

Best Start, Bright Futures Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-2026

Annex 8

March 2022

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1. Which articles of the UNCRC does this policy/measure impact on?

Realising Scotland's Ambition for Families impacts upon several articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (see annex 1):

Article 2: non-discrimination

Article 3: best interest to be a primary consideration

Article 4: implementation of the convention

Article 6: life, survival, and development

Article 12: respect for the views of the child

Article 18: parental responsibilities and State's assistance

Article 20: right to special protection

Article 24: right to health and health services

Article 25: right to be safe and happy of outside the home

Article 26: right to social security

Article 27: right to adequate standard of living

Article 28: right to education

Article 31: right to leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities

For a simplified version of the UNCRC articles: [UNCRC Articles Archive - The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland \(cypcs.org.uk\)](https://www.cypcs.org.uk/uncrc-articles-archive)

2. What impact will your policy/measure have on children's rights?

Positive.

Realising Scotland's Ambition for Families (The Plan) is set to have a highly positive impact on a range of child rights (listed above).

3. Will there be different impacts on different groups of children and young people?

[Evidence](#) shows that six types of families are at highest risk of child poverty. These priority families are: larger families (3+ children), families with young mothers (<25yrs), families with a disabled adult or child, minority ethnic families, families with a child under 1 year old, and lone parent families. The Plan places particular focus on delivering for these families. We recognise that some families fall under more than one of these priority types and so, the Plan takes an intersectional approach.

Elements of the Plan have an even wider reach (for example, improvements to transport services) so, in some cases, all children will stand to benefit. The Plan aligns with Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving the wellbeing of all children and young people.

For detailed assessments of the impact on children in Island/Rural areas, see the [Island Communities Impact Assessment \(Annex 10\)](#). See the Equalities Impact

Assessment ([Annex 7](#)) for assessment of the Plan's impact in relation to protected characteristics.

4. If a negative impact is assessed for any area of rights or any group of children and young people, can you explain why this is necessary and proportionate? What options have you considered to modify the proposal, or mitigate the impact?

Article 1 of the UNCRC defines a child as anyone under the age of 18. However, The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 states that a child is "(a) a person under the age of 16, or (b) a person who is a qualifying young person for the purposes of Part 9 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992."

The statutory targets underpinning this Plan pertain to children 16 years old and younger. Some of the key actions taken in the Plan – such as the Scottish Child Payment (SCP) – are available only to this age group. 17 and 18 year olds are ineligible for some of the Plan's key actions and are not included in the targets so will not see the full positive impact of these measures.

SCP eligibility is based upon receipt of a qualifying reserved benefit, Universal Credit. It is, therefore, considered neither proportionate nor feasible to extend this element of the plan to 17 and 18 year olds.

Effective mitigations are in place through other actions in the Plan, including the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the Educational Maintenance Allowance (UNCRC 28), provision of Free School Meals (UNCRC 27) and Clothing Grant to those entitled, plus offers of post-school transitions support including the Young Person's Guarantee and School Leavers' Toolkit.

The Care Experience Grant is available to eligible young people aged 16-25. The Scottish Mentoring and Leadership Program is a preventative approach, equipping young people so that they do not themselves become parents/carers in poverty in the future. These measures are available to 17 and 18 year olds and likely to have a positive impact. (Note that mothers aged 18 and under stand to benefit significantly from the Plan as they represent a priority family type.)

We envisage no negative impacts on the rights and wellbeing of any groups of children under the age of 16. The recently enhanced [Tackling Child Poverty Evaluation Strategy](#) will monitor for any unintended consequences of the policies set out in the Plan and will inform any modifications.

5. How will the policy/measure give better or further effect to the implementation of the UNCRC in Scotland?

The Scottish Government remains committed to the incorporation into Scots law of the UNCRC to the maximum extent possible as soon as practicable. While urgently considering the most effective way forward for this important legislation, we continue

work to implement the UNCRC. This means taking proactive steps to ensure the protection of children's rights, including the right to benefit from social security; the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development; and the right to education that develops every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. This Plan is committed to these ambitions.

The aim of the Plan is to reduce child poverty in Scotland and meet the four statutory child poverty targets set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. The Plan sets out the policy interventions to be implemented during 2022-2026 to deliver on both interim and final targets.

The Plan builds on the progress of the previous Delivery Plan, 'Every Child, Every Chance' 2018-2022 and seeks to protect a range of children's rights (UNCRC 4) and to have a positive impact on children's wellbeing. It aims to improve parental access to fair work, reduce costs of living for families, provide greater help via social security, and improve children and families' quality of life.

In tackling the three key drivers of child poverty - increase income from employment, reduce household costs and maximise income from Social Security and benefits in kind - the Plan acts in the best interests of children, working to move them out of poverty (UNCRC 3). The Plan is guided by feedback from dedicated child poverty stakeholders and children and young people themselves (UNCRC 12). It focuses on the six priority families at higher risk of child poverty, working to mitigate the discrimination they often face (UNCRC 2).

The Plan brings together a range of policies offering cross-cutting, positive effects on children and families' wellbeing. The Plan enables parents' employment by increasing access to training and skills and working in partnership with employers to support fair work, as well as strengthening the essential services of childcare and transport (UNCRC 18). It also aims to maximise families' income from benefits through doubling the Scottish Child Payment to £20 per child and then further increasing the rate to £25, enhancing advice services to ensure families access the benefits available to them (UNCRC 26), and supporting the expansion of benefits such as free school meals (UNCRC 27) and the school clothing grant (UNCRC 26). The Plan also focuses on whole family wellbeing, including access to affordable, warm homes (UNCRC 27) and connections to the Whole Family Wellbeing Funding.

The Plan aims to give children the best start to life which includes post-natal care (for example, Baby Boxes) and realising the benefits of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (UNCRC 6, 24). The Plan also acts towards equality in education through the efforts of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (UNCRC 28) and puts forward policies which support children's opportunities for learning and growth (e.g. Scottish Mentoring and Leadership Programme) (UNCRC 31).

The Plan is aligned with the commitment to 'Keeping The Promise' (UNCRC 20, 25), recognising that reducing poverty levels can influence the rates of children and young people coming in to care. Furthermore, the Plan stands to benefit care experienced children and young people through The Promise Partnership Fund and

Care Experience Grant, as well as supported access to mentoring and Family Nurse guidance for young mothers.

6. How have you consulted with relevant stakeholders, including involving children and young people in the development of the policy/measure?

A targeted consultation was conducted between September and December 2021, gathering feedback from community based and national third sector organisations, local authorities, health boards, COSLA, and the Scottish Parliament, in line with the requirements of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

In partnership with The Poverty Alliance, we consulted people with experience of living on a low income. We also conducted deep dive sessions with gender, minority ethnic, and disability stakeholders.

The Scottish Government engaged with a range of organisations representing children's interests, as well as consulting children and young people themselves (UNCRC 12). Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland contributed feedback from participatory research with 746 children and young people (across 10 schools) who discussed their priorities for wellbeing and enablers/barriers to achieving their goals.

Stakeholder consultation highlighted key areas of focus for the Plan and the actions needed to create change. 11 themes emerged from the consultation and each is addressed directly in the Plan:

1. supporting priority families (across all policy action, including addressing stigma and discrimination, and taking targeted action to reach priority families)
2. income from employment, including structural economy issues
3. childcare
4. transport
5. income from social security and benefits in kind, both the value and eligibility for these and process of navigating support systems
6. whole family support, covering practical, emotional and financial support
7. partnership working and funding
8. place based approaches
9. housing and homelessness
10. health, including mental health
11. education

The stakeholders consulted on the Plan include:

- Access to Childcare Fund
- Active Life Club
- Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre
- Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO) Scotland
- Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland
- Children & Young People's Centre for Justice
- Children and Young People' Commissioner

- Children in Scotland
- Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland
- Close the Gap
- Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER)
- COSLA
- Dundee International Women's Centre
- Cryreians
- East Ayrshire Children's Services Wellbeing Model
- Edinburgh City Council
- Energy Saving Trust
- Engender
- Equate Scotland
- Falkirk Council
- Family Fund Scottish Partnership
- Fife Centre for Equalities
- Flexibility Works
- Glasgow Centre for Population Health
- Glasgow Community Food Network CIC
- Glasgow Disability Alliance
- Inclusion Scotland
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Multi-Cultural Family Base
- NHS Dumfries and Galloway
- NHS East Ayrshire GIRFREC Group
- NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
- North Ayrshire Council
- One Parent Families Scotland
- Outside the Box
- Parenting Across Scotland
- Perth and Kinross Council
- Poverty Alliance (and through them, 25 community and voluntary organisations and 68 people with direct and recent experience of living on a low income)
- Poverty Inequality Commission
- Poverty Truth Community
- Public Health Scotland
- Save the Children
- Scottish Borders Council
- Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
- Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit, Glasgow Caledonian University
- Scottish Women's Aid
- Scottish Women's Convention
- Scottish Youth Parliament
- Sikh Sanjog
- Standard Life Foundation (Fraser of Allander Institute at the University of Strathclyde, the Poverty Evaluation and Research Unit at Manchester Metropolitan University and the Poverty Alliance)

- STEP
- Step Change Debt Charity
- Stirling Council
- West of Scotland Racial Equality Council

7. What evidence have you used to inform your assessment?

The Plan sets out a range of policies aimed at tackling child poverty in Scotland, the evidence for this assessments is drawn from policy specific CRWIAs and supplemented with additional evidence related to child poverty, the priority families, and the impact of Covid-19 on child poverty and rights.

National child poverty data

Accurate statistical data is vital for tracking progress against the tackling child poverty targets: [Child poverty summary \(data.gov.scot\)](#) [Child poverty analysis - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Scottish Government's child poverty update shows that, during 2017-2020, relative poverty stabilised at 24% compared to the interim target for 2023/24 of 18%. It was estimated that 27% of the population were living in absolute poverty in 2017-20, compared to the 2023/24 interim target of 14%. However, it is important to note that this latest data was collected prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Child poverty data and analysis is also available from independent sources: The End Child Poverty coalition released [research](#) in May 2021, detailing changes in child poverty over the previous five years. It is broken down by local area. Joseph Rowntree Foundation's '[Poverty in Scotland 2021: The independent annual review](#)' includes modelling various scenarios to show the action needed to meet the interim child poverty targets. The Fraser of Allander Institute (University of Strathclyde) published a [report](#) in January 2022, analysing various types and combinations of policies the Scottish Government could use to meet the child poverty targets, with a focus on childcare, employability and social security measures.

Evidence of what works

A (quantitative) [Cumulative Impact Assessment](#) and [comprehensive Evidence Review](#) are published alongside the Plan. These publications, alongside [annual progress reports](#), tell us what is working in the mission to tackle child poverty and inform the actions laid out in the Plan.

The cumulative impact assessment published alongside this plan models the impact of a package of policies on the child poverty targets. This analysis uses UKMOD – a microsimulation model – which allows us to estimate the impact of a set of policy measures on two of the targets: relative and absolute poverty. This type of modelling allows us to take into account the interaction between policies. The modelling shows that, as a result of the actions we have taken to date together with those set out in this plan, and using current projections, we anticipate that around 17% of children

will live in relative poverty in 2023, with more than 60,000 fewer children living in poverty since the Act was passed in 2017. Whilst economic modelling cannot precisely account for what may happen, particularly in the context of the cost of living crisis, inflation rises and increasing international instability, we anticipate that over 50,000 fewer children will live in absolute poverty compared to 2017, with around 16% of children projected to live in absolute poverty in 2023. This data and the capabilities to model future cumulative impact are vital to planning our next steps in tackling child poverty, although it must be noted that external factors introduce a significant degree of uncertainty into our projections.

The Evidence Review presents a rapid review of empirical evidence on what works to tackle child poverty. It finds that flexible, tailored approaches are needed to tackle child poverty, and a combination of universal and targeted policies. The data highlight the importance of ensuring that critical infrastructure is in place to support families: a combination of employment, childcare, transport, and advice services, alongside cash benefits. This is reflected in the Plan's circle of support for families.

Priority families

The Plan focuses on delivering for the [six priority family types](#) at highest risk of poverty. Evidence on tackling child poverty among these families can be found in focused reports produced annually. The data in these reports demonstrate how priority groups are affected by structural inequalities, disproportionately un/underemployed and more likely to struggle with costs of living.

Minority ethnic families: [Tackling child poverty: first year progress report - Annex C - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) //

Lone parents: [Tackling child poverty: second year progress report - annex C - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) //

Families with a disabled adult or child: [Tackling child poverty - third year progress report : annex B - child poverty in families with a disabled adult or child - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) //

Local child poverty data

The Plan supports a place based approach, recognising that there is no one size fits all solution to providing support in the community. There is a duty on local partners – Local Authorities and health boards – to report annually on progress in tackling child poverty. Sources of local data on child poverty include:

- [UK Gov's Children in low income families: local area statistics](#)
- [SG Local Child Poverty Dashboard](#)
- [SG 'Children in families with limited resources'](#)
- [School Healthy Living Survey statistics: 2020 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

We recognise the need for place based data – quantitative and qualitative – to support targeted action on child poverty. The Plan supports pathfinder initiatives which are tailored to local areas, generating and drawing on local knowledge, beginning in Dundee and Glasgow. We will also collate evidence of Shetland Islands

Council's multi-agency child poverty project, 'The Anchor Project'. This research will deepen our understanding of what elements of the model could and should be replicated in other rural and island communities.

Data on the impacts of Covid-19

There have been significant changes in the four years since the first Delivery Plan, which have impacted on the lives and experiences of children and families across Scotland. The new Plan launches in the context of Covid-19 recovery and seeks to learn from the collaborative action demonstrated in the pandemic response. The independent CRIA completed by the Observatory of Children's Human Rights Scotland identified that Covid-19 restrictions had impacts across a range of UNCRC Articles, affecting children's physical and mental health, education, poverty, food and digital access and play. The full impact of Covid-19 on child poverty levels is still largely unknown, particularly the long term effects on families and our economy. However, we know that the effects of the pandemic were not felt equally and deepened existing structural inequalities.

Public Health Scotland's 'Covid-19 Early Years Resilience and Impact Survey' (CEYRIS) found that Covid-19 restrictions impacted negatively on several aspects of children's lives, including play, behaviour, mood and physical activity. The findings highlight that families on lower incomes – including single-adult households and larger families - were generally more negatively affected by the restrictions. Children in these families were more likely to have concerns in relation to relationships, behaviour, and mental health and wellbeing than children in other families. It is evident that the Plan's focus on delivering for priority families is more important than ever.

The Scottish Government recently published qualitative research entitled '[Evaluation of COVID support in Low Income Households](#)'. It focused on the six priority family types and families on low incomes. Of particular relevance to the Plan, this research highlighted participants' experiences of accessing support. People preferred to get advice from familiar, trusted places, and some found that digital connectivity was a barrier to accessing support. These concerns are addressed directly in the Plan.

A selection of evidence of the impacts of Covid-19 on young people:

- [Coronavirus \(Covid-19\): children, young people and families - evidence summary - June 2021](#);
- [COVID-19 Mitigation Measures Among Children and Young People in Scotland - Summary of the Evidence Base](#);
- [Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) - experiences of vulnerable children, young people, and parents: research](#).
- ['The Impact of Covid-19 on children and young people in Scotland'](#).
- [Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) - experiences of vulnerable children, young people, and parents](#);
- [Froebel Trust: Young voices on Covid-19](#);
- [Babies in lockdown: No one wants to see my baby](#);

- [Impact Assessment: The closure of and reopening of schools as part of the Covid-19 recovery process in Scotland;](#)
- [Children's Parliament's 'Listen and Act' research project;](#)
- [Sector shutdowns during the coronavirus crisis: which workers are most exposed? - Institute For Fiscal Studies - IFS](#)
- [Class-of-2020.pdf \(resolutionfoundation.org\)](#)

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), Education and Attainment

A range of evidence, including the Growing Up in Scotland Study, shows that children from disadvantaged backgrounds benefit especially from the provision of ELC, and that high quality ELC can give children the best start in life, improve cognitive development, and contribute to closing the poverty-related attainment gap. The social, emotional, and educational outcomes from attending ELC speak to the 'SHANARRI' children's wellbeing indicators.

The Plan's offers on early childhood care and education align with the recommendation made by the UN committee in its concluding observations on the implementation of the UNCRC in the UK: *'Taking note of target 4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on access to quality early childhood development services, allocate sufficient human, technical and financial resources for the development and expansion of early childhood care and education, based on a comprehensive and holistic policy of early childhood development, with special attention to the children in the most vulnerable situations'*.

Nationally, the poverty-related attainment gap between pupils living in the most and least deprived areas has narrowed slightly, but it remains wide. School closures due to Covid-19 disproportionately affected children and young people in poverty. The Plan supports the Scottish Attainment Challenge in its efforts to close the gap. A selection of evidence on ELC, education, attainment:

- <http://www.healthscotland.scot/publications/rapid-evidence-review-childcare-quality-childrens-outcomes>
- <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/startingstrong.htm>
- [childrens-independent-cria.pdf \(cypcs.org.uk\)](#)
- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/growing-up-scotland-changes-child-cognitive-ability-pre-school-years/pages/0/>
- [Closing the poverty-related attainment gap: progress report 2016 to 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Improving outcomes for young people through school education | Audit Scotland \(audit-scotland.gov.uk\)](#)

Housing

The housing commitments highlighted in this plan are underpinned by [evidence](#) which shows that warm, healthy, safe and non-overcrowded homes in positive neighbourhoods can contribute to children's and young people's wellbeing and happiness, providing a healthy start and contributing to their social and physical

development. Good homes with room for children to play, learn and study can contribute to educational attainment.

8. How will the impact of the policy/measure be monitored?

The [Tackling Child Poverty Evaluation strategy](#) sets out how we will monitor and evaluate action taken by the Scottish Government and its partners to meet the four ambitious targets for 2030, as set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

There are three key elements of assessment:

1. Monitoring child poverty

Data for the four child poverty targets are published annually.

2. Monitoring the drivers of child poverty

A refreshed [Child Poverty Measurement Framework](#) has been developed to monitor how the drivers of poverty (e.g. parental employment levels) are changing over time. It will be reported on annually.

3. Assessing the impact of policies and external factor on poverty and its drivers

This includes consideration of external factors (e.g. demographic change) and monitors not only how, but why drivers have changed.

The measurement framework is used to produce annual reports of the drivers and impacts. The framework has recently been reviewed to check that it continues to use the best indicators and data. An updated measurement framework is published alongside this document to support the progress reports for the second delivery plan. We also plan to produce a periodic review of wellbeing outcomes for low income households to capture longer term impacts.

Cumulative impact assessment allows us to assess the impact of the package of policies on the targets. This cumulative impact modelling has allowed us to set out the impacts of a range of policies from the first plan period. We will continue to use UKMOD to allow scenario development and cumulative impact assessment of policies to help us move towards the targets.

For more details on the Tackling Child Poverty evaluation strategy.

The Plan sets out a plan to develop pathfinders, testing how system change can happen in a place-based approach to deliver more person-centred support, beginning in Dundee and Glasgow. In the coming year, additional areas will be identified and approaches will be tested and refined. Key to this initiative will be a focus on data collection, and analysis to ensure the policies are effective. Evidence

generated through the initial pathfinders process will inform the monitoring and future delivery of the Plan.

The Plan is committed to Keeping the Promise to care experienced children and young people. The Plan seeks to directly impact the drivers of child poverty, and we know that reducing poverty levels can have an influence on the rates of children and young people coming into care, reducing pressure in families and thereby reducing incidents which lead to intervention by social work services. As well as being measured through the Tackling Child Poverty evaluation strategy, we expect the impacts of the Plan to be reflected in the progress of The Promise. Note that The Promise connects directly with UNCRC 20 and 25.

The Plan is also closely interlinked with the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund. The Fund seeks system-wide change which includes ensuring that the right support is available to children and families at the right time and for as long as it is needed. The evaluation approach is currently in development in consultation with stakeholders.

The Plan aligns with GIRFEC, Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes for children, young people, and families. The Plan will impact across all of the children's wellbeing indicators, providing a cross-portfolio response and setting out measures to immediately tackle child poverty and pursue preventative action. It will particularly impact on 'Included' as tackling child poverty will enable children to fully participate in society. 'Nurtured' is also impacted by the policies which focus on access to warm, affordable homes. The Plan's consultation with children and young people, and stakeholders representing their interests, reflects the 'Respected' indicator.

The Tackling Child Poverty evaluation strategy will connect with work to develop an Outcomes Framework for Children, Young People and Families. The Framework will be rooted in GIRFEC, children's rights, and what children and families tell us matters to them. It aims to enhance our understanding of the collective impact from a wide range of policies, services and frontline practice focused on improving outcomes.

9. How will you communicate to children and young people the impact of the policy/measure on their rights?

An Easy Read version of the Executive Summary of the Plan will be published.

Many of the policies in this Plan are directed at the parents/the family as a whole - supporting children's rights and wellbeing via supporting their caregivers. Communicating with parents about the support available to them and their families is a key challenge identified in the plan. The Plan will seek to improve access to advice services, adopting a strategic approach to communications so that families, and the people supporting them, can better understand and navigate the services available.

Through the process of this CRWIA additional stakeholders have been identified to help establish clear and constructive dialogues with children and young people about the contents and principles of the Plan. This is important both to inform children of

policies affecting them, and to welcome their feedback as we evaluate the impacts of those policies.

We will look to build upon our relationship with Young Scot. The Scottish Government invests £975,000 annually for the Young Scot National Entitlement Card, which offers discounts and rewards to reduce costs of food, travel etc., as well as access to targeted offers for those most in need, e.g. Young Carers packages. We will look to strengthen our relationship with Young Scot to promote communications with children and young people about the Plan.

The emerging Young Islanders Network (YIN) will enable children and young people from all of Scotland's inhabited islands to have their voices heard on issues in their communities, including participation in the delivery of the National Islands Plan. Following its official launch, (which is scheduled to take place in spring 2022) we aim to undertake partnership work with the YIN and Youth Scotland, who is responsible for coordinating the development and delivery of the YIN on behalf of the Scottish Government. This collaboration will ensure that policy developments associated with the new Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan (2022-2026) fully consider the interests, priorities and lived-experience of children and young people on islands, and how its delivery will affect them. Our vision is to better understand the specific contextual difficulties for tackling child poverty in island communities and to ensure that this understanding is embedded in the child poverty policies that are being developed and delivered across the Scottish Government. As part of this approach and alongside a broad range of other measures, this targeted and solution-focussed engagement with the YIN will support us in continuing to do all that we can to tackle child poverty, across all of Scotland's island communities.

10. Sign & Date

Policy Lead Signature & Date of Sign Off: Emma Teale, 13 March 2022

Deputy Director Signature & Date of Sign Off: Julie Humphreys, 13 March 2022



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