

# Action Plans

Dumfries and Galloway Council and NHS Dumfries and Galloway



# Dumfries and Galloway Council

## Leadership Commitment

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Explicit agreement from Dumfries and Galloway Council to adopt a children's human rights-based approach where the organisation commit to respect, protect, promote and fulfil children's human rights, and secure better or further effect of the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Dumfries and Galloway Council (Full Council)	February 2024	Minuted decision by Dumfries and Galloway Council (Full Council) and/or addendum to the Council Plan.
Explicit commitment from new Dumfries and Galloway Council Chief Officers (in post from 1 April 2024) to respect, protect, promote and fulfil children's human rights and secure better or further effect of the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Senior Leadership Team and Council Management Team	April 2024	Minuted decision by Dumfries and Galloway Council Senior Leadership Team and Council Management Team.
Embed children's human rights into service level priorities, budgeting and planning at all levels of Dumfries and Galloway Council.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Chief Officers	March 2025	Children's human rights are reflected within Council service plans, with relevant performance indicators, and are reported through existing reporting arrangements.  Children's Rights Impact Assessment is embedded within the Council's Impact Assessment process so that children's human rights are considered when designing policies and strategies, establishing practices, and making major decisions (including financial decisions).
Present output from Rights Report to Community Planning Partnership, and any other relevant local strategic partnerships, in order to expand collaborative approach on children's human rights beyond Council and NHS.	Assistant Director Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing	March 2025	Sessions facilitated with Community Planning Partnership and any other relevant strategic partnership.
Agreement to embed a Children's Rights Impact Assessment within the Council's Impact Assessment process, as part of the ongoing Impact Assessment Review, so that children's human rights are considered when designing policies and strategies, establishing practices, and making major decisions (including financial decisions), and task relevant Officers to progress this.	Dumfries and Galloway Council (Full Council)	2024	Children's Rights Impact Assessments are carried out as part of the Impact Assessment process when designing policies and strategies, establishing practices, and making major decisions (including financial decisions), which potentially may impact children's rights.

## Participation and Empowerment of children and Young People

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Council services consistently enable children and young people to have a voice and meaningfully participate in decisions that affect their lives (now and in the future), directly and indirectly, including in policy-making, budgetary decision-making, and in reviewing processes and practices, in line with the Council's Youth Participation and Engagement Strategy 2022-2027.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Chief Officers	March 2025	Council services provide opportunities for children and young people to have a voice and meaningfully participate in decisions that affect their lives, including the design, development and review of services, in line with the Council's Youth Participation and Engagement Strategy 2022-2027.
Council Services consistently offer a range of ways for all children and young people to meaningfully participate.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Chief Officers	March 2025	Council services use a variety of methods to support participation of children and young people, in line with the Council's Youth Participation and Engagement Strategy 2022-2027.

## Empowerment of Children and Young People

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Council Services identify and review barriers to participation and work to remove these.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Chief Officers	March 2025	Council Services consider potential barriers to participation and seek to address these as far as practicable.
All children and young people have access to advice to support them in their understanding of their rights.	Assistant Director Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing, and Service Director Social Work	March 2026	All local authority staff working with children and young people have the skills and knowledge to support them in their understanding of their rights.
All children and young people have access to accessible advice to support them in their understanding of their rights within their communities.	Head of Thriving Communities and Service Director Social Work	March 2025	Community-based staff working with children and young people promote children's rights and support them in their understanding of their rights.
All children and young people have access to independent advocacy to support them in their understanding of their rights.	Service Director Social Work	March 2025	Independent advocacy is available to children and young people in relation to children's rights. Action is taken to increase awareness of these services.

## Child Friendly Complaints

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Implement a Child Friendly Complaint Process and keep under regular review.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Information Governance Manager	March 2025	A Child Friendly Complaint Process is in place and has been promoted to children and young people and their families. The process is reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure it is working well for children and families.
Regularly review child-related complaints and feedback.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Information Governance Manager	March 2025	Child-related complaints and feedback are reviewed on a regular basis to inform future improvement in processes, services and participation. Key learning is communicated to the Council Management Team or individual services as appropriate.

## Training and Awareness Raising

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Staff and volunteers at all levels of the organisation have a basic understanding of children's human rights and their responsibility to protect and advance them.	Dumfries and Galloway Council	March 2025	A mandatory E-Learning opportunity on children's human rights is provided for all existing Council staff and added to the induction process for new staff.
Staff and volunteers working directly with children and young people adopt and model a children's rights-based approach through their work.	Dumfries and Galloway Council	March 2026	Council services who work directly with children and young people provide additional learning opportunities for staff on children's human rights so staff have the confidence to promote children's rights and support them in their understanding of their rights.

## Improving Practice

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Resources are shared with services that can support them to advance children's rights and use those tools to review policy and practice.	Children's Services Manager	Ongoing	When resources are made available by Scottish Government and other sources these are circulated to relevant services.
Policies and procedures are compliant with the UNCRC.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Chief Officers	March 2026	Review existing policies and procedures to ensure that they are compliant with the UNCRC, and as part of this activity identify and remove barriers.
Legal implications of UNCRC Bill are understood by services and staff.	Assistant Director Governance and Human Resources	March 2024	Updates to be provided to Council Management Team and individual services as and when there are any local or national developments. Areas of risk are added to Council Risk Register.

## Child Friendly Publications

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Children and young people have access to child friendly/easy-read format documents when the subject matter is relevant to them.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Communications Manager	March 2026	A criteria is established which provides services with clarity regarding when a child friendly/easy-read format or version may be appropriate. The organisation has capacity to prepare and publish child friendly/easy-read documents in line with European Commission Guidance.

## Monitoring Progress

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Repeat of engagement exercise with children and young people.	Children's Services Manager	November 2025	Programme of engagement completed.
Alongside Progress Reports in 2025 bring forward proposed set of indicators (alongside up-to-date data) which can help monitor how we are protecting and progressing children's rights.	Children's Services Manager	2025	Suite of rights-related indicators agreed in relation to children's rights.

## Children's Rights Budgeting

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Children's Rights Impact Assessments are carried out as part of the Impact Assessment process when making decisions about the allocation of Council budgets.	Dumfries and Galloway Council Chief Officers	2025	Children's Rights Impact Assessments are published as part of the Impact Assessments carried out when setting budgets.
The process of Council budget development includes transparency and the participation of children and young people.	Chief Financial Officer	2025	Children and young people have opportunities to participate in the budget setting process.
Explicit budget lines can be identified which specifically support children's rights e.g. tackling child poverty or inequality.	Chief Financial Officer	2026	Budget lines are easily identifiable by anyone reviewing Council Accounts.

## Accountability and Reporting on Children's Rights

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
2023-26 Rights Report published online and shared with Scottish Government.	Children's Services Manager	February 2024	Following agreement by Dumfries and Galloway Council, NHS Board and Youth Council 2023-26 Rights Report is shared as required.
Elected Members are provided with an update on progress in 2025 as part of the Joint Annual Report on the Children's Services Plan.	Children's Services Manager	2025	Report published and scrutinised by Dumfries and Galloway Council (Full Council).
Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council are provided with an update on progress in 2025.	Children's Services Manager	2025	Report published and scrutinised by Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council.
2023-26 Rights Report developed and published.	Children's Services Manager	2026	Report published and scrutinised by Dumfries and Galloway Council, NHS Board and Youth Council.

## Non-Discrimination and Rights at Risk

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Web pages which promote children's employment rights are developed and published on Council Website.	Organisational Development Manager	2024	Web pages published.
Employment rights of children and young people are promoted through schools.	Assistant Director Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing	2024	Children and young people are aware of their employment rights.
Awareness raising campaign for employers of children and young people promoting their responsibilities in relation to children's employment rights.	Head of Thriving Communities	2024	Employers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to children's employment rights.
Where Council services identify situations where children's human rights are at risk and no solution can be implemented then this must be escalated.	Chief Officers	2024	Council Management Team are made aware of any situations where children's human rights are at risk and no solution can be implemented.

## Other

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Ensure all schools registered for the UNICEF UK Rights Respecting Schools Programme	Assistant Director Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing	August 2024	All schools are registered.
Ensure all schools registered for the UNICEF UK Rights Respecting Schools Programme achieve a minimum of Bronze level	Assistant Director Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing	August 2025	All schools have achieved Bronze level.
Explore opportunities to continue delivery of Rights Respecting Schools Programme when current funding ends in 2025.	Assistant Director Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing	August 2025	A solution is found which enables schools to continue to participate in the Rights Respecting Schools Programme or an equivalent.
Develop and deliver a programme of public awareness-raising activities of Children's Rights for parents and carers.	Assistant Director Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing	March 2026	Parents and carers are aware of children's human rights.
Develop and deliver a programme of public awareness-raising activities of Children's Rights in wider communities.	Head of Thriving Communities	March 2026	Communities are aware of children's human rights.

# NHS Dumfries and Galloway

## Leadership Commitment

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Explicit agreement from Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board to adopt a children's human rights-based approach where the organisation commit to respect, protect, promote and fulfil children's human rights, and secure better or further effect of the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board	February 2024	Minuted decision by Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board and/or addendum to a strategy or plan.
Explicit commitment from Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team to respect, protect, promote and fulfil children's human rights and secure better or further effect of the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team	February 2024	Minuted decision by Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team.
Embed children's human rights into service level priorities, budgeting and planning at all levels of NHS Dumfries and Galloway.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team	March 2025	Children's human rights are reflected within strategic plans, with relevant performance indicators, and are reported through existing reporting arrangements. A Children's Rights Impact Assessment is embedded within the NHS Impact Assessment process so that children's human rights are considered when designing policies and strategies, establishing practices, and making major decisions (including financial decisions).
Agreement to embed a Children's Rights Impact Assessment within the NHS Impact Assessment process, as part of the ongoing Impact Assessment Review, so that children's human rights are considered when designing policies and strategies, establishing practices, and making major decisions (including financial decisions), and task relevant Officers to progress this.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board	2024	Children's Rights Impact Assessments are carried out as part of the Impact Assessment process when designing policies and strategies, establishing practices, and making major decisions (including financial decisions), which potentially may impact children's rights.



## Participation and Empowerment of children and Young People

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
NHS services consistently enable children and young people to have a voice and meaningfully participate in decisions that affect their lives (now and in the future), directly and indirectly, including in policy-making, budgetary decision-making, and in reviewing processes and practices.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team	March 2025	NHS services provide opportunities for children and young people to have a voice and meaningfully participate in decisions that affect their lives, including the design, development and review of services,
NHS Services consistently offer a range of ways for all children and young people to meaningfully participate.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team	March 2025	NHS services use a variety of methods to support participation of children and young people.
Learning from CAMHS Participation activity is shared, with successful approaches upscaled across other NHS Services.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team	March 2025	Increased delivery of participation activities in services outwith CAMHS.

## Empowerment of Children and Young People

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
NHS Services identify and review barriers to participation and work to remove these.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team	March 2025	NHS Services consider potential barriers to participation and seek to address these as far as practicable.
All children and young people have access to advice to support them in their understanding of their rights.	General Manager – Women, Children and Sexual Health	March 2025	All staff working with children and young people in NHS DG will 1 know how they can support children's understanding of their rights. 2 have the skills and knowledge to support children in their understanding of their rights.

## Child Friendly Complaints

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Implement a Child Friendly Complaint Process and keep under regular review.	NHS Dumfries and Galloway Complaints Manager	March 2025	A Child Friendly Complaint Process is in place and has been promoted to children and young people and their families. The effectiveness of the process is reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure it is working well for children and families.
Regularly review child-related complaints and feedback.	NHS Dumfries and Galloway Complaints Manager	March 2025	Child-related complaints and feedback are reviewed on a regular basis to inform future improvement in processes, services and participation. Key learning is communicated to the Council Management Team or individual services as appropriate.

## Training and Awareness Raising

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Staff and volunteers at all levels of the organisation have a basic understanding of children's human rights and their responsibility to protect and advance them.	NHS Dumfries and Galloway	March 2025	A mandatory E-Learning opportunity on children's human rights is provided for all existing NHS staff and added to the induction process for new staff.
Staff and volunteers working directly with children and young people adopt and model a children's rights-based approach through their work.	NHS Dumfries and Galloway	March 2026	NHS services who work directly with children and young people provide additional learning opportunities for staff on children's human rights so staff have the confidence to promote children's rights and support them in their understanding of their rights.

## Improving Practice

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Resources are shared with services that can support them to advance children's rights and use those tools to review policy and practice.	Child Health Commissioner and Children's Services Manager	Ongoing	When resources are made available by Scottish Government and other sources these are circulated to relevant services.
Policies and procedures are compliant with the UNCRC.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team	March 2026	Review existing policies and procedures to ensure that they are compliant with the UNCRC, and as part of this activity identify and remove barriers.
Legal implications of UNCRC Bill are understood by services and staff.	NHS Legal Advisors	March 2024	Updates to be provided to NHS Board Management Team and individual services as and when there are any local or national developments. Areas of risk are added to NHS Risk Register.

## Child Friendly Publications

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Children and young people have access to child friendly/easy-read format documents when the subject matter is relevant to them.	NHS Communication and Engagement Manager	March 2026	A criteria is established which provides services with clarity regarding when a child friendly/easy-read format or version may be appropriate. The organisation has capacity to prepare and publish child friendly/easy-read documents in line with European Commission Guidance.

## Monitoring Progress

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Repeat of engagement exercise with children and young people.	Children's Services Manager	November 2025	Programme of engagement completed.
Alongside Progress Reports in 2025 bring forward proposed set of indicators (alongside up-to-date data) which can help monitor how we are protecting and progressing children's rights.	Children's Services Manager	2025	Suite of rights-related indicators agreed in relation to children's rights.

## Children's Rights Budgeting

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Children's Rights Impact Assessments are carried out as part of the Impact Assessment process when making decisions about the allocation of Council budgets.	Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board Management Team	2025	Children's Rights Impact Assessments are published as part of the Impact Assessments carried out when setting budgets.
The process of NHS budget development includes transparency and the participation of children and young people.	Director of Finance	2025	Children and young people have opportunities to participate in the budget setting process.
Explicit budget lines can be identified which specifically support children's rights e.g. tackling child poverty or inequality.	Director of Finance	2026	Budget lines are easily identifiable by anyone reviewing NHS Accounts.

## Accountability and Reporting on Children's Rights

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
2023-26 Rights Report published online and shared with Scottish Government.	Children's Services Manager	February 2024	Following agreement by Dumfries and Galloway Council, NHS Board and Youth Council 2023-26 Rights Report is shared as required.
NHS Board are provided with an update on progress in 2025 as part of the Joint Annual Report on the Children's Services Plan.	Children's Services Manager	2025	Report published and scrutinised by Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board.
Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council are provided with an update on progress in 2025.	Children's Services Manager	2025	Report published and scrutinised by Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council.
2023-26 Rights Report developed and published.	Children's Services Manager	2026	Report published and scrutinised by Dumfries and Galloway Council, NHS Board and Youth Council.

## Non-Discrimination and Rights at Risk

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Where NHS services identify situations where children's human rights are at risk and no solution can be implemented then this must be escalated.	Board Management Team	2024	Board Management Team are made aware of any situations where children's human rights are at risk and no solution can be implemented.

## Other

What needs to happen?	By who?	When?	What will success look like?
Child Health Commissioner remit in relation to children's human rights is effectively delivered.	Child Health Commissioner	March 2026	Child Health Commissioner advocates both locally and nationally that the rights and interests of children and young people, as detailed in the UN Rights of the Child are recognised, promoted and acted on in the development and implementation of policies, strategies and services.

# Appendix

## Case studies and examples



## **Pupil Council Charter**

In Dumfries and Galloway we are introducing a Scheme of Establishment for a Pupil Council Charter. A 'Scheme of Establishment' is a framework, or a set of rules for how we set something up. This helps us ensure that when Pupil Councils are set up, they have guidance to make sure they work in a way that is equitable for all young people.

The Charter should be written by the Pupil Council in partnership with the school. This is to ensure that we have consistency in the way that Pupil Councils operate. It also ensures that the work they undertake is reflected in the policies and guidance of the Education department. The Education department is working with stakeholders to develop a Charter statement.

Key Functions of a Pupil Council are:

- To promote contact between Pupils/Pupils and Parents/Communities of Interest
- To make representations to and from pupils to the school on matters that affect them in their learning and education
- To make representation to the school and local authority on policies and objectives that affect them in their learning and education

Key Features are to be:

- Fair and Inclusive - opportunities for all voices to be heard
- Transparency – opportunities to become involved are clear
- Participatory – opportunities for co-creation and co-production

## **Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council (DGYC)**

An organisation of young volunteers, aged 12-25, who live, work and study in the region. There are 35 positions on DGYC. The Youth Council represent the views of young people across the region and during this reporting period began having representation on the Education and Learning Committee and the four Area Committees.

The last elections took place in November 2021 and during this reporting period two

by-elections took place. This is to be expected with any youth council due to young people moving on for work or education. Both by-elections were run successfully.

One of the highlights of the year for the Youth Council was organising hustings events for the Local Government Elections in May 2022. The hustings involved all candidates standing for elections with questions put forward to candidates by young people throughout Dumfries and Galloway. Questions were put to candidates about their priorities and what they planned to do for young people if elected.

## Welcoming Gypsy Traveller families

In Dumfries and Galloway we welcome all families equally; however, we are aware certain protocols need to be in place when welcoming Gypsy Traveller families.

When a Gypsy Traveller family comes to school to enrol their children, support will be offered by the Head teacher and clerical staff to complete all relevant admission paperwork.

The Head teacher will discuss with parents the various routines and procedures about the day-to-day life of the school and go through with the parent the welcome pack which they can take away with them.

Contact will be made with any previous schools regarding the child's previous education if appropriate.

The child's learning will be assessed by their teacher using the school's Rapid Assessment. This will be followed by a consultation to determine level of support required.

Schools recognise the needs of Gypsy Travellers:

- To be made welcome and to feel safe and secure
- To be given the opportunity to make friends
- To have access to an appropriate\* curriculum
- To be accepted and included in the life of the school community

Schools meet the Additional Needs of Travellers through:

- Providing clear information on routines and expectations e.g. Visual timetables displaying breaks and lunchtimes . Recognising differences in vocabulary and terminology to ensure understanding.
- Talking to children about their previous school experiences, assessing children's formal learning to date using Dumfries and Galloway's Gypsy /Traveller 'Initial assessment'.

- School uniform: Children are encouraged to wear school uniform, however we do not enforce this. New and pre loved uniforms are made available for purchase, through donation or free.
- Accepting children may wish to change separately for PE.
- Accepting that Sexual health education should be discussed with parents prior to any teaching. It should not be assumed that it is 'OK' to teach.
- Celebrating festivals and cultural diversity and weaving these into the curriculum and lessons.

**The Council's Roads Service** engages with children and young people, visiting schools and talking to children and young people about road safety, and providing child-friendly materials. The Roads Service ran a competition with early learning and childcare settings and primary school learners in Dumfries and Galloway to take part in a competition to name one of our 18 new gritters for the winter of 2023/24.

Duncow Primary School was working towards a Gold Rights Respecting School Award. The school's Junior Road Safety Group invited Roads Service to visit the school so that the pupils could ask questions and raise their road safety concerns. A technician visited the school and gave a presentation to the pupils showing works that the Service had carried out. The Schools Junior Road Safety Group, which was comprised of six pupils from all different ages P1 – P7, then highlighted some road safety issues they felt were of concern to their safety, for example: repair of slow down lights; reduction of speed limit; overgrown hedges; overhanging trees. Actions were agreed on the issues raised and it was agreed that the Road Services representative would inform the group of progress.



## Waste Services Pilot

During January and February 2022 Dumfries and Galloway Council ran an innovative pilot with two primary schools in Dumfries. Members of the Global Gang School Group at Georgetown and Calside Primary Schools met with representatives from the council's Waste Services department to explore how they could recycle as much as possible. They began by identifying the most common types of waste that were produced at school - these included:

- Plastic bottles
- Paper and cardboard
- Tins and cans
- Food waste
- Crisp packets

They then provided black boxes in all classrooms to help collect recycling and easily transport it to the bins. This resulted in more recycling and fewer general waste collections. Following the pilot with the two primary schools, the Council decided to roll out school recycling across the region, and this is taking place in stages.

**Operation Safety** is an early intervention and prevention programme for P7's that is delivered in partnership between the Emergency Services (Scottish Fire & Rescue

Service, Scottish Ambulance Service, Police Scotland) and Youth Work Services. The programme seen a variety of interactive workshops delivered with young people on a wide range of issues including how to be safe online, first aid, fire safety, water safety, electrical safety and resilience. The aim is to equip young people with the information they need to be able to keep themselves and others safe, whilst also providing education about what to do if things go wrong. Operation Safety was delivered over 3 weeks in advance of the 2022 Autumn school break within the Youth Enquiry Service with local primary schools from across Nithsdale, Annandale and Eskdale and Stewartry being invited to participate for a full day experience. 41 primary schools participated in the programme from across all ward areas with over 750 P7 students taking part.

## **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**

The Be Kind project, led by nine young people supported through CAMHS service and external funding from See Me, delivered an engaging animation an educational booklet and the young people wanted to highlight the importance of talking about Mental Health and where you can seek support locally. 500 educational booklets were produced and shared locally.

Young people involved with the 'Be Kind' Mental Health project had the opportunity to share their lived experiences with policy makers when they had a meeting with Kevin Stewart MSP Minister of Mental Wellbeing and Social Care alongside See Me and BEAT Young Champions. A young person reflected on this by saying; "It felt really good to be a part of something, to feel like we were making our voices heard in the places that they are needed."

CAMHS Youth Forum members have been involved in developing a guidance document and devising training specifically for young people to equip them with the knowledge and information they need for meaningfully engaging within mental health professionals interviews.

CAMHS Improvement Projects, from focusing on our waiting times and giving young people the opportunity to share their experiences on the first assessment process and listening and learning from these.

Young people, parent and carers and members of the CAMHS staff team, were involved in developing and designing a new CAMHS and ISSU 18 Information Leaflet.

The "changing rooms" project was one of the CAMHS improvement projects. A group of young people were involved in a project to make clinical spaces look and feel more young person-friendly. This group had full ownership over an allocated budget and were involved with regards, planning, designing, involving others and officially launching the new-look spaces.

Young people took a lead role in designing the new NHS Dumfries and Galloway Child Adolescent Mental Health Service website. Young people were involved in the website working group from the start, where they were involved in all aspects: from discussing language; design; colours; developing content; producing art work; poetry; videos; and selecting podcasts to be included within the website.

## Summer of Play

In 2021 the Scottish Government provided funding for a Summer Offer for Children and Young People (Summer of Play) which would focus on the wellbeing of children and young people during the 2021 summer holidays and support existing provision of activities for children and young people and their families over the summer, ensuring they were provided with opportunities to socialise, play and reconnect within their local communities and environments. Following positive evaluations, funding was made available for the summer of 2022, and Dumfries and Galloway was allocated £329,037.

In Dumfries and Galloway, Third Sector and Council Services could apply for funding to deliver activities under the 'Summer of Play' banner over the summer holiday period. Council services were allowed to apply for funding to enable them to offer the services for free to children and young people. The Council with Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway to develop the arrangements for the Third Sector fund, to ensure it was co-designed with the sector.

As the offer was aimed specifically at children and young people, it was important that they were involved from the very beginning of the planning process for the funding. As such, 2 co-production groups were created (Primary 1 to Primary 5 & S1 to S6) in early May to ensure their views were heard. The children and young people from the co-design groups identified the following key priorities that planned activities would cover, and applicants were required to demonstrate how their activity met one or more of these priorities within their application:

- Priority 1 – Accessibility
- Priority 2 – Sports
- Priority 3 – Culture, Arts and Performance
- Priority 4 – Recreation, Social and Learning
- Priority 5 – Food
- Priority 6 – Nature and Outdoor

Applications for funding were considered by Assessment Panels which consisted of young people from the co-production groups alongside Council Officers and Third Sector partners. One of the criteria for funding was that all activities had to be co-designed with children and young people.

A range of activities were provided over the summer, and through the Amazing Summer Roadshows, 131 pop-up community events were delivered across 78 remote and rural communities in Dumfries and Galloway. These were accessed by 4,330 children and young people. Over 1,800 children and young people across the region accessed free leisure memberships for the summer holiday period in 2022. Information about the Summer Offer, and the activities provided is available [here](#).

Customer Services have continued to support the national programme to provide all 5–22-year-olds with free bus travel through the National Entitlement Cards which launched in January 2022. During the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 there were 1260 new cards issued through face-to-face appointments at Customer Service Centres; 1159 new cards issued through online applications; and a further 1532 issued to through the P7/S1 transition process in collaboration with Education.

## **Employability and Skills – Project SEARCH**

The Employability and Skills Service, in collaboration with Dumfries and Galloway College, launched Project SEARCH in 2015. The goal was to provide an additional, highly supported program designed to enhance the achievement levels of individuals in the region with additional support needs and disabilities, facilitating their journey to secure and maintain employment. The program accommodates 12 participants annually (from August to June) and aims for a 70% employment success rate each year.

The Employability and Skills Service acknowledges the positive impact of routine, structure, feeling valued, and making a positive contribution on the mental health of young people. Each young person receiving support from the service is assigned a one-to-one key worker who assists them in planning an individual program. This tailored program involves work experience, learning opportunities, training, and qualifications, aiming to provide structure and achieve positive outcomes. For young people with acute or complex mental health challenges, appropriate referrals to specialised services are made.

The Employability and Skills Service offers extensive support to young people to assist them in applying for the Holywood Trust, referring them to food banks, liaising with social services and housing providers, covering expenses for interview or job-related clothing, and facilitating access to welfare funds for clients. Additionally, the service supports clients in obtaining essential documents such as birth certificates, passports, or provisional driving licenses. Access to “moving into work” funds helps to eliminate barriers to employment, including travel, training, and driving lessons.

## **Community Mental Health Funding**

£430,000 of Community Mental Health and Wellbeing funding was granted to our Children and Families commissioned services to provide new and enhanced services for young people. The providers used the funds to develop unique and interesting projects such as an Orchard, Mental Health Advocacy in schools, Young Carers Wellbeing Support Worker, Befrienders, Animal Assisted Therapy and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy to name but a few. In 2022 over 1000 young people accessed the projects with more than half reporting improved outcomes. The main issues affecting young people accessing the services were anxiety, social interaction and isolation.

**Perinatal and Infant Mental Health services** have been developed, with the development informed by a significant engagement with new parents. Over 60 parents engaged in a survey on Maternal Mental Health and on Infant Mental Health, with 16 of these women meeting individually with PIMH team members to offer feedback. There have been three lived-experience focus groups that have taken place remotely and in Bump, Baby and Beyond. The last Focus Group fed back ideas for service improvement to a Birth Trauma Pathway group within NHS Dumfries and Galloway. Efforts continue to seek representation on the Peri-natal and Infant Mental Health Steering Group from those with lived experience. The existing lived-experience model is under review, and the service is seeking involvement from Quality Improvement Service and from Clinical Governance to develop a sustainable model. This may involve a volunteer model.

The Infant Mental Health service Wee Minds Matter has been developed and is now live for referrals. The lead clinician is trained in Video Interactive Guidance and Circle of Security. The Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Service (PIMHS) are supporting Health Visiting to offer Solihull training and expanding this across mental health services. The PIMH team are developing a training needs survey for staff to identify training priorities across perinatal and Infant Mental Health topics with support from the Psychological Therapies Training Co-ordinator. They also regularly meet with Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Champions within the NHS and have a regular update meeting with the main Third Sector providers in the area.

**Lifelong Learning** has a key delivery target for Family Learning. This is an approach that supports improved attainment which leads to positive outcomes for both adults and children. Family Learning in Dumfries and Galloway is an early intervention working with families pre-birth to children Primary 3. We provide several evidence-based programmes in the community and within 11 targeted primary schools in the region. Schools are targeted based on areas of deprivation and attainment levels. Delivery is universal within each link school and open to all parents to ensure that parents do not feel targeted and encouraging peer learning between families.

Within early learning and childcare provisions sessions are directed towards parents and carers in relation to sleep, toileting, nutrition, play. There are also a number of opportunities for sessions such as stay and play and family cooking sessions.

During the three-year reporting period the Lifelong Learning Service has engaged with 12,650 adults and children throughout the region. Lifelong Learning has a key delivery target for adults in Dumfries and Galloway to develop their skills and confidence. Community based adult learning provides a range of programmes which include literacy and numeracy support, English language learning and digital learning. Adult Learning is available to anyone 16 plus who are not in full time education.

## Tackling Poverty

All schools in Dumfries and Galloway have worked to minimise or remove all costs associated with the school day.

When considered alongside initiatives such as free school uniform events that were hosted across the region in advance of the 22/23 academic year and offered free school uniform for children, parents of school age children have seen some reduced costs which may have gone a small way to help with the increased costs of living. Where feasible we have adopted a cash first approach in order to ensure the dignity of families. This is also exemplified by our period dignity project which makes sanitary products available in ways that are acceptable to those who need them.

Within the local authority, data analysis highlighted lower than expected uptake levels in relation to income related free meals, school clothing grants and holiday food payments. This analysis led to work to match data of families in receipt of free school meals and council tax reduction in order to identify children who were in one data set and not the other (as being in receipt of free school meals on financial grounds). Where children were found to appear in only one data set staff subsequently proactively contacted and engaged with families to invite an application, providing support as required. This approach has increased the uptake of income related free school meals which has a direct financial benefit to local families. It has also increased the uptake of means tested council tax reduction which has had a positive financial impact by reducing the families' liability to pay council tax, water and waste water charges.

Throughout August 2022, the Poverty and Inequalities Team delivered four Free Back to School Uniform Events across the Region supporting 475 family members, with over 5,595 items of new and pre-loved school uniform items redistributed. Free Haircuts from local Hairdressers at each event also helped to save families money before children and young people went back to school.

In addition to the free events, seven permanent School Uniform Banks have been developed in each of the following locations which are open all year round for the donation and collection of school uniforms:

- Stranraer
- Newton Stewart
- Dalbeattie
- Castle Douglas
- Kelloholm
- Dumfries
- Annan

The School Meals Service has various references, policies, guidance that support the delivery of the service, some of which support children and human rights. The service complies with all Scottish Government legislation in relation to food and drink provision in schools. Healthy Eating in Schools is embedded within our school meals lunchtime service and ensures all children and young people have access to nutritional balanced meals when in school. This related to children's rights on having access to proper nutritious food while also having a children and young people centre approach showing our commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of our children and young people.

For further information about Children's Rights in Dumfries and Galloway,  
please contact **[ChildrensServices@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:ChildrensServices@dumgal.gov.uk)**