

The Promise Calls to Action

In 2016 the Independent Care Review was commissioned by the Scottish Government to conduct a root and branch review of Scotland's care system. Between February 2017 and February 2020, the Care Review heard over 5,500 experiences from children, young people and adults who had lived in care and the paid and unpaid workforce.

The Care Review published its findings and recommendations in a set of five reports, which cover the changes the Care Review recommends, plans for implementing changes and the investment in services that is required: All reports can be accessed by following the link below.

<https://www.carereview.scot/conclusions/independent-care-review-reports/>

The key report for change is **The Promise** which sets out an overall view of what the new approach should be to ensure that young people grow up loved, safe, and respected to realise their full potential. The report is broken into 5 foundations **Voice, Family, Care, People** and **Scaffolding**.

In South Ayrshire we have set out **55 calls to action** as outlined under each of the 5 foundations in the tables below

	THE PROMISE- Foundation VOICE: Children must be listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care, with all those involved properly listening and responding to what children want and need. There must be a compassionate, caring decision-making culture focussed on children and those they trust.
1	DECISION MAKING South Ayrshire must ensure that decision making is based, first and foremost, on what the child needs and wants.
2	DECISION MAKING South Ayrshire must support a culture change in key institutions responsible for decision making.
3	INFORMATION AND DECISIONS Ensure that the right information is shared at the right time and that those close to children are heard. The starting point for any decision must be how to best protect relationships that are important to children.
4	STRUCTURAL AND SYSTEM LISTENING South Ayrshire must listen to care experienced children and young adults in the delivery, inspection and continuous improvement of services and of care.

5	<p>LISTENING TO CHILDREN</p> <p>Care experienced children and young adults must have ownership over their own stories and personal data so that they can understand and influence how their stories are shared.</p>
6	<p>LISTENING</p> <p>Active listening and engagement must be fundamental to the way South Ayrshire makes decisions and supports children and families. There is no simple formula or standardised approach that will suit all.</p>

	<p>The Promise Foundation FAMILY</p> <p>Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together, to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way.</p> <p><i>Scotland must do all it can to keep children with their families. Nurturing and supporting families to stay together will take far more than Scotland currently provides.</i></p>
1	<p>RISK AND SAFETY</p> <p>South Ayrshire must broaden its understanding of risk. This is not about tolerating more risk, or becoming more risk enabling. It means ensuring a more holistic understanding of risk that includes the risk to the child of removing them from the family. There must be a shift in focus from the risk of possible harm to the risk of not having stable, long term loving relationships.</p>
2	<p>POVERTY</p> <p>There must be significant, ongoing and persistent commitment to ending poverty and mitigating its impacts for Scotland’s children, families and communities.</p>
3	<p>SUPPORTING FAMILIES When children talk about wanting to be safe, they talk about having relationships that are real, loving and consistent. That must be the starting point. South Ayrshire must prioritise that message from children over rules that have too often failed to keep them safe.</p>
4	<p>BEGINNING PARENTHOOD</p> <p>South Ayrshire must support a broad understanding of the importance of the early years of parenting.</p>
5	<p>PRE SCHOOL</p> <p>South Ayrshire must ensure that there are places in every community for parents of young children to go for support and advice, to meet other local parents and to stay and play with their children.</p>
6	<p>INTENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT</p> <p>Whatever issues families face, South Ayrshire must ensure that intensive family support is available, proactive and characterised by the 10 family support principles*</p>

7	<p>INTENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT</p> <p>South Ayrshire must support all families caring for disabled children and those with additional support needs. If families require intensive support they must get it and not be required to fight for it.</p>
8	<p>MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES</p> <p>South Ayrshire must ensure that timely, trauma informed and thoughtful support therapies act as a cushion to all those that require it, regardless of diagnosis.</p>

	<p>The Promise – Foundation: CARE</p> <p>Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so, and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.</p>
1	<p>UPHOLDING CHILDRENS RIGHTS</p> <p>If South Ayrshire removes children from their families, their rights must be upheld as a basic minimum standard for their care. That must mean a clear commitment to creating the right culture of care where the whole of the workforce respects, upholds, champions and defends the rights of children for whom they are responsible.</p>
2	<p>NORMALISATION of CARE EXPERIENCE</p> <p>South Ayrshire should be a good parent to the children it has responsibility for. That means carers and workers must act, speak and behave like a family so that South Ayrshire can be the best parent it can be. South Ayrshire must stop stigmatising the children it cares for.</p>
3	<p>BROTHERS and SISTERS</p> <p>Scotland already has a presumption that children will stay together with their brothers and sisters. That presumption must be fully implemented and closely monitored in South Ayrshire.</p>
4	<p>RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO THE CHILD</p> <p>All children must be supported to continue relationships that are important to them, where it is safe to do so.</p>
5	<p>TRANSITIONS</p> <p>Any transition in care experienced child or young person’s life must be limited, relational, planned and informed.</p>
6	<p>STABILITY</p> <p>South Ayrshire must limit the number of moves that children experience and support carers to continue to care.</p>
7	<p>ATTACHMENT and CO-REGULATION</p> <p>Secure attachments, based on loving, consistent relationships, must be the bedrock of every decision made about children.</p>
8	<p>LANGUAGE OF CARE</p> <p>South Ayrshire must change the language of care. Language must be easily understood, be positive and must not create or compound stigma.</p>

9	<p>LIFE STORIES</p> <p>South Ayrshire must understand that 'language creates realities'. Those with care experience must hold and own the narrative of their stories and lives; simple, caring language must be used in the writing of care files.</p>
10	<p>SCHOOLS</p> <p>Schools in South Ayrshire must be ambitious for care experienced children and ensure they have all they need to thrive, recognising that they may experience difficulties associated with their life story.</p> <p>The formal and informal exclusion of care experienced children from school must end.</p>
11	<p>HEALTH</p> <p>The workforce and in particular family carers must know that they have a particular role in supporting children to have good overall health across dental, physical, mental and sexual. That must be done through caring, nurturing relationships that models good habits and a healthy approach to life.</p>
12	<p>RESIDENTIAL CHILDRENS HOMES and RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS</p> <p>The quality of relationships that children experience in residential settings must be the priority.</p>
13	<p>CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES</p> <p>In all care settings, South Ayrshire must provide and promote positive, regular experiences for children.</p>
14	<p>FOSTER CARE</p> <p>South Ayrshire must better support its foster carers to be the best parents. Foster carers must feel valued, cared for and supported to care.</p>
15	<p>ADOPTION SUPPORT</p> <p>Adopting parents must have access to support at any point during the life of their child if they require it. That support must be available even if it was not initially required and must mirror the principles of intensive family support.</p>
16	<p>KINSHIP CARE</p> <p>Whatever the mode of arrangement, South Ayrshire must ensure that children living in kinship care get the support they need to thrive. Kinship must be actively explored as a positive place for children to be cared for.</p>
17	<p>LONG TERM HOSPITAL STAYS</p> <p>South Ayrshire must ensure that there is timely access to mental health support before crisis point, so that children can avoid hospitalisation.</p>
18	<p>RESPITE</p> <p>South Ayrshire must stop using the word 'respite' and rethink the nature of short breaks.</p>
19	<p>RESTRAINT</p> <p>Scotland must strive to become a nation that does not restrain its children. South Ayrshire must reflect on the impact of the equal protection legislation that removes the defence of 'justifiable assault' to ensure that all children wherever they live, are protected from all forms of violence.</p>

20	<p>CRIMINALISATION</p> <p>South Ayrshire must stop the criminalisation of care experienced children by supporting the workforce to behave and treat children in a way that is relational rather than procedural and process driven.</p>
21	<p>SECURE CARE</p> <p>Children must not be placed in prison like settings. Children must not be held in Secure Care because there are inadequate options for them within the community.</p>
22	<p>ADULT LIFE</p> <p>Young adults for whom South Ayrshire has taken on parenting responsibility must have a right to return to care and have access to services and supportive people to nurture them. Parenting does not stop at 18 - South Ayrshire must continue to consider how to create greater equity and opportunity for care experienced young adults. That consideration must include how to increase opportunity for care experienced people to access employment, training, stable housing and support.</p> <p>Older care experienced people must have a right to access supportive, caring services for as long as they require them. Those services and the people who work in them must have a primary focus on supportive relationships that help people to access what they need to thrive</p>

	THE PROMISE- Foundation - PEOPLE : The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community , who in turn must be supported to listen and to be compassionate in their decision-making and care
1	STRUCTURE and DEFINITION South Ayrshire's understanding of the workforce must primarily be about their role in terms of the degree of closeness of relationships they have with children, rather than their status as paid/unpaid or in terms of professional/voluntary.
2	NURTURING SCOTLANDS WORKFORCE The workforce must be nurtured. They must be supported at all stages of their caring journey. That support must enable them to facilitate a sense of home, family, friends, community and belonging in which children feel loved and can flourish.
3	NURTURING SCOTLANDS WORKFORCE Supporting the workforce to care must be at the heart of South Ayrshire's service planning. Supervision and reflective practice is essential for all practitioners, regardless of their professional discipline or role, who are working with children.
4	PERSONAL IDENTITY, LOVE and RELATIONSHIPS Children who have been harmed through relationships, must have supportive relationships in order to heal. South Ayrshire must support and encourage the workforce to bring their whole selves to their work, and to act in a way that feels natural and not impeded by a professional construct.
5	PERSONAL IDENTITY, LOVE and RELATIONSHIPS The purpose of the workforce must be to be caring above anything else
6	PERSONAL IDENTITY, LOVE and RELATIONSHIPS Rather than detach, the workforce must be encouraged not to step back but to step in.
7	PEOPLE and RISK South Ayrshire must support the workforce to contribute to a broader understanding of risk. South Ayrshire must understand, through its people and structures, the risk of children not having loving supportive relationships and regular childhood and teenage experiences.
8	PEOPLE and RISK There must be no barriers for children to have regular, positive childhood experiences

	<p>The Promise – Foundation SCAFFOLDING</p> <p>Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.</p>
1	<p>STRUCTURE, COMISSIONING, FUNDING and STANDARDS</p> <p>South Ayrshire must declutter the landscape of how it cares. Services and provision must be designed on the basis of need and with clear data, rather than on an acceptance of how the system has always operated.</p>
2	<p>STRUCTURE, COMISSIONING, FUNDING and STANDARDS</p> <p>Scotland must avoid the monetisation of the care of children and prevent the marketization of care</p>
3	<p>STRUCTURE, COMISSIONING, FUNDING and STANDARDS</p> <p>South Ayrshire must make sure that its most vulnerable children are not profited from.</p>
4	<p>STRUCTURE, COMISSIONING, FUNDING and STANDARDS</p> <p>The standards of care must be consistent across providers and these must continue to be subject to independent scrutiny and accreditation that values what children and families value.</p>
5	<p>RIGHTS</p> <p>South Ayrshire must respect, uphold, champion and defend the rights of children and recognise that their rights are most often realised through relationships with loving, attentive caregivers.</p>
6	<p>RIGHTS</p> <p>South Ayrshire must implement the rights of the child in a way that does not reinforce a focus on policy, process and procedure but supports the ability of children and those around them to connect and develop relationships and cultures that uphold their rights as a matter of course</p>

7	<p>ADVOCACY</p> <p>Care experienced children and adults must have the right and access to independent advocacy, at all stages of their experience of care and beyond.</p>
8	<p>PARENTING</p> <p>All of South Ayrshire's institutions and organisations, who have responsibilities towards care experienced children and young adults, must be aware of, understand and fully implement all their parenting responsibilities.</p>
9	<p>DATA COLLECTION</p> <p>South Ayrshire must improve the quality and completeness of its data and consider the potential of data linkage to improve accountability for outcomes rather than inputs alone.</p>
10	<p>INSPECTION & REGULATION</p> <p>There must be a complete overhaul of regulation and scrutiny that centres on listening to children about how they are cared for, their ability to flourish and thrive and that measures the things that matter to them.</p>
11	<p>INSPECTION & REGULATION</p> <p>South Ayrshire must re-orientate its system of scrutiny to uphold relationships so children feel loved, safe and respected</p>