and 8 families have received employment support. As a result, 1 family is no longer affected by debt; 2 parents have entered higher education and 3 have found jobs. Statistics re children's health and educational outcomes have still to be gathered.

**C: Develop community parenting and family support services by empowering children, young people, families and communities as assets.**

*We want to ensure that there is a spread of access to universal supports and programmes and improve on the availability of targeted supports for parents, carers and families who require additional support, with a focus on early intervention and prevention. To deliver effective and efficient family support services to families, it is crucial that we are aware of what is available across East Lothian in relation to family support services. Aligning all family support activity by three categories – service provider, service type (universal, family support and intensive services) and the age range/unique demographic groups these services cater to remains crucial to develop a comprehensive preventative strategy that provides support to families and enables families to help themselves*

Work is underway to create a parenting directory for parents and professionals, which will outline universal, additional and targeted county wide parenting supports for families and children of varying ages. The process of creating this directory will help identify areas of good practice to be replicated and areas of need. Ways of ensuring parents and professional views are captured when gathering this information are being investigated.

A parenting pathway will also be created for professionals to help them understand the universal, additional and statutory tier system of support and how to refer/signpost families to services.

**D: Support provided to parents and families improves parenting capacity and resilience and will be of a high standard.**

*We will ensure that a variety of high-quality evidence-based interventions and methods are used to give parents and carers the knowledge and confidence to develop as parents and carers and commit to intervention at the earliest opportunity to support positive changes in their child's and family's life*

Evidence based programmes such as Grow Together and a Good Start are now operating to provide the best start to young children. Outcomes from these groups are being gathered for evaluation by the service providers.

Information is being gathered about which workers from the Third Sector, Connected Communities, Health, Education and Children's Services are trained in which evidence based parenting programmes. The hope is that once Covid restrictions allow, parenting groups will be available for everyone who needs them across the county.

### 3. WE WILL REDUCE INEQUALITIES FOR OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN AND BETWEEN OUR COMMUNITIES

The Key objectives identified for this priority and are detailed below, however some still require to be further explored and key partnership work strands developed. The underlined workstreams have been initially prioritised as to where to focus improvement work.

- Children's rights and human rights
- Participation
- Tackling childhood obesity
- Overcoming barriers to improving educational attainment
- Strengthening vocational education
- Promoting gender equality and children's human rights to reduce violence against women and girls and domestic abuse

The following has been progressed to date;

#### **1. Children's rights and human rights**

A champions (members of the Local Authority, the Health Board and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations) workshop was hosted on Child Rights Impact Assessments (CRIAs) and partners have worked together to complete an outline CRIA on the Childrens Services Plan (CSP), which was shared with the CSP Board and a response is currently being formulated. Recruitment of children has been completed and on-line engagement with children from various school settings has started. The project is working with approx. 100 children from P5- S1 across 4 schools (Yester Primary, Letham Mains Primary, Longniddry Primary and Ross High). More intensive work has commenced with a cohort of 12 'investigators' from across the schools who have been selected based on their interest in the project and on giving children who do not often get the chance to participate in this type of opportunity the chance to do so. Two workshops have been undertaken with the Investigators and have 3 more to go before they present their views. The children have been exploring what it means to be healthy, happy and safe in East Lothian, and getting to grips with what CSPs and CRIAs are. As this is a 'learning' project, the project team are working with colleagues from The Observatory of Children's Human Rights Scotland to capture feedback as we travel through the project and I know some of you have been interviewed for this.

Over the course of December fun, short sessions with the children investigators will be run where there will be discussion about how children can be involved in service planning and CRIAs and any questions they may have about the CSP. An initial 'presentation' of the children's findings will be shared with the champions and the Children's Services Partnership and CYPCS in December. In January 2022 a workshop is planned to discuss the initial draft of the 'How to involve C+YP in CRIAs' guide with the project team and champions to ensure it is for purpose.

## **2. Participation**

The East Lothian Community Planning Partnership values the engagement and participation of children, young people and their families in the planning and delivery of all services to children and young people. The Children's Strategic Partnership has signed up to the 'Golden Rules for Participation' developed by the Scotland Commissioner for Children and Young Children through consultation with children and young people across Scotland. Every golden rule has a list of things to consider about children and young people's participation. Some examples of the ways that we engage with our children and young people are noted below.

The East Lothian Champions Board provides young people with care experience with a platform to have their voice heard. The Board is made up of three groups. The participation group is made up of young people with care experience. The support group is made up of staff that support the young people in every way they can. The Ambassador's group is made up of Heads of Services and Elected Members representing Housing, Education, Police, Finance, Aftercare, Health & Well-being, Keeping Loved Ones Together and Employment. Members come from a range of care backgrounds, with the majority living in foster care or care leavers. The ages range from 14 up to 26 years of age and reaches out to all care experienced young people. During the period, 2020 to 2021, the Champs team facilitated three update meetings with Ambassadors. Young people shared their experiences of loneliness, isolation, mental health, and poverty as a result of lockdown restrictions.

There is emerging evidence to support the impact of the Champions Board activities. Below are a list of areas that demonstrate a greater awareness of corporate parenting and changes that have happened:

- Employment of two care- experienced young people in paid roles as participation assistants and a third care- experienced young person be worked on the home and belonging project. This demonstrated our commitment to provide paid employment opportunities to care experienced young people.
- All active schools and instrumental tuition activities are free to care-experienced young people.

- Positive relationships between staff, with children and young people at the hearing centre. There is a commitment to making hearings more child and young person friendly.
- Council tax exemption has been very well received by care experienced young people. Workers have been supporting young people to access the exemption.

During 2020/21 there were the range of mechanisms in place to support engagement and participation of children and young people and their families was limited due to school closure and lockdown restrictions. Most consultation and engagement activity took place online through virtual meetings and surveys. Many of the forums listed below enabled children and young people the opportunity to participate in strategic policy practice and review. These included:

- **Pupil Councils** are established in all East Lothian primary and secondary schools. These councils aim to give our children and young people a voice and consider aspects of school life, learning and teaching, and how the school engages with its community. During 2020/2021, Pupil council activity was limited due to school closures. There was high levels of engagement from young people on the East Lothian Climate Change Strategy 2001-2005 consultation.
- **Youth Councils** representing the six secondary schools, feed into local and national consultations. Again youth council activity was limited locally due to school closures and lockdown. Nationally, members of the youth council were also to participate in Scottish wide consultations covering the impact of lockdown on young people in Scotland.
- **Who Cares? Scotland** provide independent advocacy and children's rights support to children and young people that are looked after and represent their views at an individual and strategic level. Who Cares? Participation Workers support the involvement of care experienced young people in a range of local and national groups and events.
- **Viewpoint** Children's Services uses Viewpoint (Computer Assisted Interviewing Technology) as a tool to gain the views of children and young people. Results are used to inform their individual plans and reviews as well as multi- agency service planning. Viewpoint was also introduced as a tool to support the identification of young carers.
- **Student Evaluation of Experience Survey** The Education Department undertakes a pupil evaluation survey on an annual basis. The survey asks children and young people in Primary 6 and Secondary 2 and 4 for their views on a wide range of subjects, including community safety, participation, child protection and environmental issues. The findings inform service planning and school improvement planning. The survey did not take place during 2020/21 due to school closure. During 2020/2021, the survey did not take place due to school closure.

- **Family Led Information Point (FLIP)** is a forum for parents and carers who have a child/relative with additional support needs. Parents and carers share their views on a wide range of services including education, health, sports and leisure. The FLIP Facebook page remained an active hub for sharing information during 2020/2021. Face to face monthly meetings did not take place during this period.
- **Parent Councils** Parents and carers have been actively involved in the life of the school, particularly since the implementation of the Parental Involvement Act in 2008. The council has been proactive in working with parents to empower them, and parent councils have a key role to play in many school decision-making processes. East Lothian Council has developed its own Parental Engagement Strategy, designed by parents for parents. [https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210557/schools\\_and\\_learning/12100/parental\\_involvement/2](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210557/schools_and_learning/12100/parental_involvement/2)
- **Recruitment and selection** East Lothian Council has a commitment to involve young people in the recruitment and selection of staff including senior manager posts within Education and Children's Services
- **Consultation on the Children and Young People Services Plan 2020-2023** an online survey covering the three main priorities within the Children and Young People Services plan was administered in June 2020. The survey received 421 responses. 231 responses were from East Lothian parents. Responses were in strong support of the 3 priorities for the plan and feedback gathered informed the improvement plan for these priority areas.

### **3. Tackling childhood obesity**

Initial preliminary work has commenced scoping what actions can be implemented to reduce childhood obesity. To date this has taken the form of stakeholder interviews with Health Visitors, School Nurses, Local Authority workers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector colleagues as well as a range of children and young people. Initial actions emerging from this exercise include all Health Visitors being bought appropriate equipment to ensure weights are taken at appropriate pathway visits, as well as height and weight uptake data being shared with team leads to target improvement efforts. A summary of improvement ideas, which include what support would be beneficial to be offered to children and families has been collated. That list will be reviewed and feasibility of these ideas assessed and priorities

31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

### DUNBAR

Population (0-15) = 2,993  
Pupils (P1-S6) = 2,406  
Relative poverty for children 12%  
**(up from 10% in 2014/15)**  
Pupils with Additional Support Needs = 407  
369 referrals to children's social work  
Mental health referrals for children = 50  
Registered for Free School Meals (P4 to P6) = 152  
Number of Exclusions (rate per 1000 pupils) = 3.7

### PRESTONPANS

Population (0-15) = 3,175  
Pupils (P1-S6) = 2,460  
Relative poverty for children 17%  
**(up from 13% in 2014/15)**  
Pupils with Additional Support Needs = 833  
745 referrals to children's social work  
Mental health referrals for children = 58  
Registered for Free School Meals (P4 to P6) = 236  
Number of Exclusions (rate per 1000 pupils) = 6.9

### HADDINGTON

Population (0-15) = 3,416  
Pupils (P1-S6) = 1,845  
Relative poverty for children 14%  
**(up from 12% in 2014/15)**  
Pupils with Additional Support Needs = 482  
405 referrals to children's social work  
Mental health referrals for children = 37  
Registered for Free School Meals (P4 to P6) = 166  
Number of Exclusions (rate per 1000 pupils) = 6.0

## EAST LoTHIAN

231 Looked After children  
39 Children on the  
Child Protection Register  
40 Young People receiving  
aftercare care services  
3979 pupils with Additional  
Support Needs

### MUSSELBURGH

Population (0-15) = 3,256  
Pupils (P1-S6) = 3,177  
Relative poverty for children 21%  
**(up from 18% in 2014/15)**  
Pupils with Additional Support Needs = 950  
899 referrals to children's social work  
Mental health referrals for children = 115  
Registered for Free School Meals (P4 to P6) = 385  
Number of Exclusions (rate per 1000 pupils) = 17.6

### TRANENT

Population (0-15) = 4,466  
Pupils (P1-S6) = 2,876  
Relative poverty for children 19%  
**(up from 16% in 2014/15)**  
Pupils with Additional Support Needs = 864  
7812 referrals to children's social work  
Mental health referrals for children = 131  
Registered for Free School Meals (P4 to P6) = 307  
Number of Exclusions (rate per 1000 pupils) = 17.4

### NORTH BERWICK

Population (0-15) = 2,394  
Pupils (P1-S6) = 2,118  
Relative poverty for children 10%  
**(up from 7% in 2014/15)**  
Pupils with Additional Support Needs = 443  
236 referrals to children's social work  
Mental health referrals for children = 27  
Registered for Free School Meals (P4 to P6) = 80  
Number of Exclusions (rate per 1000 pupils) = 0.9



## Supporting data sets

### Health Core dataset

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>East Lothian</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Children reaching all developmental milestones at the time of their 13-15 month review	90.1%	Children born in 2019 -> reviewed in 2020/21	There is no statistically significant change in these indicators from last year. However, work has commenced analysing Health Visitor data sets to understand where best to prioritise partnership improvement projects in terms of HV coverage and ensuring children meet their developmental milestones.
Children reaching all developmental milestones at the time of their 27-30 month review	86.1%	Children born in 2018 -> reviewed in 2020/21	
Percentage point gap between the most deprived and least deprived eligible children reaching all of their developmental milestones at the time of their 27-30 month review	1.4	Children born in 2018 -> reviewed in 2020/21 Note East Lothian SIMD quintile 4 has a higher proportion of children reaching all milestones (92%) than quintile 5 (86%). Quintile 1 (least deprived) is at 84%.	
% change in average monthly referrals to CAMHS outpatient services	14.9%/22%	2021/22 YTD vs 2019/20 and 2020/21	There has been a rise in referrals to CAMHS services, which can be seen as a barometer of availability and access of tier 1 & 2 services, as well as a general deterioration of CYP mental health due to the pandemic situation. However, work has begun in providing a single point of access for mental health provision, and it is expected this will better signpost CYP to appropriate support services earlier in the pathway.

Primary 1 Body Mass Index (BMI) statistics % Overweight, obese and severely obese combined (clinical)	22.1 / 21.9 %	20/21 East Lothian vs Scotland Average	Priority 3 of the CSP plan is focusing on this specific measure and actions will be developed and tested in 22/23
% Obese and severely obese combined (clinical)	11.9 / 10.6 %		

### Children's social work services 2020-21

Referrals to children's services 2020-2021		
Cluster/Ward	Total	% of Total
Dunbar	369	10.1%
Haddington	405	11.1%
Musselburgh	899	24.7%
North Berwick	236	6.5%
Prestonpans	745	20.5%
Tranent	812	22%
Non-disclosure of address	128	4%
Out with East Lothian	43	1.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3637</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Referrals to children's services have been rising year on year. In the last decade the number has risen from 2,311 to 3,637 – an increase of 57%. Whilst a proportion of this increase might be attributed to population growth, the majority is due to factors of poverty and deprivation. The three most common reasons for referrals were parenting issues, domestic incidents and mental health issues. The largest referral agency was the Police Service. The independent food aid network which operates throughout Scotland showed there was a 123% increase in the 3 day parcels from the previous period last year exacerbated by the pandemic but primarily as a result of benefits being insufficient to allow families to buy enough food. These factors are contributory to the need for a social work service.

In 2020-2021 there was an average of 830 allocated cases held by practitioners. 231 children and young people were looked after which equates to a rate of 10.8 per 1,000 compared with a national rate of 14.0.

<b>Looked after Placement</b>	<b>March 2021</b>	<b>Rate per 1,000 (0-17 pop)</b>	<b>Scottish average</b>
Home Supervision	61	2.9	3.7
Foster Care	81	3.8	5.3
Formal Kin Care	52	2.4	4.0
Residential Care	37	1.7	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>14.0</b>

As well as having 52 children and young people in formal kin care arrangements, a further 80 were being supported to remain with family and friends out with the statutory legal framework. Investment was made expanding family group decision making in conjunction with the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector to support our aim of keeping children and young people within East Lothian where safe to do so. During the year, more children and young people ceased to be looked after than became looked after. Exactly half of all those who had been looked after away from home were returned home to their parents.

The latest statistics produced by the Scottish Government show that 72% of East Lothian care experienced school leavers had one or more qualification at SCQF level 4. The Scottish average is 72% for all care leavers. 78% of care experienced school leavers were in positive destinations (i.e. education, training or employment) and the same percentage were in positive post school destinations after a 9 month follow up. This is slightly above the national percentage of 75%.

There were 39 East Lothian children aged between 0 and 15 on the child protection register at the end of the period. This translates to a rate per 1000 (0-15 pop) compared with a national rate of 2.9. Almost half of registrations involved domestic abuse as a factor closely followed by parental drug misuse.

The disability team provided support to around 150 children, young people and their families ensuring respite arrangements and growing the number of Direct Payments by 55% during the year. The Share the Care service was particularly hard hit by COVID as were some other resources that are routinely used by children with disabilities and their families.

There were around 90 young people who were eligible for after care services during the year. Over 40 were regular recipients of support but the whole after care cohort could access support or advice and the intensity of that support increased primarily due to COVID. Children's services augmented the financial assistance to young people in the same way that universal credit during the year. Of the destinations that were known, almost half of the young people receiving a service were in training, education or employment.

In total, children's services obtained and distributed 92 iPads and Chromebooks to vulnerable children and families to promote digital inclusion. Many of the devices came with their own internet access to allow families without broadband the ability to connect. This has been a major contributor to addressing our three priorities of improving mental health and wellbeing, supporting the resilience of families and reducing inequalities between and within communities.

### **Education**

There was a 1.5 percentage point increase overall in the proportion of P4 to S6 pupils registered for free school meals between the 2019 Sept census and the 2020 Sept census. In terms of what has caused that increase, there will be a number of different factors, not least, the impact of COVID and lockdown itself. There were also a number of COVID hardship payments provided by the Scottish Government last session linked to those eligible for free school meals which were promoted nationally and locally.

### **Conclusion**

2020-21 was an exceptionally challenging year for children, young people and families with a wide range of impacts on their health and wellbeing from COVID. We achieved much during the year and strengthened our relationships and partnership working. The priorities identified for the children's strategic partnership remain very much aligned with the national policy direction and recognition that supporting families, improving mental health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities was and will be essential in helping our families and communities move successfully through and beyond the pandemic.

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