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2021/22 Report on the Northern Ireland Executive's Child Poverty Strategy

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Introduction

The Executive's Child Poverty Strategy was published on 25 March 2016. The Strategy's aims are to reduce the number of children in poverty and reduce the impact of poverty on children.

The Strategy focuses on four high level outcomes:

- Families experience economic well-being.
- Children in poverty learn and achieve.
- Children in poverty are healthy.
- Children in poverty live in safe, secure and stable environments.

This document is an Annual Report on progress on the Strategy as required by Article 12(7) of the Life Chances Act, which requires an annual report to be laid before the NI Assembly which describes:

- The measures taken by the NI departments in accordance with the NI Strategy.

- The effects of those measures that contribute to the achievement of the purpose of ensuring, as far as possible, that children here do not experience socioeconomic disadvantage.

As such, this Annual Report provides:



- The data available up to the end of March 2022 for each of the agreed indicators in the Strategy (in the main body of the report);



- Full reports on each of the actions in the Strategy (Annex A); and



- Reference to an associated Programme for Government Outcome(s). (These are the draft 2016-21 outcomes which were published in 2016.)

NB: Data collection in 2020/21 was impacted by Covid-19 restrictions resulting in a heavily reduced sample size. This led to additional uncertainty around the estimates, particularly for smaller groups. As such, child poverty statistics for 2020/21 are not available.

Draft Programme for Government Outcomes (2016-21)

Outcome 1

We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy.

Outcome 2

We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment.

Outcome 3

We have a more equal society.

Outcome 4

We enjoy long, healthy, active lives.

Outcome 5

We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential.

Outcome 6

We have more people working in better jobs.

Outcome 7

We have a safe community where we respect the law, and each other.

Outcome 8

We care for others and we help those in need.

Outcome 9

We are a shared, welcoming and confident society that respects diversity.

Outcome 10

We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest.

Outcome 11

We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure.

Outcome 12

We give our children and young people the best start in life.

Headline Indicators

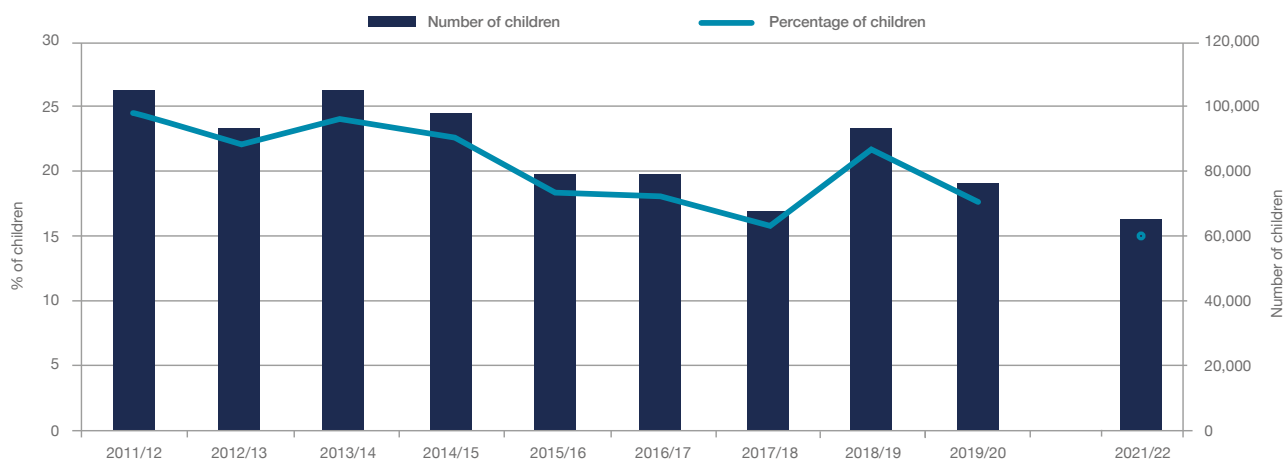
These child poverty figures relate to the year 2021/22. They are taken from the Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality Report (published March 2023) and are the official child poverty figures available as at the end of March 2023. Data for 2020/21 has not been released due to a greatly reduced sample size for the Family Resources Survey as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Absolute Poverty - Before Housing Costs (BHC)

Children living in households with income less than 60% of the UK median for 2010-11 (adjusted year on year for inflation).

- In 2021/22, there were approximately 68,000 children in absolute poverty BHC, which represents 15% of children in NI. There were approximately 75,000 children (17% of children in NI) in absolute poverty BHC in 2019/20. This is not a statistically significant decrease.

Percentage and number of children in absolute poverty (BHC), 2011/12 to 2021/22

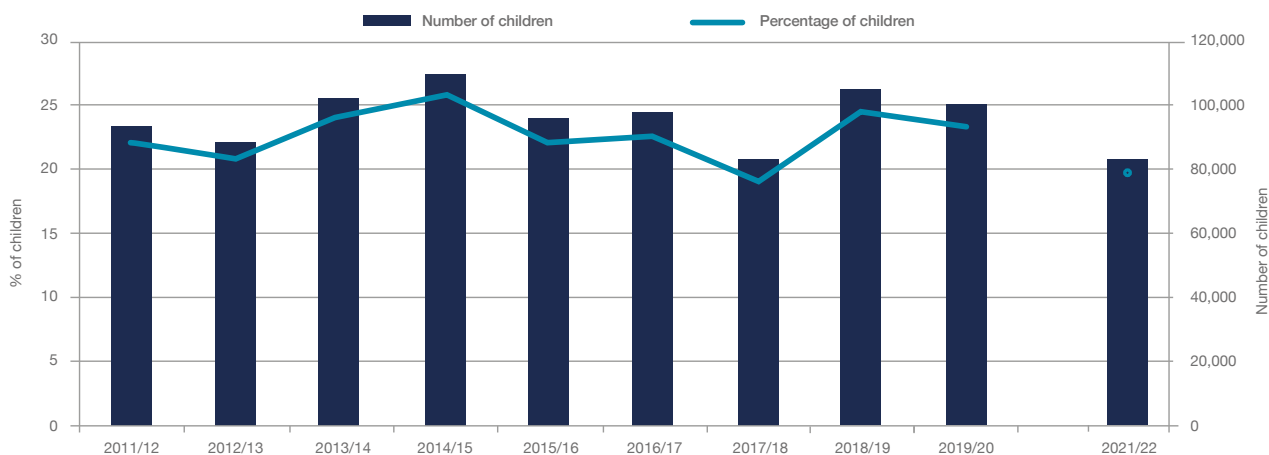


Relative Poverty - Before Housing Costs (BHC)

Children living in households with income less than 60% of the median UK income in that year.

- In 2021/22 relative child poverty was 18% BHC (approximately 83,000 children). There were approximately 100,000 children (22% of children in NI) in relative poverty BHC in 2019/20. This is not a statistically significant decrease.

Percentage and number of children in relative poverty (BHC), 2011–12 to 2021–22



Summary of Progress against Child Poverty Strategy Outcomes

Below is a summary of the actions/initiatives across the four Outcomes that were delivered over the reporting year 2021/22 (up to March 2022). The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the work reflected in report cards in different ways, with programmes paused, others adapting to changed circumstances and others continuing at a reduced level of delivery. In the main, the information (analysis and statistics) relates to the reporting year

2021/22. However, some of the information is not readily available at the time of publication. For example, educational related data will reflect one full school academic year, others including financial information may not be available to the end of the financial year. The source and date of the information available at the time of publication is contained in the individual report cards.

Outcome 1: Families Experience Economic Well-Being

Department for Communities (DfC), the NI Housing Executive, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), Department for the Economy (DfE), Department of Health (DoH) and Department of Education (DE) contribute towards this Outcome.

The section below describes the actions taken to improve the economic well-being of children in poverty; the focus being on the steps taken to help people improve their training and education, to find work, to reduce household heating costs, to increase their income through improved benefit/grant uptake and supporting families with childcare provision.

Summary of actions taken to improving economic well-being through Employment & Education.

DfC offered work placements to help young unemployed 16-24 year olds prepare for work. Of the 59 participants who left the Work Experience Programme between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, 29 (49%) of them moved into employment or education immediately following participation.

DfE funds Essential Skills training programmes for adults, delivered by accredited tutors working in Further Education colleges and training providers. During 2020/21 there were 15,156 qualifications issued, of which

8,189 (54%) were at Level 2. Of the 24,008 Essential Skills enrolments in 2020/21, 6,555 (27.3%) were from students living within the most deprived quintile.

The Step Up to Sustainable Employment (SUSE+) programme is a mentor-led initiative organised by South West College in Enniskillen, that seeks to address barriers to progression into education, training and sustained employment and is aimed at people aged 16 to 65 who are unemployed or economically inactive. In 2021/22, 69 rural participants have entered employment after leaving the programme. A further 26 rural participants have continued onto further education or joined training programmes.

Published figures (at 31 March 2022) show that from 2017 to 2021, 46,311 additional jobs were created in Invest NI (DfE) supported companies.

Summary of actions taken to improve economic well-being through reducing household heating costs.

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, the Affordable Warmth Scheme (run by the NIHE in partnership with local councils) grant aided £11.77m to allow 2,841 homes to be improved (Covid-19 restrictions on home visiting continues to impact the number of homes assisted). These interventions have resulted in improvements to the physical and mental well-being of all members of those households (including children), who have availed of the scheme.

Summary of actions taken to improving economic well-being through improving benefit or grant take-up and practical support.

During 2021/22 the 'Make the Call' (MtC) programme (DfC) has been able to improve people's weekly income by an average of £88.18 per person per week. Of the 30,781 people MtC connected with in 2021/22 and had a benefits discussion with, they have been able to assist 10,839 people to increase their income through needs assessments and to link 10,235 of these people to various supports and services.

21,239 low income families caring for disabled children have been helped through Family Fund in NI (DoH) distributing £7.3m in direct grant support (as of November 2021).

A pilot scheme was launched in September 2021 to address period dignity in schools by providing free period products to support confident attendance. The scheme will support all pupils, including the 1,711 who responded to CCEA's (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment) baseline survey in June 2021. By November 2021, 31% of all schools were taking part.

Summary of actions taken to improving economic well-being through support for Childcare.

It is widely recognised that the provision of affordable, high quality childcare allows parents to participate in employment, education/training or support services. The Bright Start School Age Childcare (SAC) Grant Scheme (DE) has assisted families from disadvantaged areas and/or those who are on welfare benefits to access childcare provision

(this also included creating or sustaining childcare places in rural communities, disadvantaged areas and on the school estate). Statistics show that from 2014/15 to 2021/22, 2,500 childcare places have been created and sustained.

The programme funding of some £765,000 in 2021/22 for the Women's Centre Childcare Fund (WCCF - DfC) allows for the provision of approximately 76,500 two-hour childcare places to those in the margins of employment. In addition to this, the programme also had a target of engaging with 671 new families. It is anticipated that due to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic the target for the provision of over 76,500 childcare places may not be met. The 14 WCCF Groups have provided the Department with their revised activities as a direct result of Covid-19 during 2021/22. It is envisaged that the target of over 600 new families to be engaged will be achieved remotely. The provision of such childcare places and associated support through the Women's Centres is likely to have long term positive benefits to the child, the parents of the child and wider society both in terms of avoiding costs associated with dealing with issues later in the child's life and also avoiding problems such as poorer health, educational, employment and criminal justice outcomes.

The Bright Start Children with a Disability Holiday Grant Scheme provided funding of £75,806 for 6 summer schemes from 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2021. The Scheme assists parents of children with a disability to access childcare during school holidays periods, to provide childcare for children with a disability, enabling them to have the same childcare experience as their peers.

In the period October 2021 to March 2022, 329 people were awarded upfront childcare costs through the Adviser Discretion Fund. Of all awards approved between October 2021 and March 2022 there have been 147 distinct work-related positive outcomes from 180 distinct approved applications. This equates to 81.67% positive outcomes for this period (there is a 13 week into work outcome work coach follow-up period). A positive outcome constitutes either found work, progression/ increased hours, retained employment or start up self-employment.

Outcome 2: Children in Poverty Learn and Achieve

DoH, DE, DfE and DfC contribute towards this Outcome. The section below describes the actions taken to improve the educational attainment of children; the focus being on the steps taken to encourage learning and achieving in pre-school children, in primary and post-primary school children, young people and also through youth/community and other groups.

Summary of actions taken to encourage learning and achieving in pre-school children and their parents.

The Sure Start projects deliver a wide variety of services which are designed to support children's learning skills, health and well-being, and social and emotional development. 93% of Sure Start users reviewed, reported improvements in at least one of the following seven areas: physical health, emotional wellbeing, keeping your children safe, social networks, boundaries and routines, child development and home, money & work.

The provision of safe and high quality childcare benefits the child directly and also the parent by supporting engagement in employment, education, training and support services. The Childcare Partnership (CCP) training programme provided 6,425 places (April 2021 – March 2022) to promote good practice and to improve and enhance skills across the childcare workforce. The CCP training team have developed and continually updated the "Covid-19: Infection Prevention and Control Training Resource for Childcare Settings" throughout the year in line with

the DOH and PHA Guidance. This resource is available on the NISCC (NI Social Care Council) Learning Zone. 6,662 people have completed this course up to the end of December 2021.

Summary of actions taken to encourage learning and achieving in primary and post-primary school children.

By the end of the full time Nurture Group (DE) intervention in the academic year 2020/21, 208 children showed improved Boxall scores indicating gains in their social, emotional development and behavioural skills. Of those children who attended a Nurture Group full time, 57 (out of a total of 478) moved to a lower stage of the Special Educational needs Code of Practice.

From April – December 2021 Libraries NI (DfC) issued/renewed 427,722 books to children in libraries serving areas of deprivation and rural areas. All 42 libraries serving areas of deprivation and/or rural areas offered programmes promoting reading for enjoyment. An example was the Pilot Schools' Project for the Summer Reading Challenge. 12 schools in areas of social deprivation (urban and rural) were identified by the Education Authority to take part. As part of the pilot, every Key Stage 2 pupil in each school became a library member and was supplied with a library card. Frontline staff delivered the library cards and 'core materials' to schools before the end of the summer term when they either spoke with pupils face to face or via an on-line platform.

34.8% of pupils in the pilot schools borrowed library books for the Summer Reading Challenge.

DfE continue to support young people to secure and sustain suitable employment, education or training. In the academic year 2021/22 (up to October 2021), the proportion of young people leaving the TfS Skills for Work and achieving a qualification was 70%. Of the students attending Further Education (FE) colleges in the 2021/22 academic year (up to end of October 2021):

- 4,451 students attending FE colleges received transport assistance in 2021/22.
- 262,333 meals were provided to FE students eligible for free school meals in 2021/22 financial year.
- 44 students attending FE colleges received a clothing allowance in 2021/22.

The number of Newcomer pupils (supported by the Education Authority's InterCultural Education Service) going into Higher Education, Further Education, Employment or Training has decreased from 91.1% in 2009/10 to 87.6% in 2019/20.

Of those schools involved in DE's Extended Schools programme (2020/21) 98% reported evidence that the programme reduced underachievement. Data from the Full Service Extended Schools (2020/21) demonstrates a long-term trend of improved attendance, GCSE and A level attainment during the life of the programme.

In the 2021/22 academic year, the DfE's Careers Service delivered 20,300 guidance interventions to the year 12 cohort (88% of the 2021/22 cohort). As a result of careers guidance, 85% of young people surveyed

knew more about their career options and 80% were more aware of the skills required to achieve their career goals.

Between April 2021 and March 2022, 17,050 young people participated in online Creative Learning Centre digital technology programmes; 15,424 or approximately 90% in school based programmes and 1,626 or approximately 10% in community based programmes.

Summary of actions taken to encourage learning and achieving through youth/ community and other groups.

As part of its continued work to support young people into education or employment, DfE's Community Family Support Programme supported 5,363 (1 April 2015–31 December 2021) participants aged 16 and over not in employment, education and training (NEET). 987 participants progressed into employment upon leaving, while 1,625 participants progressed into education or training upon leaving.

Peace4Youth will support marginalised 14–24 year olds to develop capabilities in good relations, citizenship and personal development to improve their life chances and enhance their employability. Over 7,600 young people to date have successfully completed their Peace4Youth programmes (subject to verification by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)).

DfE also delivers the Additional Support Fund (ASF) which helps FE Colleges provide the necessary technical and/or personal support required to allow students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to participate in FE programmes. Of the 5,358 ASF final

year enrolments completed in 2020/21, 4,744 resulted in a qualification.

Of the 300 pupils in 10 different schools who received two 2-hour Deaf awareness and basic British Sign Language courses (funded by DfC Languages Branch), 100% of participants expressed greater confidence in the use of sign language.

While Covid-19 impacted significantly on the Education Authority's youth work provision during 2021-22, its report card on the work for this period shows that despite youth services not being fully operational, 6,108 young people gained accreditation (increase from 1,672 in 2020/21) and 10,939 young people were assessed as having maximised their potential against youth work measures (increase from 916 in 2020/21).

Outcome 3: Children in Poverty are Healthy

DoH, DE, DfC, and DfI, contribute towards this Outcome. The section below describes the actions taken to reduce the impact of poverty on parents and children's health; the focus being on the steps taken in educating/supporting parents and families, children and practitioners in children's sporting and health care fields.

Summary of actions taken to improve health for children experiencing poverty through educating/supporting parents and families.

The Early Intervention Support Service (DoH) aims to support families when difficulties arise before they need involvement with statutory services. 79% of families using the Service report improvement in at least 2 areas. (Project workers agree with families which areas to focus on. Interventions would generally be focused on a maximum of three areas (out of a possible 10)).

DoH is responsible for providing support for families through Family Support Hubs which help families address a range of issues, such as poor attachment or engagement with baby; improving the level of play/communication; poverty; and substance misuse. In 2020/21, 8,405 families were referred through the Hubs, 815 more families than in 2019/20, slightly over a 10.7% increase. The Hubs collected a sample of 105 families with 143 children across the region during 2020/21. 100% of these families reported that the process of being referred to the Hub worked well and 101(96%) reported positive outcomes for themselves and their children.

The Family Nurses Partnership (DoH) delivers preventative support to vulnerable first time, young parents to improve antenatal health, child development and parents' economic self-sufficiency. As a result, the development of children of participants at 24 months were within normal limits.

During 2020/21, 37,376 children aged 0-3 were registered with Sure Start projects. 93% of its users reviewed, improved in at least one of the seven areas, with 48% improving in at least three areas (physical health, emotional well-being, keeping your children safe, social networks, boundaries and routines, child development and home, money & work).

Due to the impact of Covid-19 it was no longer possible to provide antenatal care and education to mothers in groups of 12. To ensure mothers-to-be still had access to antenatal education, the Public Health Agency as an interim measure purchased a multi-user online licence for the Solihull programmes in March 2020. Due to the ongoing pandemic the licence has been renewed for a further year. Of the 6,432 who started 'Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby', 93% of course completers found the course helpful.

Throughout 2021 all maternity units and health visiting services across the 5 HSCTs have achieved and maintained UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) accreditation. This now means that 100% births and 100% new birth visits are provided within BFI trained and accredited midwifery and health visiting services.

HENRY (an organisation which provides support for families with their babies and young children) delivers an Early Years Obesity Prevention Programme to children 0-5 years old and their families. From October 2020 – August 2021, 13 programmes were delivered, with 62 parents participating and involving 67 children (aged 0-5). 89% of respondents felt that the programme was ‘Good’ or ‘Great’, while 79% would ‘Definitely’ recommend the programme to other families.

Summary of actions taken to improve health for children experiencing poverty through educating/supporting practitioners in children’s sporting and health care fields.

As part of its implementation of the Infant Mental Health Plan and in addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences, DoH organised training for its practitioners. Of those practitioners who have completed the training, several have secured specialist posts in new models of service delivery that are being established across NI. (For e.g. ABC Pips - a service which provides parents with support and space to talk about challenging emotions around parenting their baby).

Summary of actions taken to improve health for children experiencing poverty through educating/supporting children.

There were 555 children/young people involved in ‘Uniting Opportunities’ (DfC); a cross-community sport and creativity programme aimed at enhancing individual and community development and tackling disadvantage through delivery of training and activities, facilities and promoting equality/improving good relations. 97% of children and young people reported that their attitudes have improved towards children from a different religious background.

Demand for the Independent Counselling Service for Schools is strong, with 36,855 counselling sessions delivered during the 2021/22 academic year. During this reporting period, the top ten presenting issues included: peer issues, anxiety, behaviour, bereavement, academic, low mood, family, anger, self-harm and suicidal ideation.

As part of DoH’s efforts to promote positive mental health, evaluation from young people participating in Mindset Adolescent from April 2021 – June 2021 showed that 99% reported an improvement in attitude to mental ill health.

DE ensure that lessons are provided to children in years 8-10 about a healthy diet and how to plan and cook healthy meals safely. Children and young people are therefore equipped with the necessary skills to make healthy food choices with a view to encouraging healthy lifestyles beyond school.

The Active School Travel Programme (ASTP) delivered by DfI works with schools to encourage school children to travel more actively to school (cycling, walking, scooting, skating or a park and ride/stride/scoot journey). 96% of teachers and champions thought the ASTP had excellent/good impact on pupils’ road safety awareness and getting pupils more physically active.

The Sports Programme in schools aims to provide a specialist coaching support to primary schools to deliver the Key Stage 2 Physical Education Curriculum. Up until 31 December 2021, coaches from the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) & Irish Football Association (IFA) delivered over 5,000 PE sessions to approximately 12,000 pupils in around 100 primary schools. The Programme was recently independently evaluated and research findings reported that the programme has real impact with those that do not normally take part or take part less regularly in sports activities.

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

DoJ, Youth Justice Agency (YJA), NI Prison Service, DfC, the NI Housing Executive, DAERA, DfI and DoH contribute towards this Outcome. The section below describes the actions taken to improve the safety, security and stability of children in poverty; the focus being on the steps taken to help those involved in (and affected by) the justice system and those who have housing issues. It also describes actions taken to help improve children's security and safety, including in rural communities.

Summary of actions taken to improve the safety, security and stability of children in poverty through helping those involved with the Justice System.

In a bid to reduce the impact of the justice system on families the DoJ worked with delivery partners to strengthen healthy family relations of those in the care of the NI Prison Service and actively promote the wellbeing and positive life outcomes for children affected by parental imprisonment. Support was given to assist those in custody with parenting relations through the Family Matters Programme. Of the group sessions delivered, 50 families were supported by the Family Matters programme, 93% of individuals completing the programme reported an improvement in their ability to understand the impact of their own behaviours/choices on children/family.

DoJ also works with key delivery partners to develop and roll out Early Intervention initiatives, for example, the Community Resolution Notice Awareness Programme,

for children on the cusp of the Youth Justice system. 96.8% of children and 95.2% of carers who provided a response felt that the Community Resolution Notice Awareness Programme would help avoid further offending (April 2021 – March 2022).

The NIHE funds the 'Beyond the Gate' service (run by Housing Rights), which provides intensive short-term support to prisoners on release who are most at risk from homelessness and reoffending, to ensure they have a place to live and are connected with appropriate support services to help them sustain their home and successfully resettle within the community. During 2021/22 the service engaged with 96 individuals as part of a comprehensive housing and homelessness advice service and also made 310 referrals to additional support services.

The DoJ's Tackling Paramilitarism Programme aims to assist children and young people who are under threat from the influence of paramilitaries. One of its initiatives is the Youth Outreach programme which places an Outreach Worker in areas which have been identified as experiencing high paramilitary activity. They aim to build relationships with young people who are not currently engaged with the youth services and who could be considered as higher risk of involvement in paramilitary activity.

The Engage project provides a range of Youth Work support to these vulnerable children in partnership with the Community and Voluntary sector. From April 2021 – March 2022, 578 young people are involved

through Engage programmes. Youth Outreach Workers also provided individual mentoring support to 282 young people in Engage.

Summary of actions taken to improve the safety, security and stability of children in poverty in rural communities.

Over 2021/22, £8.2m funding has been invested in Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation (TRPSI) initiatives aimed to address poverty, social isolation and health and well-being in rural areas. Programmes included, for example, a scheme to increase the sustainability, development and recovery of micro businesses which has helped over 600 businesses. Over 900,000 rural beneficiaries benefited from TRPSI initiatives in 2021/22.

Summary of actions taken to improve the safety of children in poverty.

Making sure that children are safe and know how to be safe is crucial. During this reporting year DfI provided material and resources to schools to deliver Practical Child Pedestrian Safety Training (PCPST) and the Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS).

In the PCPST programme what was due to be delivered in the 2020/21 year was delivered in 2021/22. In the 90% of schools who completed stage 3 of PCPST, there was a 26% increase in knowledge of pedestrian safety issues after this training. After participating in the CPS training, 4,405 (94%) children attained the CPS standard.

Health Protection Branch (DoH) are responsible for providing primary school pupils with safety and community awareness training, including how to prevent everyday accidents and dangerous situations and how to deal with them safely should they occur. Owing to the workload pressures as a result of Covid-19, efforts on the aforementioned areas did not take place in the 2021/22 year.

Summary of actions taken to improve the safety, security and stability of the environments where children in poverty live.

To ensure that children live in stable environments a range of interventions were delivered this year. For example, access to suitable social housing (DfC) was improved when, during the reporting period 2020/21 a total of 2,403 units were delivered against a target of 1,850. The completion of 6,709 additional social homes from 2017/18 until 2020/21 helped reduce the impact of child poverty for these families by providing a stable and safe living environment.

Projects designed to promote social, economic, physical and community renewal included 14 childcare projects aimed at helping those who were out of work. 150 residents were supported into employment.

During 2021/22 the Housing Advice Service provided assistance to 11,770 cases regarding the prevention of homelessness, accessing accommodation, affordability and housing conditions. Homelessness was prevented in 2% of cases. Help provided will lead to improved housing conditions in 92% of cases and 89% of clients had an improved sense of well-being.

Housing Related Support Services funded through the Supporting People (SP) programme include provisions which can support young mothers. For example, 23 services for both single women and women with children, who are at risk of domestic violence (14 accommodation based and 9 floating support).

Throughout 2021, the Housing Executive's Financial Inclusion Managers successfully worked with tenants across the organisation experiencing complex debt issues and/or rent arrears to help them maximise their benefits, budget effectively and safely, and make the most of their ability to switch between utilities and save money. During the 2021/22 financial year, the Financial Inclusion Managers received an average of 215 referrals per month. From September 2021 to March 2022, they identified £1,016,891 of potential additional income for Housing Executive tenants.

Outcomes: Indicators and Actions

Outcome 1: Families Experience Economic Well-Being

As child poverty is measured by household income, this outcome aspires to reduce the number of children in poverty through actions (see page 25) focused on improving the economic well-being of parents, families and households with children. The Indicators below will be used to measure whether we are moving in the right direction towards this outcome.

The indicators are:

- Combined Low Income and Material Deprivation.
- Percentage of Children living in workless households.
- Percentage of all households with children where at least one adult is in work and the household is in poverty.



- £11.8m was spent improving the homes of 2,841 low income families (Affordable Warmth Scheme).



- 10,839 people were assisted by Make the Call (DfC) in 2021/22 to increase their income through benefits by £88.18 per person per week.



- £7.3m was distributed in direct grant support to 21,239 families caring for disabled children on a low income (Family Fund NI: April 2017 – Dec 2021).



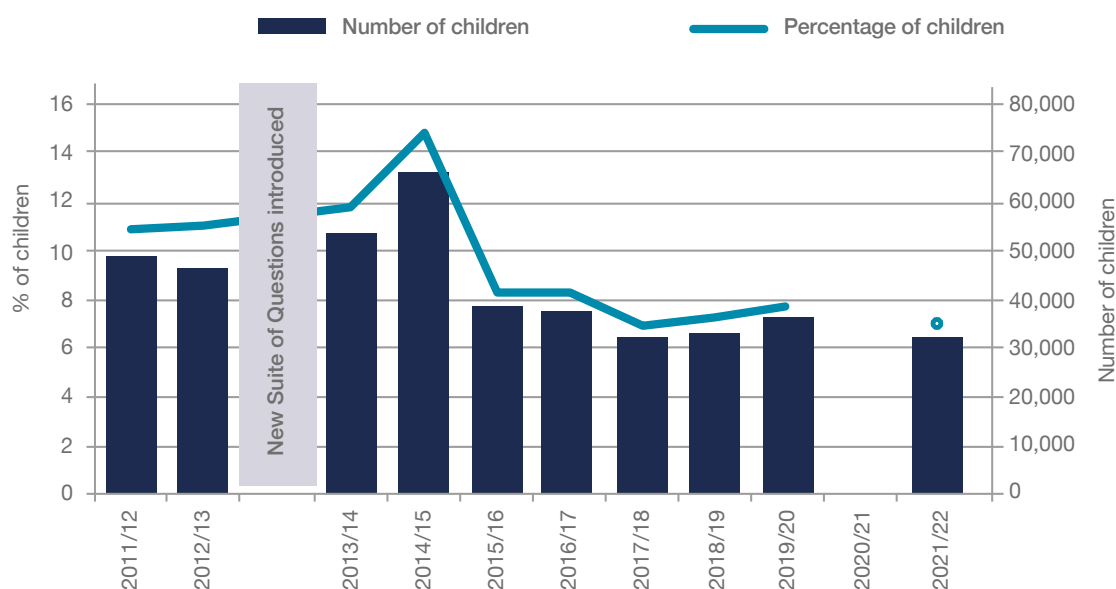
- Bright Start Children with a Disability Holiday Grant Scheme - “His confidence has grown hugely whilst attending Summer Scheme - he really enjoyed the trips out- thank you so much” (Parent of Disabled Child).

Outcome 1: Indicators

Combined Low Income and Material Deprivation (Before Housing Costs)

(Source: Department for Communities, Northern Ireland Poverty and Income Inequality Report 2021/22)

- This measurement is used to combine the measurement of low income along with material deprivation in families. It is sourced in the Family Resources Survey where families are asked about income poverty and also if a range of indicators apply. For example, some of the indicators under this measure include the ability of a family to replace broken electrical goods, the ability to make choices such as going on holiday away from home one week a year not with relatives or being behind on any household bill. If a family has a household income below 70% of the median income and a certain number of these indicators are met, then that family is considered in combined low income poverty. This measure attempts to demonstrate the everyday impact of low income on families and is an indication of family disposable income.
- Data for 2020/21 has not been released due to a greatly reduced sample size for the Family Resources Survey as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.



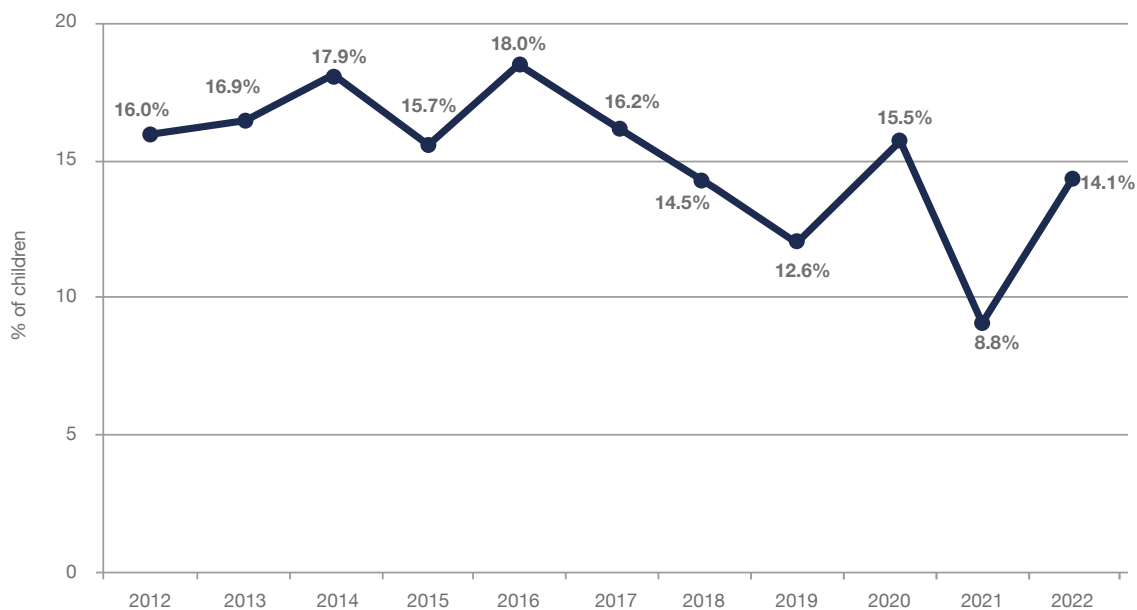
Analysis

The estimated percentage of children in combined low income and material deprivation decreased to 7% (32,000 children in NI) in 2021/22 (11% in the UK). The difference between the 2019/20 estimate of 8% and the 2021/22 estimate is not statistically significant.

Outcome 1: Indicators (continued)

Percentage of Children living in workless households

(Source: ELMSB, Labour Force Survey Quarter 2 data used)



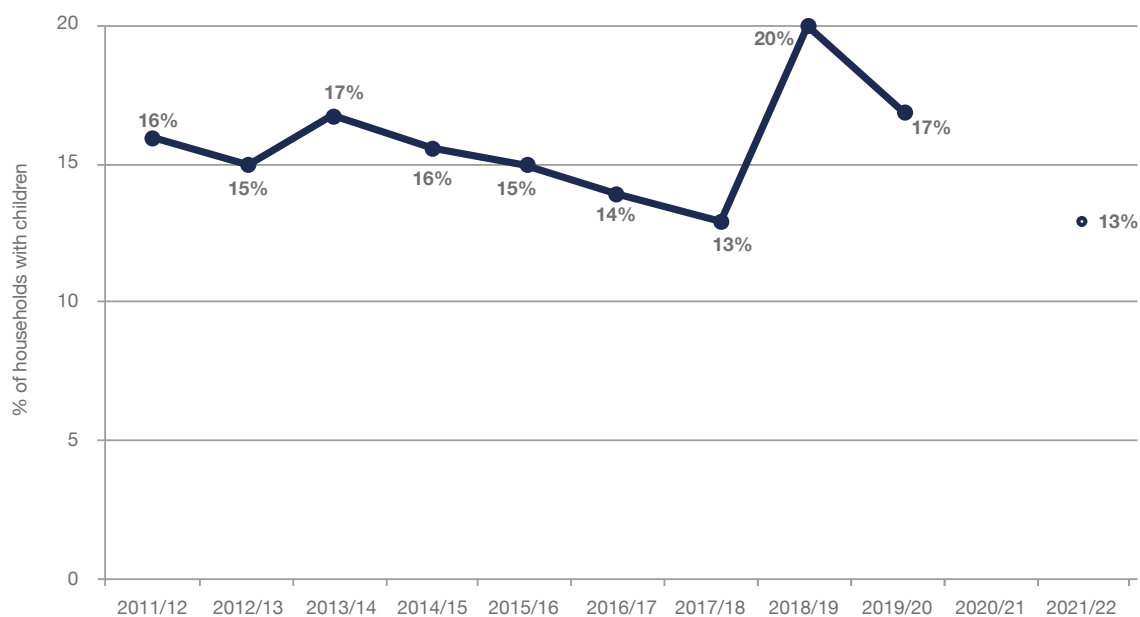
Analysis

A workless household is a household in which no adults of working age are currently in work. The 2021 proportion of 8.8% is the lowest in the last ten years with the peak being 18.0% in 2016.

Outcome 1: Indicators (continued)

Percentage of all households with children where at least one adult is in work and the household is in poverty

(Source: Department for Communities)



Analysis

The percentage of children living in households where at least one adult is in work and the household is in poverty saw a 4 percentage point (pps) fall between 2019/20 and 2021/22. The ten year trend for this measure has been relatively constant.

Outcome 1: Actions

- 1.1** Supporting Invest NI's Customers to Create Jobs - Invest NI will fully utilise its employment focused support, particularly Selective Financial Assistance (SFA), to support high value employment opportunities in NI's business base. This includes utilising SFA and Grant for Research & Development (R&D) support to attract new first-time inward investors to NI.
- 1.2** Help young people aged 16+ who are unemployed and seeking permanent work to prepare for work by offering work experience opportunities to develop skills, gain experience and develop confidence and provide (subject to eligibility) financial support to cover travel and childcare costs.
- 1.3** From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 we will connect with 30,000 people to ensure they are getting the benefits, supports and services they are entitled to. We will continue to work with other government departments and the voluntary and community sector, creating new referral partnerships aimed at improving support on benefit entitlement and increasing the package of supports and services.
- 1.4** Provide Essential Skills training for adults – which must be accessible to people from highly deprived areas – to improve their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, upskilling the working age population by delivering Essential Skills.
- 1.5** Create up to 7,000 new school age childcare places serving disadvantaged communities, on the schools estate or serving rural communities, creating approximately 750 new childcare jobs. Enhance the information on childcare services available online (including a social media app) and promote existing financial assistance to increase uptake, enable more informed decisions and reduce costs for parents.
- 1.6** Provide training and small grants to enable childcare providers to meet the needs of children with a disability.
- 1.7** Provide childcare places through 14 Women's Centres to assist parents in low income families to increase their skills and gain education and training to avail of paid employment.
- 1.8** Since 1 April 2015, the Affordable Warmth Scheme, administered by the Housing Executive, has offered energy efficiency improvement measures to households with an annual income of less than £20,000. This income threshold was increased to £23,000 with effect from 01 July 2021. The scheme aims to target those in most need.
- 1.9** Provide grant support to low-income families raising disabled and/or seriously ill children to help with essential items such as fridges and clothing and other items such as sensory toys.
- 1.10** Recruit rural participants (40%) who are unemployed or economically inactive to the Step Up to Sustainable Employment (SUSE+) programme to gain skills and qualifications needed to become employment ready.
- 1.11** Pilot scheme to address period dignity in schools - providing free period products in schools to support confident attendance at school.
- 1.12** The Department for Communities will provide a grant payment for upfront childcare costs where these are acting as a barrier to employment.

Outcome 2: Children In Poverty Learn And Achieve

This outcome seeks to reduce the impact of poverty on children through actions (see pages 30 to 31) to improve their educational attainment and therefore their life chances. The indicators below will be used to measure whether we are moving in the right direction towards the outcome.

The indicators are:

- Proportion of school leavers entitled to Free School Meals achieving at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*– C (or equivalent) including GCSE English and Maths.
- Percentage of 16–24 year olds not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).
- Percentage of pupil enrolments in primary and post-primary schools with less than 85% attendance.



- 98% of schools participating in the Extended Schools Programme (2019/20) reported evidence that their provision reduced underachievement.



- By the end of full time Nurture Group intervention 57 (29%) children had moved to a lower stage of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.



- The Community Family Support Programme progressed 1,625 participants into education or training upon leaving.

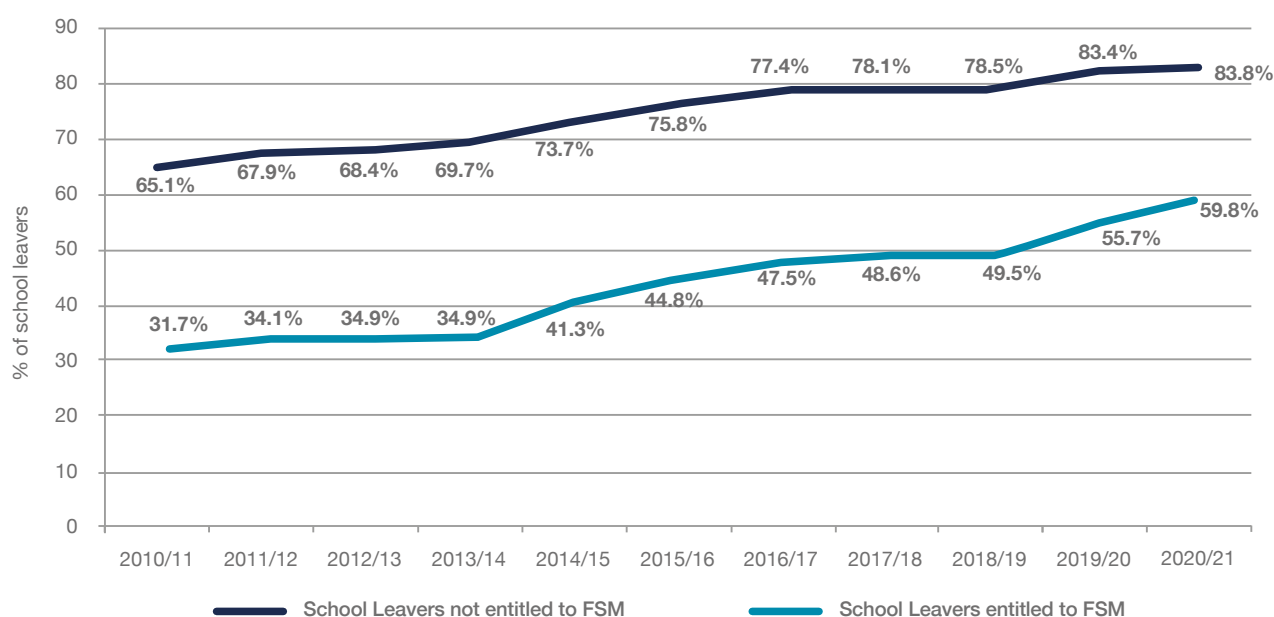


- In academic year 2020/21 the Care to Learn (NI) Scheme provided £0.08 million in assistance to young parents who are students in FE to help with the cost of childcare.

Outcome 2: Indicators

Proportion of school leavers entitled to Free School Meals achieving at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C (or equivalent) Including GCSE English and Maths

(Source: Department of Education, School Leavers Survey)



Analysis

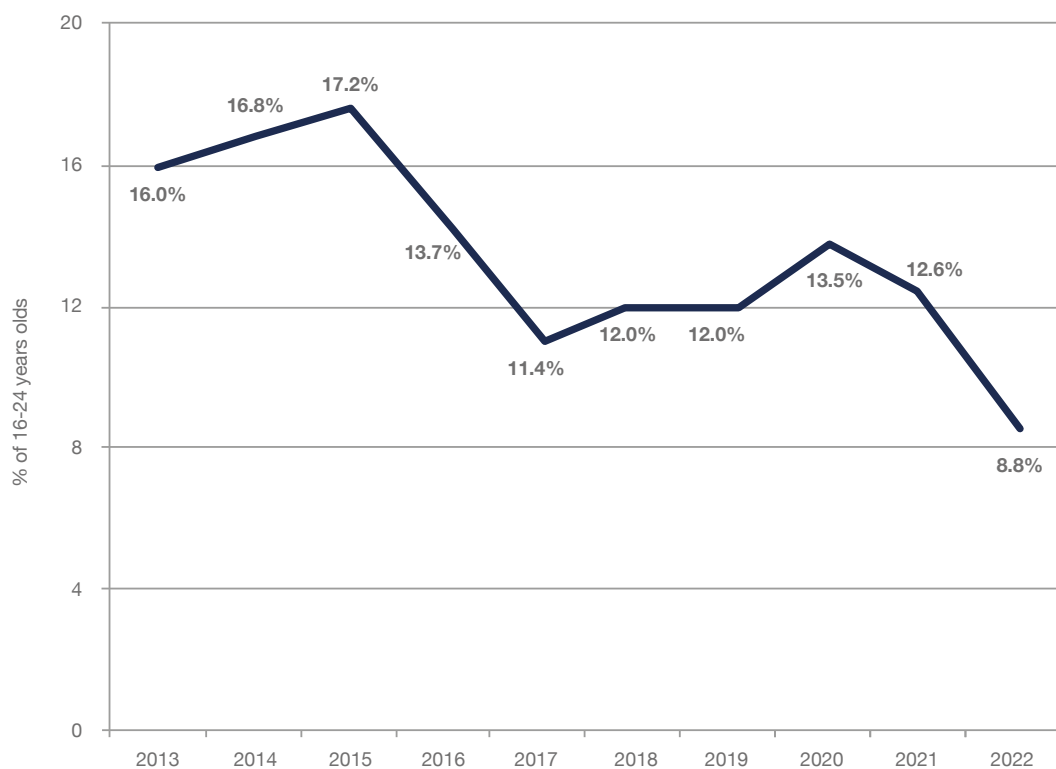
The general trend for this indicator is that the number of school leavers achieving at least 5 GCSEs or equivalent at Grades A*-C (including English and Maths) has been increasing over time for all school leavers. Entitlement to Free School Meals (FSM) is used as a proxy measure for poverty when looking at pupil attainment levels. The attainment gap between school leavers who are entitled to FSM and those who are not entitled has closed slightly over the last 4

years. It should be acknowledged that this is in the context of improving attainment levels for both groups of school leavers. The gap between FSM and Non-FSM pupils fell from just over 31 pps to 24 pps between 2015/16 and 2020/21. Over the same period the proportion of those pupils achieving 5 GCSEs grade A*-C including English and Maths and not in receipt of FSM increased by 8 pps to 83.8%, while for those in receipt of FSM the proportion reaching this attainment level increased by 15 pps to 59.8%.

Outcome 2: Indicators (continued)

Percentage of 16-24 year olds not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

(Source: ELMSB, Labour Force Survey Quarter 2 data used)



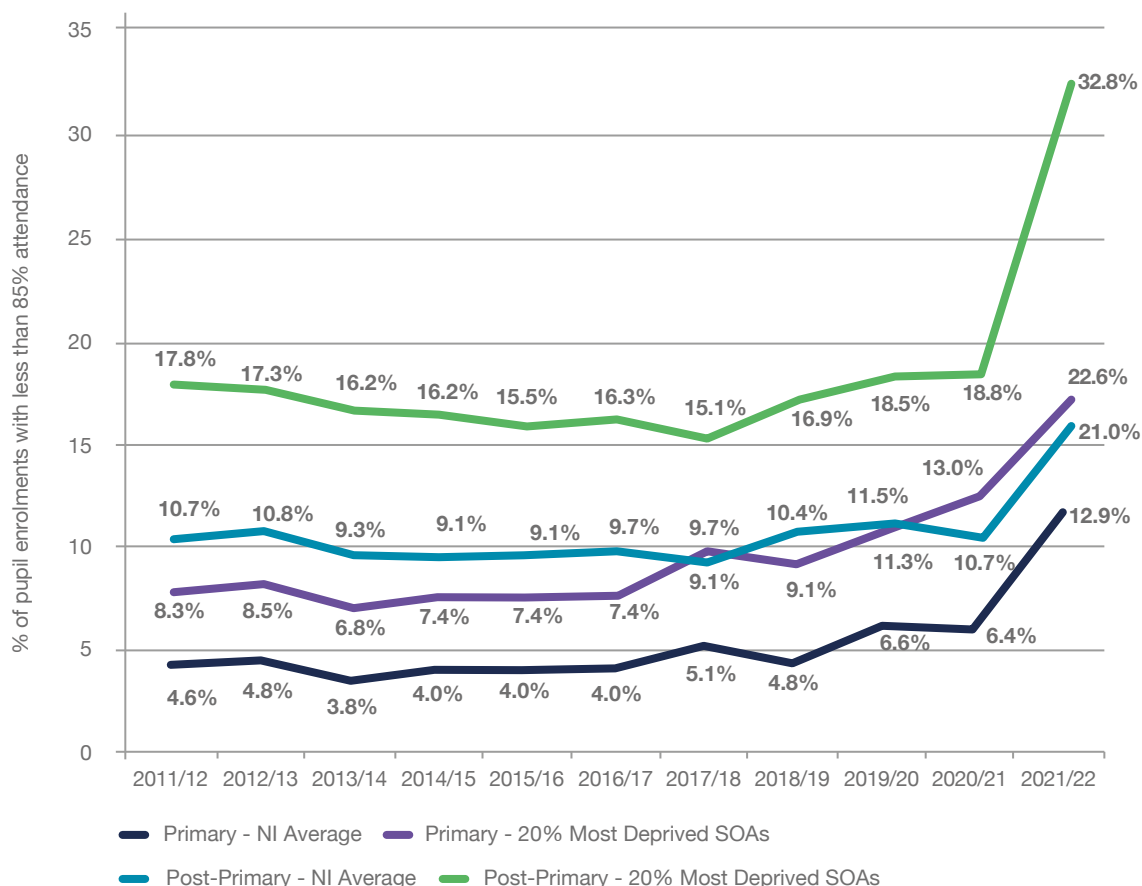
Analysis

Over the last ten years, the proportion of 16-24 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) peaked at 17.2% in 2015, the 2022 figure is 8.8%.

Outcome 2: Indicators (continued)

Percentage of pupil enrolments in primary and post-primary schools with less than 85% attendance

(Source: Department of Education)



Analysis

When looking at either primary or post-primary schools the proportion of pupil enrolments with less than 85% attendance has been consistently higher in schools within the 20% most deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) in NI than the NI average. There was an increase for all categories between 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Outcome 2: Actions

- 2.1.** Support 31 Nurture Groups in local primary schools, with trained staff to select the children who will benefit most from additional support and develop individual learning plans agreed with teachers and parents.
- 2.2** Provide a targeted community family intervention programme to support disadvantaged families, address educational, employment, training, health, social and economic issues that impact on their daily lives. Provide support to prevent young people from falling into the NEET category and help other young people who find themselves in this situation to re-engage with education, training or employment.
- 2.3** Support training to improve and enhance skills across the childcare workforce.
- 2.4** Peace4Youth will support up to 7,400 marginalised 14-24 year olds to develop capabilities in good relations, citizenship and personal development to improve their life chances and enhance their employability.
- 2.5** Provide assistance and support to young people aged 16-18 to secure and sustain suitable employment, education or training provision; including a guaranteed training place for all 16-17 year old school leavers, tailored mentoring and support, childcare support for young parents and help with costs in special circumstances.
- 2.6** Provision of Sure Start to at least the 25% most deprived areas, (including at least one developmental programme for age group 2-3 in each Sure Start project) to promote the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of pre-school children, particularly those who are disadvantaged, to ensure they can flourish at home and when they get to school.
- 2.7** Provide access to books and to programmes which promote reading for enjoyment and a lifelong love of books. These programmes, for children of all ages, include the annual Summer Reading Challenge.
- 2.8** Provide additional support for Newcomer pupils and Traveller children.
- 2.9** Provide additional support to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to enable them to seek further education and qualifications, including providing sign language and personal development programmes for deaf children.
- 2.10** Continue to provide funding to schools in areas of the highest social disadvantage to provide additional activities, classes and support for learning largely outside the normal school day to meet the needs of children and their parents, families and local communities through the Extended Schools programme as well as Full Service provision in two specific areas of socio-economic deprivation to enhance the educational attainment of disadvantaged young people.
- 2.11** Provide additional support for children and young people in care to help them achieve GCSE level qualifications, including developing Personal Education Plans and Care Plans (specifying education and training requirements as agreed with the young person).

- 2.12** Use an alternative approach to learning, including (1) enterprise and employability programmes and (2) Creative Learning Centres to provide the use and understanding of new digital technologies and new media, to engage and excite pupils.
- 2.13** Support young people to attain educational outcomes through Youth Work, including targeted provision for those who have barriers to learning, are disadvantaged, in areas of deprivation and who are at risk of disengagement.

Outcome 3: Children in Poverty are Healthy

This outcome seeks to reduce the impact of poverty on parents and children through actions (see page 36) to improve children's health and their life chances. The Indicators below will be used to measure whether we are moving in the right direction towards the outcome.

The indicators are:

- Number of patients 0-17 (registered with a dentist and receiving dental treatment) who had at least one treatment for dental caries per 1,000 registered patients.
- Percentage of Year 1 pupils who are obese.
- Number of hospital admissions of those aged 0-17 with self-harm diagnoses (rate per 100,000).



- Improvement/maintained progress in the physical health of 91% of Sure Start families reviewed using 'Outcomes Star' model (2020/21).



- 96% of families using Family Support Hubs reported positive outcomes for themselves and their children (2020/21).

- Early Intervention Support Service:



- 48% of children and young people reported an increase in physical health (April 2016-Mar 2021).

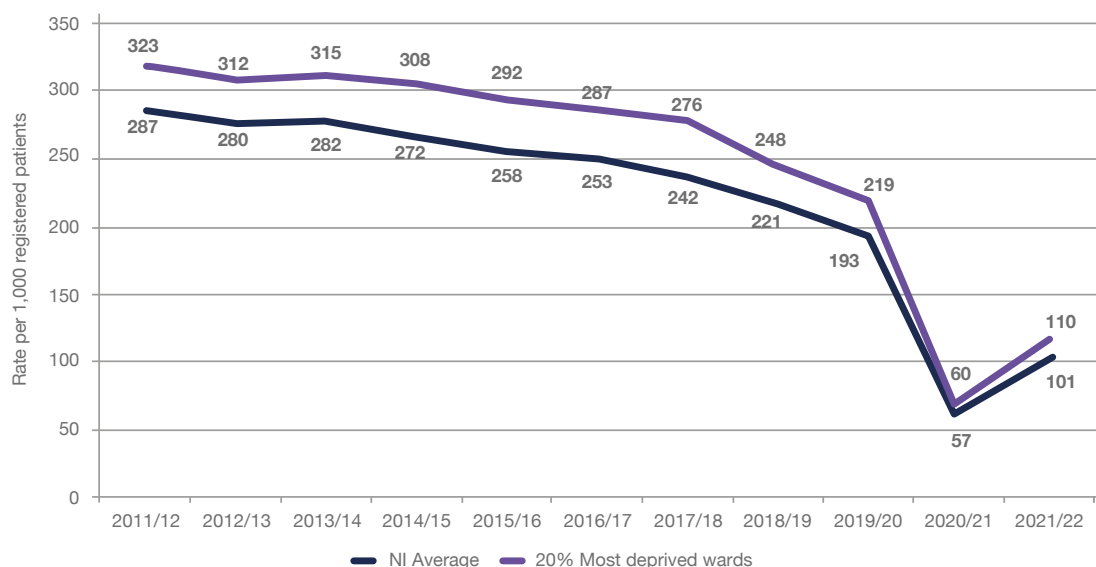


- 74% reported increased well-being (April 2016-Mar 2021).

Outcome 3: Indicators

Number of patients 0-17 (registered with a dentist and receiving dental treatment) who had at least one treatment for dental caries per 1,000 registered patients

(Source: BSO Dental Statistics Dataset)



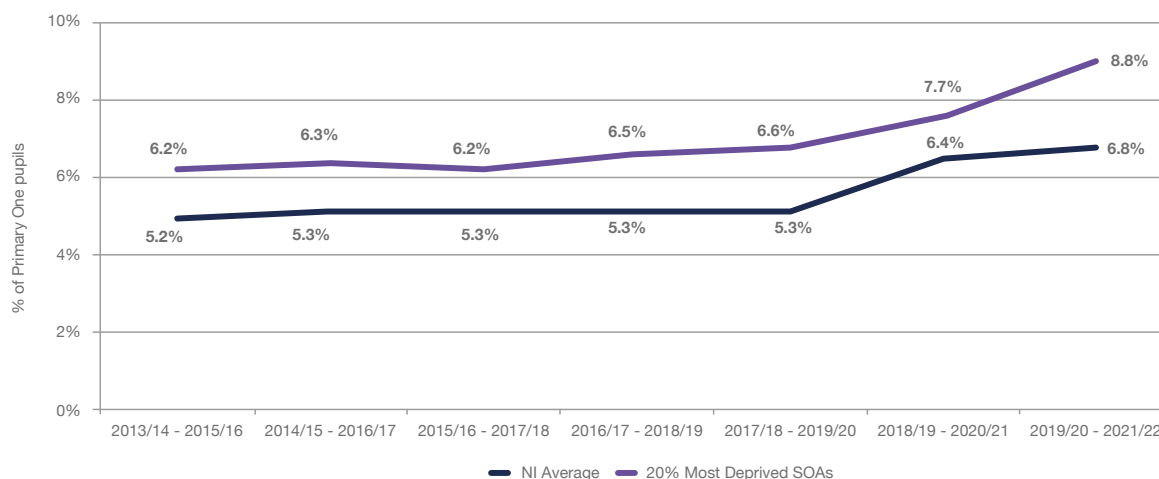
Analysis

There has been a downward trend over the last ten years for the no. of patients 0-17 (registered with a dentist and receiving dental treatment) who had at least one treatment for dental caries per 1,000 registered patients. The 2021/22 figures are 101 and 110 for the NI Average and the 20% most deprived wards respectively compared to 2020/21 when the figures were 57 and 60.

Outcome 3: Indicators (continued)

Percentage of year 1 pupils who are obese

(Source: Department of Health, Child Health System)



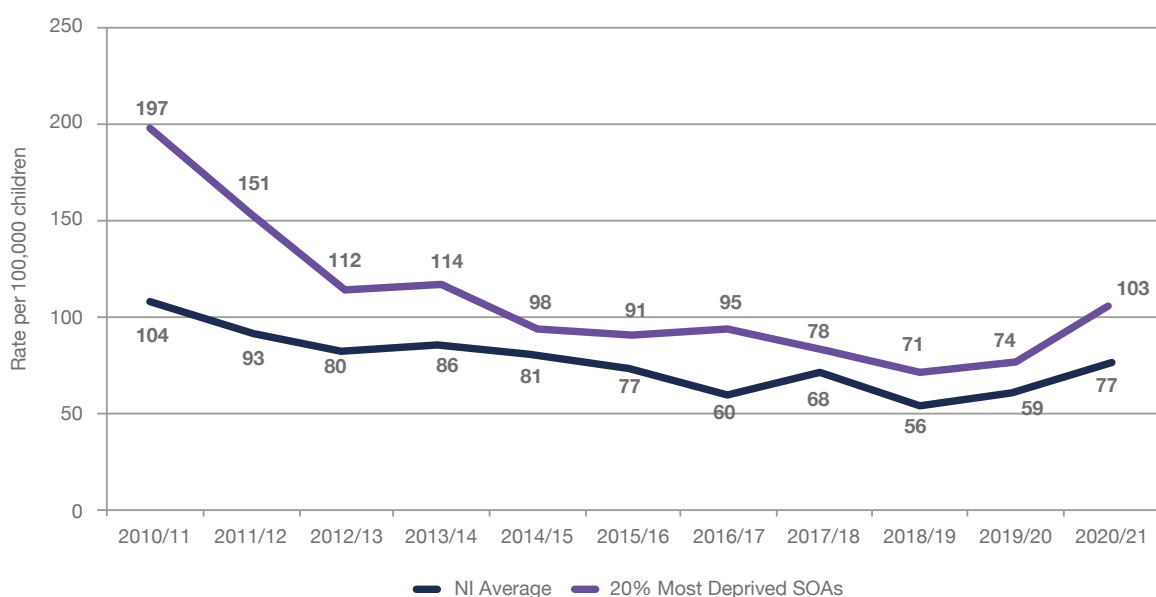
Analysis

The proportion of Year One pupils who are obese rose between 2013/14 - 2015/16 and 2019/20 - 2021/22 for NI as a whole and for those children living in the 20% most deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) of NI. The gap between the most deprived areas and NI overall has increased between 2013/14 - 2015/16 and 2019/20 - 2021/22 by 1 pp.

Outcome 3: Indicators (continued)

Number of hospital admissions of those aged 0-17 with self-harm diagnoses (rate per 100,000)

(Source: Department of Health, Hospital Inpatient System)



Analysis

The number of hospital admissions for self-harm diagnoses among children and young people aged 0-17 fell over the past decade with their lowest point in 2018/19. There was an increase between 2018/19 and 2020/21 in NI from 56 to 77. The gap between the 20% most deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) and the NI average has narrowed over the period.

Outcome 3: Actions

- 3.1** Implementation of Early Intervention Support Service (EISS) to provide support for families with emerging vulnerabilities.
- 3.2** Provide support for families through Family Support Hubs, bringing together representatives from statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations who work in local areas to provide early intervention services locally to help families address a range of issues, such as poor attachment or engagement with baby; improving the level of play/communication, poverty, healthy eating, budgeting and substance misuse.
- 3.3** Expansion of evidence based training and practice in implementing the Infant Mental Health Plan and addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences.
- 3.4** Extend the Family Nurses Partnership to all HSC Trusts to deliver preventative support to vulnerable first time, young parents to improve antenatal health, child development and parents' economic self-sufficiency.
- 3.5** Delivery of the T:BUC Uniting Communities Programme, a cross communities initiative that uses sport, physical and creative activity to enhance individual and community development and tackle disadvantage through the delivery of training and activities to young people aged 11-24 years, which is underpinned by good relations and equality, that enables them to gain the confidence and skills to become advocates for social change in their own communities.
- 3.6** Provide support to parents of children 0-3 years old in at least the 25% most disadvantaged ward areas, promoting physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of pre-school children, including parenting advice on nutrition, breastfeeding and healthcare.
- 3.7** Provide independent counselling support in post-primary schools and pilot a counselling and therapeutic support service, 'Healthy Happy Minds' in primary schools. The initiatives are designed to promote mental health and emotional well-being and support for pupils facing problems such as difficult home circumstances and bullying.
- 3.8** Promote positive mental health and provide frontline crisis intervention to prevent suicide.
- 3.9** Develop and Deliver Early Years Obesity Prevention Programme to children 0-5 and their families.
- 3.10** Train, support and resource midwives to deliver key messages to parents about how to promote and nurture healthy infant development.
- 3.11** Provide lessons about a healthy diet and how to plan and cook healthy meals safely as part of the required curriculum for children in years 8-10.
- 3.12** Deliver training to school children in relation to walking and cycling skills to encourage active and safe travel.
- 3.13** Implement the Sports Programme in schools which aims to provide a specialist coaching support to primary schools to deliver the Key Stage 2 Physical Education Curriculum.
- 3.14** Support uptake and prevalence of breastfeeding.

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

This outcome seeks through actions (see page 41) to ensure that the environments children in poverty grow up in are safe, secure and stable. The Indicators below will be used to measure whether we are moving in the right direction towards the outcome.

The indicators are:

- Recorded number of criminal offences per 1,000 population.
- Number of child admissions to hospital due to an accident in the home or on the road (rate per 100,000).
- Number of families presenting to the NI Housing Executive as homeless.



- During 2020/21, 4,405 (94%) children who participated in the Cycling Proficiency Scheme reached the required standard.



- During 2020/21, 11,770 clients were assisted by the Housing Advice Service with their housing issues and homelessness was prevented in 2% of cases.

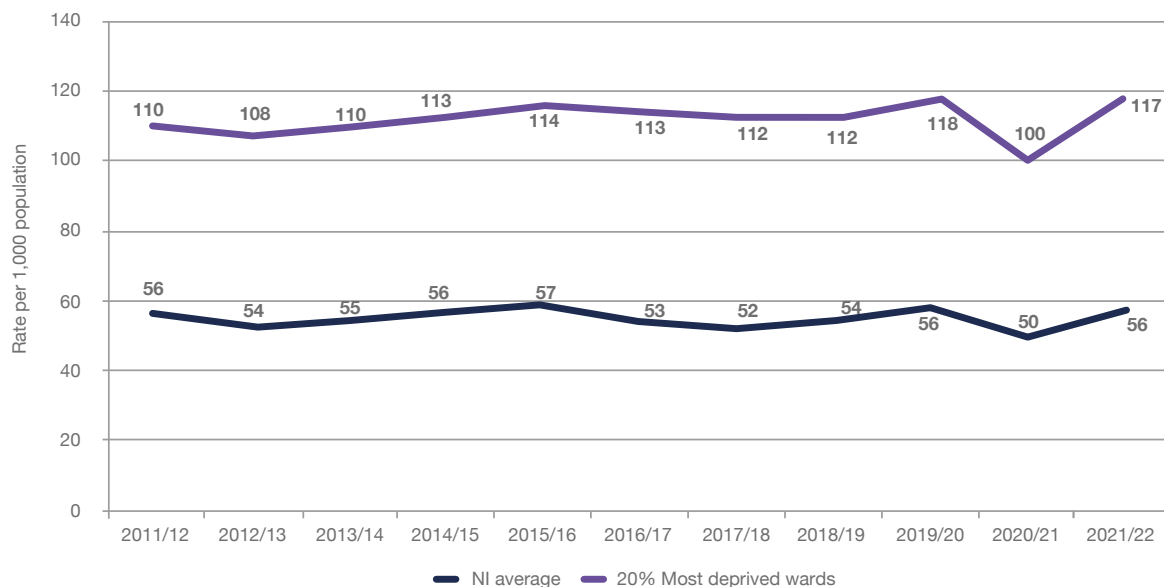


- 93% of individuals completing the Family Matters programme reported an improvement in their ability to understand the impact of their own behaviours/choices on children/family.

Outcome 4: Indicators

Recorded number of criminal offences per 1,000 population

(Source: PSNI, Crime Recording System)



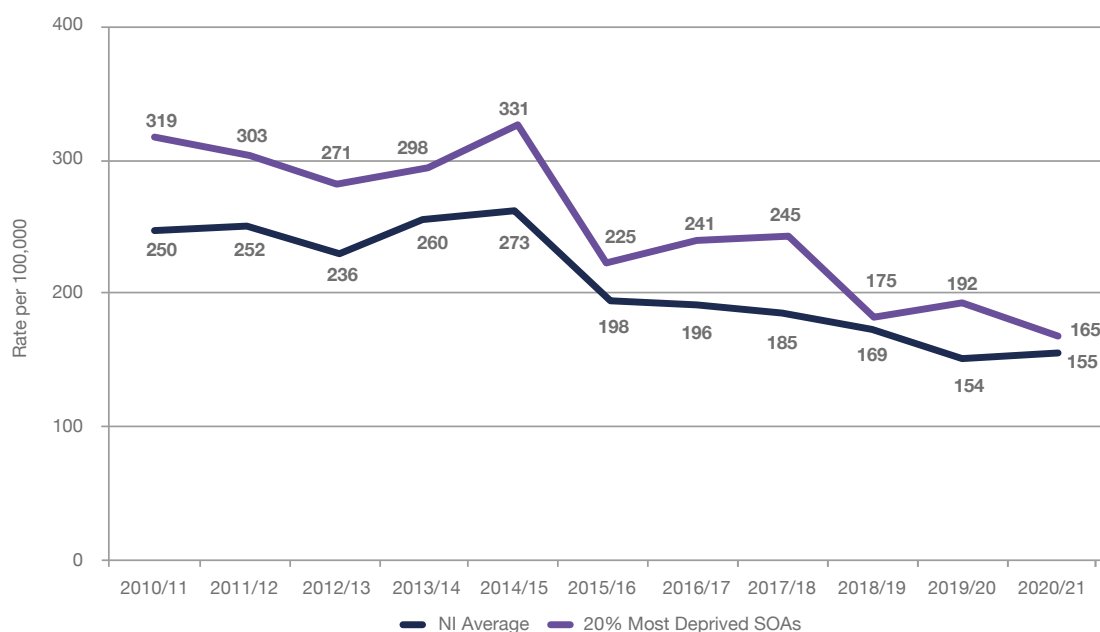
Analysis

There has been very little change in the recorded number of criminal offenses in the 20% most deprived wards and in NI over the last ten years. In 2020/21 the gap between the NI average and the 20% most deprived wards is at its lowest in the same period.

Outcome 4: Indicators (continued)

Number of child admissions to hospital due to an accident in the home or on the road (rate per 100,000)

(Source: Department of Health, Hospital Inpatient System)



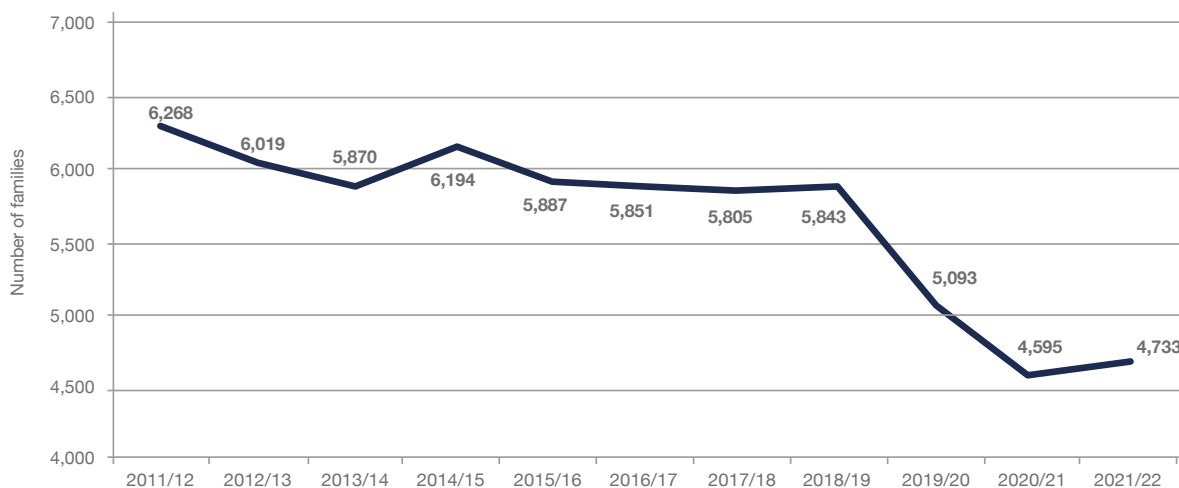
Analysis

In the last ten years, there has been a general downward trend in the number of child admissions to hospital due to an accident in the home or on the road. The gap in 2018/19 between the NI average and the most deprived areas is at its narrowest point during that period.

Outcome 4: Indicators (continued)

Number of families presenting to the NI Housing Executive as homeless

(Source: NI Housing Executive)



Analysis

In the last ten years, there has been a general downward trend in the number of families presenting as homeless to the NI Housing Executive. The 2020/21 figure of 4,595 is the lowest in the last ten years.

Outcome 4: Actions

- 4.1** Provide specific support in rural communities.
- 4.2** Provide Road Safety amongst children and young people by providing material and resources to schools delivering Practical Child Pedestrian Safety Training and enhanced Cycling Proficiency Scheme.
- 4.3** Increasing the social housing stock to improve access to suitable social housing.
- 4.4** Deliver projects designed to promote social, economic, physical and community renewal in the 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.
- 4.5** Provide tenancy support and temporary accommodation, where necessary, for young mothers.
- 4.6** Provide primary school pupils with safety and community awareness training, including how to prevent everyday accidents and dangerous situations and how to deal with them safely should they occur.
- 4.7** Work with Housing Rights to tackle homelessness and housing problems in NI through the provision of free advice and representation to people who are at risk of homelessness.
- 4.8** Provide comprehensive housing and homelessness advice to all who require it, free of charge, including pre-release housing advice and tenancy sustainment to all prisoners at all prisons/detention centres.
- 4.9** Provide Tenancy Support Assessments for all new Housing Executive tenants including a financial health check and identification of other needs (debt advice, budgeting, daily living skills, mental illness, and addictions), referring tenants to floating support services and other organisations to obtain the support required.
- 4.10** Work with key delivery partners to develop and roll out Early Intervention initiatives for children on the cusp of the Youth Justice system.
- 4.11** Deliver initiatives under the Tackling Paramilitarism Programme to assist children and young people under threat.
- 4.12** Work with delivery partners to strengthen healthy family relations of those in the care of the Northern Ireland Prison Service and actively promote the wellbeing and positive life outcomes for children affected by parental imprisonment.

Completed Actions

The table below lists actions which were in the 2020/21 Report on the NI Executive’s Child Poverty Strategy, their report card number and gives the reasons why they are now considered as complete.

Action	Reason For Completion
<p>“Provide Free School Meals and Uniform Grants to low income families, extending eligibility criteria from 2014 to include post-primary school children (whose parents receive Working Tax Credit and whose annual taxable income of £16,190 or less) to help reduce costs for low-income working families.” (Action 1.9 - DE).</p>	<p>This action is now complete. This criterion was introduced and mainstreamed into the Free School Meals and Uniform Grant criteria in September 2014. In 2019/20 there were a total of 95,983 approved applications for free school meals and 17,061 pupils were entitled to Free School Meals and Uniform Grant under the extended eligibility criterion for post-primary pupils whose parents receive Working Tax Credit and whose annual taxable income is £16,190 or less. (Approved application figures provided by the Education Authority at 11 October 2019).</p> <p>Universal Credit was introduced in Northern Ireland in September 2017 and when fully implemented will replace five qualifying benefits and tax credits, including Working Tax Credit, outlined in the current Free School Meals and Uniform Grant eligibility criteria. While a significant number of claimants will be migrated by 2024/25, following the Autumn statement, the completion date for the move of all legacy benefit claimants to Universal Credit is 2028/29.</p>

Action	Reason For Completion
<p>“We want to increase the confidence of parents in their role as their child’s first educators, and thereby to increase the quality of parental support amongst our most disadvantaged children and young people, through a multi-faceted and targeted information campaign.” (Action 2.14 - DE)</p>	<p>Given the ongoing impact of Covid-19, the parental engagement campaigns ‘Give your child a helping hand’ and ‘Miss School. Miss Out’ were paused in 2020 since many parents were supporting their children at home with their learning and the majority of children were unable to attend school during lockdown. A new advertising campaign entitled ‘Try and Stop Me’ was launched on 20 September 2021 and is about instilling hope and aspiration in our children and young people.</p>
<p>“Through the ‘Miss School. Miss Out’ Advertising Campaign 2019/20 we want to highlight the fact that school attendance is not just essential, it is also beneficial and that in missing school you are also missing out on a range of other life experiences.” (Action 2.15 - DE)</p>	<p>A new advertising campaign entitled ‘Try and Stop Me’ was launched on 20 September 2021 and is about instilling hope and aspiration in our children and young people.</p>

Annex A: Report Cards

Report Cards

This Annex contains Report Cards for each of the actions in the Child Poverty Strategy. Report Cards have been completed by the lead Department responsible for the action.

These report cards use performance accountability measures in accordance with Outcomes Based Accountability to evaluate

how well a project, programme or service is performing at the participant level. These will answer the questions:

- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Is anyone better off?

Table: Performance Measures Categories used in Outcomes Based Accountability

	Quantity	Quality
Effort	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?
Effect	Is anyone better off?	

Outcomes Based Accountability and this reporting process is explained in the Executive’s Child Poverty Strategy.

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.1:

Supporting Invest NI's Customers to Create Jobs - Invest NI will fully utilise its employment focused support, particularly Selective Financial Assistance (SFA), to support high value employment opportunities in NI's business base. This includes utilising SFA and Grant for Research & Development (R&D) support to attract new first-time inward investors to NI.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Economy

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 1 & 6

How much did we do?

- **247** companies receiving Employment related Support (ES).
- **3,548** Assisted Jobs through our ES interventions with companies.
- **2,466** of the total assisted jobs paying salaries above the NI Private Sector Median (PSM).

(Source: Invest NI's Offers and Claims Management System (OaCMS) / Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems – For the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022).

How well did we do it?

- Median controllable casework processing days of **18 days**.
- **94%** (232) of companies receiving ES were SMEs (Small & Medium-Sized Enterprises).
- **89%** (221) of companies receiving ES were Locally-Owned.

(Source: Invest NI's OaCMS / CRM systems – For the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022).

Is anyone better off?

- **46,311** Additional Jobs (job gains) in Invest NI supported Companies (Combined 2017 to 2021 position).
- **£34,290** Employment Cost per employee (2021).
- **0%** change in employment costs per employee (2020 to 2021), **4%** increase in employment costs per employee (2019 to 2021).
- **£45,411** Value-Added per employee (2021).
- **2%** increase in Value-added per employee (2020 to 2021), **6%** increase in Value-added per employee (2019 to 2021).

(Source: Invest NI Key Performance Indicator (KPI) dataset. Increase in employment costs per employee is a proxy measure of increasing salaries. Value-Added per employee is an estimate of Value-Added based on all information available to Invest NI, it is not a definitive position).

Reporting Period:

April 2021 to March 2022

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.2:

Help young people aged 16-24* who are unemployed and seeking permanent work to prepare for work by providing work experience opportunities to develop skills, gain experience and develop confidence and provide (subject to eligibility) financial support to cover travel and childcare costs.

(*NB: action has been updated as 16 & 17 year olds in receipt of Universal Credit are eligible to participate in the Work Experience Programme from September 2021.)

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 3

How much did we do?

From April 2021 the Work Experience Programme has been incentivised to include participation payments for both employers and unemployed people.

An expanded version of the programme for young people, known as the Opportunity Guarantee, includes longer duration, increased incentives for employers and a guarantee of an interview for a job or apprenticeship for the young person.

How well did we do it?

For the 2020/21 year there was only 1 Work Experience placement due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, 65 people participated on the Work Experience Programme who were aged 16-24. In that year, 59 of them left the programme.

Is anyone better off?

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 of those 59 who left the programme aged 16 to 24:

- 26 people gained employment.
- 3 entered education.

Reporting Period:

April 2021 to March 2022

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.3:

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 we will connect with 30,000 people to ensure they are getting the benefits, supports and services they are entitled to. We will continue to work with other government departments and the voluntary and community sector, creating new referral partnerships aimed at improving support on benefit entitlement and increasing the package of supports and services.

Status: In progress: (the above actions are detailed in the DfC Five Year Operational Strategy 2020-2025).

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 3, 4, 8

How much did we do?

- In 2021/22 Make the Call Wraparound Service (MtC) connected with 30,781 people.
- In 2021/22 we continued to develop new corporate partnerships, working with other government departments and the voluntary and community sector to increase our offer of services and supports.
- MtC ran three advertising campaigns in 2021/22. The campaigns raise awareness among the public of the services that MtC can provide.

How well did we do it?

Of the 30,781 people we have connected with in 2021/22 and had a benefits discussion with:

- We have been able to assist 10,839 of those people to increase income through needs assessments.
- We have also been able to link 10,235 of these people to various supports and services.

Is anyone better off?

The average weekly amount that people MtC assisted to increase their income through benefits was **£88.18** per person per week for the year 2021/22.

Reporting Period:

MtC published their full 2021/22 end year results in October 2022 and these have been included above.

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.4:

Provide Essential Skills training for adults – which must be accessible to people from highly deprived areas – to improve their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, upskilling the working age population by delivering Essential Skills.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for the Economy

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 1, 5, 6, 12

How much did we do?

There were a total of 24,008 Essential Skills enrolments for 2020/21. Of these, 13,262 were delivered at FE (Further Education) colleges.

How well did we do it?

Of the 24,008 Essential Skills enrolments in 2020/21, 6,555 (27.3%) were from students living within the most deprived quintile. The overall retention rate since the start of the Essential Skills Strategy in 2002 the retention rate* is 89.7%. For Level 2, this was 90.1%. The overall retention rate* in 2019/20 was 89.4%. (*Retention rate is defined as the proportion of the number of enrolments who complete their study to the number of enrolments.)

Is anyone better off?

15,156 qualifications in Essential Skills were issued in 2020/21 of which 8,189 (54.0%) were at Level 2.

Since the start of the Essential Skills Strategy in 2002 there have been 541,604 enrolments completed, of which 393,413 have resulted in a qualification. This gives an achievement rate* of 72.6%.

Of the 603,838 enrolments since the start of the Essential Skills Strategy, 393,413 have resulted in a qualification. This gives a *success rate of 65.2%.

(*Achievement rate relates to the percentage of the number of enrolments who complete their study and achieve their qualification to the number of enrolments who complete their study. Success rate is the overall measure of performance, which is the proportion of the number of enrolments who complete their study and achieve their qualification to the number of enrolments.)

Reporting Period:

2020/21

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.5:

Create up to 7,000 new school age childcare places serving disadvantaged communities, on the schools estate or serving rural communities, creating approximately 750 new childcare jobs. Enhance the information on childcare services available online (including a social media app) and promote existing financial assistance to increase uptake, enable more informed decisions and reduce costs for parents.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 6, 8, 12

How much did we do?

- As part of the first phase of the Executive Childcare Strategy, the pilot Bright Start School Age Childcare (SAC) Grant Scheme launched in 2014. The SAC Grant Scheme provides financial support to settings providing school age childcare in disadvantaged areas, rural communities and on the schools estate.
- There have been 3 calls for applications under the Scheme, the most recent of which closed in January 2016. The Scheme is closed for any new applications.
- Information about childcare services via the Family Support NI (FSNI) website has been expanded and enhanced.
- Work has been ongoing with HMRC to promote financial assistance available to parents with the costs of childcare.

How well did we do it?

Latest data indicates:

- Between 2014/15 and 2021/22, approximately £9.3 million was spent on the pilot SAC Grant Scheme to sustain and create low cost childcare places.
- A further £1m was allocated in 2022/23.

Over the period of the Scheme an estimated 2,500 childcare places were created or sustained in the targeted areas, with approximately 95% of settings located in disadvantaged areas or supporting disadvantaged families and 60% of settings in rural communities or supporting rural families. The scheme has also funded 25% of settings located on the school estate.

(NB: Figures add to more than 100% as some settings may be located in more than one targeted group i.e. disadvantaged or rural area or on the school estate.)

- Across funding rounds 1, 2 and 3, 58% of settings met or exceeded their targets in regard to the percentage of parents accessing Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC).
- The children in the childcare settings supported under the Scheme have benefited from accessing services in settings that meet or exceed the Department of Health 'Minimum Standards for Day Care and Childminding for Children under Age 12'. These standards ensure that settings are subject to regular inspection and provides assurance on the quality of the childcare services provided.
- The FSNI website has a section on financial assistance available to parents and also providers available by area. It has also been a central source of guidance for parents and childcare providers during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Department continued to support the Bright Start settings during the Covid-19 pandemic, and some have also benefitted from the emergency Covid-19 Childcare Financial Support schemes, established to support childcare settings during the pandemic.
- The Department provided substantial financial support to the childcare sector since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, supporting childcare places and jobs. Almost £40m was paid to childcare providers to assist with sustainability pressures and temporary closures due to Covid-19 related incidents within their provision.

Is anyone better off?

The Grant Scheme has successfully targeted support for childcare provision in areas of identified need. This included creating or sustaining childcare places in rural communities and disadvantaged areas and on the school estate, including assisting families from disadvantaged areas and/or those who are on welfare benefits, to access childcare provision.

- To date, 2,500 childcare places have been created and sustained.
- Over the period of the Scheme, 91 settings have been supported, approximately 65 settings were already in operation and 26 settings were new to the Scheme. We are currently supporting 59 settings in the Scheme, maintaining 1,300 places.

As a result of more accessible information through the FSNI website, parents and prospective parents are able to make more informed choices about their childcare decisions and the financial assistance available with the costs of childcare.

Reporting Period:

1 April 2014 – 31 March 2022

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.6:

Provide training and small grants to enable childcare providers to meet the needs of children with a disability.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Fair Play Small Grants Scheme

Purpose

This funding provides additional staff capacity to support the inclusion of children with a disability in registered group based childcare settings. It is administered via the Early Years team in the Health and Social Care Board.

The Desired Outcomes of the Scheme are as follows:

- Early identification of children in need.
- Families able to access high quality early years and childcare services appropriate to their child's needs.
- Children with a disability having access to the same quality learning and development opportunities in early years and childcare settings, helping them to reach their full potential.
- A sustainable increase in the capacity and confidence of the childcare workforce to effectively care for, and support the

development of, children presenting with a wide range of disabilities.

- Childcare providers will utilise this experience to regularly review and develop more effective policies and procedures aimed at respecting difference, promoting equal opportunities and inclusion.

Round 1 (R1)

The total funds awarded in September 2021 to cover the period September 2021 – August 2022 was £416,328.54.

This funding provided 35 childcare providers with 905 additional staff hours which in turn facilitated the inclusion of an additional 143 Children with a disability in mainstream registered group based childcare.

Round 2 (R2)

Due to increased demand in year an additional £222,243.87 was awarded in November 2021 and disseminated in December 2021.

This funding provided an additional 728 staff hours for a further 36 group based childcare providers which in turn supported an additional 84 children with a disability to access mainstream childcare services.

Total number of grant recipients R1 & R2 – 71.

Total number of children with a disability accessing mainstream childcare services R1 & R2 – 227.

Total number of additional staff hours R1 & R2 – 1,633.

Bright Start Holiday Grant Scheme

Purpose

The purpose of this Scheme is to assist parents of children with a disability to access high quality, inclusive childcare during school holiday periods enabling them the same child care experience as their peers.

Objectives:

- Ensure decisions are taken in the best interest of the children who will be attending the service.
- Ensuring all successful applicants adhere to regulatory standards in the delivery of their proposed services.
- The funding is intended to provide a group-type service to enable parents to attend training and/or work during the holiday periods.
- Ensuring the limited budget is allocated on a reasonable basis as possible (i.e. staffing costs, equipment and resource costs, etc.).

The total value of the grants awarded in 2021-22 was £75,806. This enabled 6 providers to provide an extension to their existing childcare service.

The provision of the small grants enabled 174 children to attend childcare provision over the school holiday periods. 154 children had a disability and 20 siblings attended.

The 154 children attending presented with a wide range of disabilities including: ASD, ADHD, Down Syndrome, Epilepsy, Learning Disability, Cerebral Palsy, moderate to severe learning disabilities, Autism, challenging complex behaviours, non-verbal, Hypoxic-ischemic Encephalopathy, Visual Impairment, Craniofrontal Nasal Syndrome, Angelman Syndrome, Hydrocephalus, PICA.

How well did we do it?

Fair Play Small Grants Scheme

No. of participants who applied – 111.

No. of applicants who withdrew – 3.

No. of participants who were successful – 71.

66% of applicants were successful.

Bright Start Holiday Grant Scheme

No. of participants who applied – 7.

No. of unsuccessful applicants – 1.

To access both grants schemes applicants had to demonstrate that they could provide a high quality inclusive service for children with a disability and their siblings in the case of the holiday grant scheme.

Parents/Carers were consulted in relation to the child/children's needs and involved in all aspects of their care and education plan.

Providers were required to secure suitably qualified trained staff to meet the needs of the individual children.

Providers agreed to work alongside a range of Allied Health Professionals to meet the needs of the children and where appropriate to make best use of relevant child specific equipment and resources to support their inclusion.

All successful recipients were required to adhere to the Trust's most up to date Government Guidelines on Infection Prevention and Control during the current Covid-19 Pandemic.

Is anyone better off?

Fair Play Small Grants Scheme

Parents and childcare providers have indicated that the grants scheme provided access to high quality childcare services which has had a positive impact on family life and on the ability for parents to seek or return to employment or training.

Both parents and the providers indicated that a whole team approach has been used to good effect both within the setting and home environment to facilitate improvement in all aspects of the child's development impacting on a better quality of life at home.

"Working as a team benefits everyone including children and parents."

"Staff have worked closely with parents to provide suitable activities that can be transferred to and applied within the home environment."

Strong support was also evidenced in terms of the benefits that were derived for all children. It was encouraging to learn that the children with disabilities were not cared for in isolation with one – one member of staff to child but had opportunities to learn and play with all the children and had access to the whole staff team within the facilities.

"Yes, the other children do not see the disability they see their friend who has a disability."

"The other children have been in a privileged position of playing alongside and supporting their friends who have additional needs throughout the grant scheme they have developed a sense of empathy, care and understanding."

"Other children in the setting benefitted from inclusion, play, materials and activities, increasing their knowledge regarding difference, respect and tolerance."

Provider experiences included: shared learning, participation in additional training opportunities, networking and learning with and from other allied health and education professionals. Many reported that the experience had led to further development of internal policy and procedures.

Training needs identified by the grant recipients were collated and shared with the Childcare Partnership training team annually to facilitate the commissioning of disability awareness and child specific training for staff teams.

"We discuss child's needs regularly with parent and other agencies to provide a suitable education/care plan."

“Each child has an individual plan created by us with the parents input and any other allied/ educational professional that works with the child.”

“All care plans are individualised for each child’s needs and shared with parents. Plans are reviewed regularly and parents are consulted at each stage.”

“Staff have learned how to include all children in planning activities and how to adapt activities to suit the needs of all children.”

Overall, providers were very positive about the confidence the staff had gained from their participation in the scheme as the disabilities that the children had were often complex, varied and challenging.

“All staff have learned a lot from getting to know the children more and understanding the various aspects of the child’s disability. They feel more confidence as play workers.”

Both parents and providers have commented that having access to additional trained childcare staff over and above normal child adult ratios with the correct expertise and experience in the child’s earliest years via this small grants scheme, has had a real impact in supporting the children’s development and transition into mainstream education.

Feedback from parents whose children attended the Bright Start Holiday Grant Scheme

“We have really seen a marked improvement whilst at summer scheme this year in comparison to school (special school); he was much calmer and more settled with children that don’t have severe learning difficulties in comparison to his school environment that can impact greatly on his behaviour unfortunately.”

“His confidence has grown hugely whilst attending Summer Scheme - he really enjoyed the trips out - thank you so much.”

“Another brilliant summer scheme. My two boys had a fantastic time. The care you provide is second to none.”

“My daughter made a wee friend at the summer scheme and this helped her feel more confident again going out.”

“Thank you so much to all the staff involved in organising and delivering the summer scheme this year from the behind the scenes in the office, the bus driver and to all the wonderful staff we met each morning. It’s been great for me to be able to focus on work for a few hours while I know my son is extremely well cared for and his needs are met. I can see him bouncing and being ‘bubbly’ when he is on the walk out for pick up. I think he has thrived; he comes home, desensitizes, then can tell me all about his day. It has been great for him.”

Reporting Period:

April 2021 – March 2022

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.7:

Provide childcare places through 14 Women's Centres to assist parents in low income families to increase their skills and gain education and training to avail of paid employment.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 3, 5, 6, 9

How much did we do?

The programme funding of some £765,000 in 2021/22 allows for the provision of approximately 76,500 two-hour childcare places to those in the margins of employment. In addition to this the programme also had a target of engaging with 671 new families.

To provide 2 hour childcare places for the parents of children living in those areas who are:

- In receipt of Income Support/Unemployed and registered for Job Seekers Allowance (Income-based) OR Universal Credit, AND meet either a), b) or c) below.
- To avail of the Women's Centre Childcare Fund (WCCF) the following criteria apply.

To provide 2 hour childcare places for the parents of children living in those areas who are:

- a. Engaged in part-time (less than 16 hours per week) paid voluntary/community development work.
- b. Engaged in vocational or educational development or training.
- c. Engaged in personal development training.

Or, if none of the above applies:

Have within the last 12 months, progressed employment following a period of unemployment

How well did we do it?

Across the 14 programmes this was delivered by:

- Matching childcare services each quarter to support the needs of women seeking to engage in Training, Education, and Vocational Development Courses in the 14 areas serviced by the programmes.
- Signposting.
- Providing placement for Childcare Trainees and information.

- Connecting with similar organisations in each area to enhance the existing service through sharing of information and resources.
- Provision of opportunities for parents to access information and raise awareness of the organisations and community support available in each of the 14 areas.
- Delivery of the School Age Mothers Support Programme for Young Mothers and Babies.

Is anyone better off?

It is anticipated that due to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic the target for the provision of over 76,500 childcare places may not be met. The 14 WCCF Groups have provided the Department with their revised activities as a direct result of Covid-19 during

2021/22. It is envisaged that the target of over 600 new families to be engaged will be achieved remotely.

The provision of such childcare places and associated support through the Women's Centres is likely to have long term positive benefits to the child, the parents of the child and wider society both in terms of avoiding costs associated with dealing with issues later in the child's life and also avoiding problems such as poorer health, educational, employment and criminal justice outcomes.

Reporting Period:

2021/22

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.8:

From 1 April 2015 the Affordable Warmth Scheme (AWS) administered by the Housing Executive, has offered energy efficiency improvement measures to households with an annual income of less than £20,000. This income threshold was increased to £23,000 with effect from 1 July 2021 and at the same time disability benefits were excluded from the income calculation. The scheme aims to target those most in need.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 2, 4, 8

How much did we do?

Affordable Warmth Scheme Expenditure:

2015/16 – £11.5m

2016/17 – £21.8m

2017/18 – £18.2m

2018/19 - £14.5m

2019/20 - £12.3m

2020/21 – £6.7m

2021/22 – £11.77m

(Covid-19 restrictions on home visiting has impacted the number of homes assisted).

The Business Case to continue the scheme until March 2024 was confirmed August 2019.

How well did we do it?

NI House Condition Survey (HCS)

The 2016 NI HCS indicated 47% of NI houses were households with children. The report also referenced the significant investment by Government through schemes such as Affordable Warmth which have made a considerable contribution to the decrease in fuel poverty. Fuel poverty in NI has reduced from 42% (294,000 dwellings) in 2011 to 22% (160,000 dwellings) in 2016.

Standard Assessment Procedure

Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the Government's method of rating the energy efficiency of a dwelling. Using SAP data from 2015 it was estimated that the average SAP score for properties before Affordable Warmth intervention was 56.4. After Affordable Warmth measures were installed the average SAP score for properties was 65.4. The most

recent HCS estimated that mean SAP in NI had increased from 59.6 in 2011 to 65.8 in 2016.

Impact Affordable Warmth Has On Health

Research carried out on behalf of the Department for Communities by the University of Ulster on the Health Impact Analysis of the Affordable Warmth Programme: 2014-2018 showed fuel poverty has a significant impact on the health and well-being of people, in particular children.

People in fuel poverty live in cold, damp houses often experiencing financial stress and anxiety as the cost of heating their home is a significant outlay from their income.

Interventions from the AWS aim to reduce the cost of heating homes. A key outcome/result is the beneficial effect on the physical and mental health of those living within the home.

The interventions implemented can:

- decrease the cost of heating;
- reduce the prevalence of damp and mould;
- reduce child respiratory conditions, most notably asthma; and
- improve Common Mental Disorders (CMD).

NI Energy Efficiency Scheme Evaluation

A 3-year evaluation completed in November 2018 of the AWS reported that each household participating in this scheme will manage to save an average 72,000 kWh of energy, £3,650 of fuel costs and 20,500 kg of CO₂ throughout the lifetime of the energy efficiency measures installed. Their dwelling will also show an approximate 9-point increase in SAP rating.

Stakeholder & Customer Feedback

The analysis of results from annual Customer Satisfaction surveys has concluded there is a high level of satisfaction with the AWS. The 2017-18 survey results showed 94% of respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the scheme and in 2018-19 this rose to 97% of respondents. The 2018-19 customer satisfaction survey, completed in 2020, was the most recent due to the impact of Covid restrictions on the ability to carry out surveys.

In the most recent Affordable Warmth Customer Satisfaction Survey, 88% of respondents said their standard of housing had improved since measures were installed. In addition 47% of respondents indicated that their ability to pay for heating their home had improved whilst 31% indicated that their health had improved.

The AWS has the support of key stakeholders including Consumer Council NI, local Councils, National Energy Action, Energy Saving Trust, Utility Regulator and Gas providers.

The positive impacts and performance of the scheme is discussed at HECA (Home Energy Conservation Authority) panel meetings hosted by the NIHE.

Is anyone better off?

Energy Efficiency measures employed include: loft, cavity and solid wall insulation, heating system, window replacement and draught-proofing.

2015/16 – 3,057 homes improved.

2016/17 – 5,069 homes improved.

2017/18 – 4,148 homes improved.

2018/19 – 3,205 homes improved.

2019/20 – 2,594 homes improved.

2020/21 – 1,599 homes improved year to date (Covid-19 restrictions on home visiting impacted the number of homes assisted).

2021/22 – 2,841 homes improved (Covid-19 restrictions on home visiting continues to impact the number of homes assisted).

Up to 31 March 2022, 41,135 energy efficiency measures were grant aided to 22,520 homes throughout Northern Ireland with an approximate investment of almost £97.5m.

These interventions have resulted in improvements to the physical and mental wellbeing of all members of those households (including children), who have availed of the scheme.

Reporting Period:

1 April 2015– 31 March 2022

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.9:

Provide grant support to low-income families raising disabled and/or seriously ill children to help with essential items such as fridges and clothing and other items such as sensory toys.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 8, 9

How much did we do?

- 21,239 families caring for disabled children on a low income have received grant support from Family Fund in NI.
- 2,520 families caring for disabled children in NI have received a home visit or telephone assessment providing additional support and signposting to improve their well-being and financial position.
- Added Value: Around 1,127 families caring for disabled children in NI have received information, advice and support over the telephone around a myriad of areas including financial and benefit support, understanding education support, disability element of Tax Credits signposting.
- Added Value: 343 families in NI were identified as being eligible to receive the disability element of Tax Credits and received appropriate signposting and support. 60 families in NI have received detailed information on other sources of grant support available to them.
- Added Value: 82 families in NI caring for disabled children have received digital skills training. Alongside the opportunity to join in with Family Fund's Summer School where children were able to learn and show new creative skills on tablet computers.
- Added Value: 7 Family Information days hosted in East and West Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Omagh, Dungannon, Newry and Coleraine. These drop-in events, which took place prior to 2020 allow families to get information on the support available from a number of organisations in one visit. Four virtual events were held with Sense NI in 2021.

How well did we do it?

- £7.3m has been distributed in direct grant support to families in NI as of November 2021.
- 91% of our annual grant making target for 2021/22 has been achieved with 3 months left to go until the end of the funding year.

- 31% of families applying for the first time have received a home visit or telephone assessment. (Statistic just for 2020 and 2021).
- Telephone enquiries from around 30,843 families and health professionals in NI were answered.
- In 2021, 4,545 non-voice contacts from families in NI were received.
- £544,414 (discounts and breakage) has been generated from Family Fund's contract supplier arrangements allowing the delivery of more grants to families as of November 2021.

Is anyone better off?

- 21,239 of the most vulnerable families living on lower incomes.
- 88% of all families whose applications have been processed received direct grant support. (Statistic just for 2021).
- 466 families caring for disabled children in NI received urgent grant support (processed within 48 hours) while their child was in hospital unexpectedly.
- 9% of all families that applied received a home visit or telephone assessment to provide additional support. (Statistic just for 2021).

Research we have undertaken into the impact of the grants Family Fund provided in Northern Ireland in 2020 highlights the positive impact they had:

- 100% of families agreed their disabled children benefitted from the grant.
- 84% of families agreed that Family Fund helped them better manage their children's care and support needs.
- 75% of families agreed that Family Fund helped them manage better financially.
- 72% of families agreed that Family Fund helped them to better access information and support.

Reporting Period:

1 April 2017 - 31 December 2021

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.10:

Recruit rural participants (40%) who are unemployed or economically inactive to the Step Up to Sustainable Employment (SUSE+) programme to gain skills and qualifications needed to become employment ready.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 3,6

How much did we do?

2021/22 – 180 rural participants to be recruited onto the SUSE+ Programme.

2021/22 – 32 rural participants receive qualifications in Essential Skills/Literacy/Numeracy/ICT.

2021/22 – 40 rural participants entering employment on leaving the programme.

How well did we do it?

92% of the 2021/22 rural participants have been recruited onto the SUSE+ Programme to date.

31% of the 2021/22 rural participants received qualifications in Essential Skills/Literacy/Numeracy/ICT.

173% of 2021/22 rural participants entered employment after leaving the programme.

Is anyone better off?

In 2021/22, 69 rural participants have entered employment after leaving the SUSE+ Programme. A further 26 rural participants have continued onto further education or joined training programmes.

Another 90 rural participants have gained Specialist Training Qualifications (Forklift/First Aid/Food Hygiene/Manual Handling/Paediatric First Aid).

Reporting Period:

1 April 2021 – 31 December 2021

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.11:

Pilot scheme to address period dignity in schools - Providing free period products in schools to support confident attendance at school.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 3, 12

How much did we do?

A pilot scheme was launched in September 2021 to address period dignity in schools by providing free period products to support confident attendance. The scheme is available to over 1,000 settings, including primary schools, post-primary schools, special schools and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) settings.

How well did we do it?

Pilot scheme introduced as planned in September 2021, making provision on a similar basis to schools in England, Scotland and Wales, promoting fairness and equality.

	Total schools in sector	Schools ordering by Nov 21	%
Primary	789	202	26%
Post-Primary	217	101	47%
Special	35	19	54%
Total	1,041	322	31%

Is anyone better off?

The scheme will support all pupils, including the 1,711 who responded to CCEA's (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment) baseline survey in June 2021. In particular it will support the:

- 28% of pupils who said that they had difficulty accessing period products, 19% of whom said they or their parents couldn't afford them.
- 8% of pupils who have missed school because they didn't have access to sufficient period products, 10% of whom missed school many times.
- 67% of pupils who said period products were too expensive; and
- 57% of pupils who said that they had to ask a friend or teacher for period products while in school.

Reporting Period:

September 2021 to June 2022

Outcome 1: Families experience economic well-being

Action 1.12:

The Department for Communities will provide a grant payment for upfront childcare costs where these are acting as a barrier to employment. (Up to £1500 is available to eligible parents through the Adviser Discretion Fund to help eligible customers enter employment, recommence employment following maternity leave or increase their hours of employment.)

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 3, 6, 8 & 12

How much did we do?

In 2021 the Universal Credit Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 were amended to ensure payments made by the Adviser Discretion Fund (ADF) were not to be left out of the account when calculating childcare element. This means that if support is provided through the Adviser Discretion Fund for upfront childcare, the customer can still claim childcare under UC in arrears. This can then be used to pay the subsequent month's childcare costs.

Support was rolled out in October 2021 to provide up to £1500 for eligible parents to pay upfront childcare costs.

How well did we do it?

So far (between 1 October 2021 and 31 March 2022) there have been 329 ADF awards for upfront childcare costs for 310 unique customers. Total spend for this period comes to £94,270.

Is anyone better off?

Of all ADF awards approved by team leaders between October 21 and March 22 there have been 147 distinct work related positive outcomes from 180 distinct approved applications. This equates to 81.67% positive outcomes for this period (there is a 13 week into work outcome work coach follow-up period). A positive outcome constitutes either found work, progression/increased hours, retained employment or start up self-employment.

Between Oct 21 to March 22 there were 3 ADF upfront childcare awards for lone parents.

Reporting Period:

October 2021 - March 2022

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.1:

Support 31 Nurture Groups in local primary schools, with trained staff to select the children who will benefit most from additional support and develop individual learning plans agreed with teachers and parents.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Nurture Groups

- 46 primary schools received funding for a Nurture Group.
- 1,524 children received Nurture Group support:
 - 478 attended a nurture group on a full time basis;
 - An additional 1,046 children received short term support in the Nurture room;
 - 208 had returned to their mainstream class by June 2021;
 - 51 children were a Child Looked After (CLA).
- Of the 478 children attending the Nurture Group full time, 368/76.9% of parents/carers have engaged with the nurture group.
- 208/43.5% children returned to their mainstream class by June 2021.

- In March 2022 the Education Minister announced the expansion of the Nurture Programme with the establishment of 16 new Nurture Groups by the end of the 2021/22 school year.

Whole School Nurturing Approaches (WSNA) Model of Support – through the ‘Nurture Approach in Education Programme’.

- 23 Primary schools and 2 Special Schools received WSNA level 3 support.
- 588 school staff (teaching and non-teaching) participated in WSNA model of support level 3 training.
- 8 parents participated in a pilot modelling of intervention session.
- 114 professionals attended cross sector/multi - disciplinary collaboration sessions.
- 3,087 school staff (teaching and non-teaching) engaged in Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) training.

How well did we do it?

- Queens University Belfast (QUB) published an evaluation of the “Impact and Cost Effectiveness of Nurture Groups in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland” (2016), which found clear evidence that Nurture Groups were having a consistent, significant and large effect in improving social, emotional and behavioural outcomes among children who previously had difficulty learning within a mainstream class. The same effects were not evident among children in similar circumstances attending a school without a nurture group.
- 23 schools to date have received the Marjorie Boxall Quality Mark Award for excellence in Nurturing, with one school achieving NI’s first National Nurturing School Award in 2018.
- A Nurture Advisory and Support Service (NASS) has been established in the Education Authority (EA) to support schools with nurture groups and to deliver the ‘Nurture Approach in Education Programme’ which is available to all primary, special, post-primary schools and Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) settings.
- Whole School Nurture Approaches (WSNA) Model of Support training, through the Nurture Approach in Education Programme had an overall target for analysis, interventions and facilitation of training of 150. The number achieved was 213 (142%).

Is anyone better off?

Nurture group children

By the end of full time Nurture Group intervention:

More children will reach their expected stage of development and progress in education

and learning in line with their peers:

- **208 (44%)** of children showed improved Boxall scores indicating gains in their social, emotional development and behavioural skills.

Fewer Pupils require statutory or other assessments:

- **57 (29%)** of children moved to a lower stage of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Best Practice on Nurture provision will be provided in schools:

- **23 (50%)** of schools successfully achieved the Marjorie Boxall Quality Mark Award (MBQMA).

Nurture Approaches in Education Programme

- Pupil attendance will improve and school suspensions and expulsions will be reduced.
- Positive attitudes will be developed in schools to effectively address social, behavioural, emotional, and well-being (SBEW) barriers to learning through whole school nurturing approaches.
- Schools develop confident parents to support their child’s early development, and improve infant and parent emotional health and well-being/mental health.
- The needs of children will be identified earlier and fewer children and families are reliant on targeted or later interventions as their needs are met through early and preventative provision.
- Learning from nurturing approaches will be shared.

Reporting Period:

September 2020 – June 2021

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.2:

Provide a targeted community family intervention programme to support disadvantaged families, address educational, employment, training, health, social and economic issues that impact on their daily lives. Provide support to prevent young people from falling into the NEET category and help other young people who find themselves in this situation to re-engage with education, training or employment.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for the Economy

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 6

How much did we do?

Under the first call, 5 operations were allocated funding of £5.02m towards total project costs of £7.73m for the period of 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2018. Under the second call, 5 operations have been allocated funding of £8.6m towards total project costs of £13.3m for the period of 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2022.

The Community Family Support Programme (CFSP) (funded under Priority 2 of the NI European Social Fund (ESF)) is a new approach developed by the Department to tackle disadvantage, social inclusion and youth unemployment in NI. It provides a family intervention support and employability mentoring service to help families address their health, social, economic, educational, employment and training issues that impact on their daily lives. It aims to support all family members and break the cycle of intergenerational unemployment and

associated poverty in communities. Over its lifetime (up until March 2023) the CFSP aims to:

- Support 5,040 NEET participants aged 16 and over in families receiving Community Family Support.
- Progress 505 NEET participants into employment upon leaving.
- Progress 1,010 NEET participants into education / training upon leaving.

How well did we do it?

From 1 April 2015 - 31 December 2021, progress to date is:

- Supported 5,363 participants aged 16 and over not in employment, education and training (NEET) in families receiving Community Family Support.
- Progressed 987 participants into employment upon leaving.

- Progressed 1,625 participants into education or training upon leaving.

Is anyone better off?

Delivery of the CFSP is ongoing. It was due to end in March 2022 however the third Call for applications will extend the programme until March 2023. A formal mid-term evaluation of the NI ESF Programme published in December 2020 was broadly supportive of the Community Family Support Programme.

Reporting Period:

The information contained in the “How well did we do it?” section relates to the Period April 2015 – December 2021.

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.3:

Support training to improve and enhance skills across the childcare workforce.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

In the period from April 2021 – March 2022, there are **8** different mandatory training courses on offer and **27** different continued professional development (CPD) courses available to early year's practitioners via the Childcare Partnership (CCP) training programme.

225 mandatory training courses were delivered including - full and refresher Safeguarding, Safeguarding Designated Officer training, Safeguarding Children Effectuated by Parental Substance Abuse, Health and Safety, Risk Assessment and Manual Handling, Fire Safety, Food Safety, and Full/Refresher Paediatric First Aid training.

104 CPD themed training courses were planned to run up to the end of March 2021.

The CCP invested in a series of generic online Mini Modules focusing on leadership and management, handling complaints, time management, managing change, presentation skills and coaching and mentoring, among

others. **1,216** people were offered the opportunity to complete the modules.

To date **6,425** places were provided in the Childcare Partnership training programme to promote good practice across the sector. Of these places there were **3,227** supporting mandatory training and **2,198** (including **1,216** Mini Modules) places supporting CPD training.

CPD training included: Supporting Children's Social and Emotional Wellbeing, Understanding and Implementing the Solihull Approach, Championing Diversity and Inclusion, Understanding Child Development, The Impact of Loss on Children and Families, Supporting Children with Learning Disability in Early Years, The Impact of Domestic Violence, Outdoor Play, Introduction to Autism, Supporting Children's Speech Language and Communication and Understanding Infant Mental Health.

In the period April – December 2021 the Training Team produced 3 E-Zines. Features included safeguarding practice, addressing

child poverty, supporting staff and children's emotional wellbeing, domestic violence, loss, trauma and supporting children with additional needs in mainstream childcare settings.

The CCP E-Zines were viewed **2,191** times by early year's practitioners over the period April to December 2021. Copies of the CCP E-Zine can be downloaded from the following link [Training & Quality – Childcare Partnerships \(hscni.net\)](https://www.hscni.net)

The CCP training team have developed and continually updated the **COVID-19: Infection Prevention and Control Training Resource for Childcare Settings** throughout the year in line with the DOH and PHA Guidance. This resource is available on the NISCC (NI Social Care Council) Learning Zone. **6,662** people completed this course up to the end of December 2021.

The CCP team also updated the Health and Safety Training for Childminders in 2020-21 which was available via the NISCC Learning Zone from the beginning of April 2022.

How well did we do it?

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic we have continued to adapt our method of training to meet need, with the majority of training delivered online, via Zoom.

Mandatory and Continued Professional Development (CPD) Training:

- Attendance figures for the period April 2021-March 2022 will be collated in April 2022.
- Evaluations suggested that most people welcomed attending training online and have valued the opportunity to continue with their continued professional development.

- A small number of practitioners have indicated that they do not like online training and would benefit more from face to face courses. The Childcare Partnership Training team will review the situation in early 2022 in line with DoH and PHA guidance.

Is anyone better off?

Due to Coronavirus pandemic, one of the key areas of focus in 2021/22 was continuing to support the early year's sector by providing accessible and relevant training. In Summer 2022 we completed a Training Needs Analysis and have responded to priority needs and will continue to use the information to inform future plans.

The CCP training programme provided a variety of training courses adapted to meet newly identified needs and for online delivery. This programme included the following courses:

- The Solihull Approach
- Trauma Sensitive Practice in conjunction with Safeguarding Board NI
- Nutrition Matters
- Hanen Speech and Language Training
- Championing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Observation and Planning
- Promoting Resilience
- Supporting Children's Behaviour
- Understanding Child Development
- The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children and Families
- The Impact of Loss on Children and Families

- Supporting Children with a Learning Disability in Early Years Settings
- Exploring Sensory Processing and Sensory Play

Feedback to date has shown an improvement in knowledge, confidence and competency in relation to all training.

Some examples of feedback:

“I did the designated officer training online recently and following this re-evaluated our paperwork and made improvements.”

“The ACEs Training was very good. It definitely made me think about children differently.”

“The Early years Solihull Approach Theory & Practice particularly inspired me; it has broadened my existing knowledge and enabled me to apply theory in my day to day childcare practice.”

“The Woodwork Workshop was amazing, I am thoroughly enjoying it, such a depth of knowledge and Peter had a real expertise in the area.”

“The COVID-19 training helped me to identify where my high touch points are and it created better infection and prevention control management.”

“The Summer of Play course was a very informative course and was very enjoyable.”

“I just want to thank the CCP team for your dedication to supporting workforce development throughout this difficult time.”

Reporting Period:

April 2021– March 2022

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.4:

Peace4Youth will support up to 7,400 marginalised 14–24 year olds to develop capabilities in good relations, citizenship and personal development to improve their life chances and enhance their employability.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for the Economy

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 7,9,10

How much did we do?

- 11 major projects.
- Programme activity was due to end in December 2021. Some projects were granted extensions, with Programme activity ending for all in June 2022.
- Over 7,600 young people to date have successfully completed their Peace4Youth programmes (subject to verification by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)).
- DfE administered an incentive payment to over 3,250 participants over the Programme.
- £36m programme budget.

How well did we do it?

- The Peace4Youth programme has exceeded its target, having had a positive impact on the young people who have taken part as evidenced by the evaluations of the programme.

Is anyone better off?

- 87% achieved at least 1 qualification in areas such as personal development, good relations, citizenship, and essential skills.
- 79% of young people indicated that they intended to progress to a positive destination including, education, training, employment or voluntary/community work.*

(*Key Findings from the most recent, Phase II Mid-Term Evaluation Report from QUB)

Reporting Period:

2021/2022

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.5:

Provide assistance and support to young people aged 16-18 to secure and sustain suitable employment, education or training provision; including a guaranteed training place for all 16-17 year old school leavers, tailored mentoring and support, childcare support for young parents and help with costs in special circumstances.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for the Economy

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 1, 5, 6, 12

How much did we do?

The Department for the Economy (DfE) provides a guarantee of a training place on its Training for Success (TfS) programme for all 16-17 year olds who are not in full time education or employment, with extended eligibility for persons under 22 years with a disability, including learning difficulties/ SEN (Special Educational Needs) and under 24 years for persons from an 'In Care' background.

The TfS programme closed to new recruitment on 31 July 2021. The young people will remain on the programme until their training is finished.

TfS was replaced by the Skills for Life and Work (SfLW) programme at Entry Level, Level 1, and in certain circumstances up to Level 2, in September 2021. Training is open to 16-17 year olds who are not in education or full time employment, with programme eligibility being extended to under 22 years for participants

with a disability and under 24 years for participants from an "in care" background.

Careers Advisers delivered 20,300 (88%) careers guidance interventions to Year 12 (2021/22 academic year).

Careers Advisers provided pre-entry guidance to all young people who commenced SfLW. In addition the Careers Service, with parental/ guardian consent as appropriate, referred all school leavers progressing into training with a declared disability or learning difficulty who were interested in progressing into training to one of DfE's contracted Disability Support Providers to avail of pre-entry training support.

The Care to Learn (NI) Scheme provides financial support to further education students who are young parents to help meet the cost of registered childcare provision and allow the young students to start or continue their education in Further Education (FE)

colleges. The scheme is open to students who are young parents aged 16 to 19. In academic year 2020/21, £0.08m in assistance was provided. 2021/22 academic year figures are not yet available, however during the 2021/22 financial year £0.15m of assistance was provided.

The Further Education Hardship Fund provides students who are experiencing exceptional financial difficulty with assistance in meeting costs associated with learning, for example fees, books and equipment, travel costs and associated living costs for those students 18 years of age and over. The maximum support available to each student is £3,500 per annum and in academic year 2021/22 £2.0m of support was made available, with actual spend figures not yet available.

FE Home to College Transport program provides school-age FE students on a full time FE course, aged under 19, and living more than 3 miles away from the College, (with no closer College offering places on a similar course), support for transport to their place of study. £4.6m was spent during 2021/22.

FE Free School Meals support offers eligible further education students paid meals or refreshments within the college. It is targeted at FE students aged under 19 from families on benefits. In response to Covid-19 and to tackle child food poverty, direct payment of free school meals were paid into eligible students' households throughout 2020/21 including holiday periods. £0.94m was spent during the 2021/22 financial year.

FE Clothing Allowance supports eligible FE students attending full-time education at a FE college with an allowance for physical

education clothing if physical education is part of their course. It is targeted at FE students aged under 19 from families on benefits. £0.001m was spent during 2021/22.

How well did we do it?

At the end of October 2021, 2,064 people were in training through the TfS Programme. Of these participants, 86% of participants were on Skills for Work (1,765) comprising of 707 on Skills for Work Level 1 and 1,057 on Skills for Work Level 2. There was 1 participant on Skills for Work Level 3 at the end October 2021. There were also 10% on Skills for Your Life (201) and 5% of participants (98) were not assigned an option.

The TfS programme closed to new recruitment on 31 July 2021.

Skills for Life and Work commenced in September 2021 and at the end of January 2022, 1,051 young people were on the programme.

25 student's aged 16-19 attending FE colleges received Care to Learn (NI) financial support in the 2020/21 academic year. 2021/22 academic year figures are not yet available.

1,282 students attending FE colleges received Hardship Fund financial support in 2020/21. Final figures are not yet available for the 2021/22 academic year.

4,451 students attending FE colleges received transport assistance in 2021/22.

262,333 meals were provided to FE students eligible for free school meals in 2021/22 financial year.

44 students attending FE colleges received a clothing allowance in 2021/22.

Is anyone better off?

Up to the end of October 2021:

Skills for Your Life outcomes - The total leavers figure for the current academic year (up to October 2021) is 158 and the percentage of these leavers gaining a qualification is 70%. One leaver has progressed in the current year. The percentage of leavers that did not progress or gain a qualification is currently at 30%. The remaining participants still have time to gain a qualification or progress.

Skills for Work outcomes - In the latest academic year 2021/22 (up to October 2021), the proportion of those leaving and gaining a qualification was 70%, whilst 8% of leavers progressed.*

(*Progressed (TfS): means that output related funding was paid for the participant after they moved to the next option within TfS 2013/2017, moved to FE or moved into employment immediately on finishing the programme and sustained this for 13 weeks. It is possible for a participant to progress without gaining a qualification, or to gain a qualification and progress.)

Participants will receive £40 per week (non means tested) Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for the duration of the programme, 104 weeks or 156 weeks (for persons with a disability), plus travel and childcare costs, if required.

EMA does not affect social benefits that may be being claimed by a programme participant, or his/her parent/guardian.

TfS and SfLW programmes are delivered throughout NI by FE Colleges and a network of non-statutory Training Suppliers contracted by the Department.

Disability Support Suppliers are contracted to work in conjunction with Training Suppliers to

support participants with disabilities to assist them in their training. Participants will work at their own pace to achieve the maximum possible (up to a level 3) in their chosen occupational area. Essential Skills needs are also addressed, if required.

In the 2021/22 Academic Year, as a result of careers guidance:

- 85% of young people (YP) know more about their career options.
- 80% of YP are more aware of the skills needed for the jobs/careers they are interested in.
- 88% of YP understood the importance of looking at current and future job trends when planning their career.
- 76% of YP felt better prepared to make decisions about their career options.
- 72% of YP felt more confident about making decisions regarding their careers.
- 91% of YP were satisfied with the service they received from the Careers Service.

The support provided through Care to Learn, the Hardship Fund, Home to College Transport, Free School Meals, and Clothing Allowance are intended to promote and encourage participation in further education through addressing potential barriers experienced by the students. In providing this 4,451 students received transport assistance, 262,333 free school meals were provided, 44 students received a clothing allowance to enable ongoing participation in FE; as well as supporting young parents to participate in FE and supporting students through the Hardship Fund – figures of which are not yet available.

Reporting Period:

2020/2021 & 2021/22 (where indicated).

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.6:

Provision of Sure Start to at least the 25% most deprived areas, (including at least one developmental programme for age group 2-3 in each Sure Start project) to promote the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of pre-school children, particularly those who are disadvantaged, to ensure they can flourish at home and when they get to school.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

- Sure Start services were available in (at least) the 25% most disadvantaged areas in NI, as defined by the NI Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM) 2010. (Source – Department of Education).
- The Sure Start budget was £27.4m in 2020/21.
- Approximately £5.5m of the budget funds the 148 Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds in Sure Start.
- Services are provided by 38 Sure Start projects across NI.
- 37,376* children aged 0-3 were registered with Sure Start projects during 2020/21. (*Decrease in the number of registrations from 2019/20 due to fall in birth rate and global pandemic.)
- Provision is universal within Sure Start catchment areas and the Department (DE) has introduced procedures to enable need to be met outside of the Sure Start boundary areas.

How well did we do it?

- 70% of children aged 0-3 eligible to receive Sure Start services registered for provision (based on estimated number living in targeted areas, based on 2011 census data).
- 58% of families registered, availed of at least one Sure Start activity during the period.
- 3,505 families which accessed Sure Start services, participated in a Sure Start Parental Survey. Of parent responses:
 - 91% would be extremely likely to recommend Sure Start.
 - 93% agree strongly that Sure Start had a positive impact on them and their family.
 - 83% rated their local Sure Start as Excellent.
 - 90% agreed strongly that Sure Start Antenatal, Postnatal and Parent Only services staff were helpful.

- 79% agreed strongly that Sure Start Antenatal services helped prepare for the birth of their child.
- 85% agreed strongly that Sure Start Antenatal services were high quality.
- 86% agreed strongly that Sure Start Postnatal services helped them understand their baby and their babies' needs.
- 83% overall rated Sure Start Postnatal Services as Excellent.
- 87% of parents agreed strongly that Sure Start Postnatal services were high quality.
- 83% agreed strongly that Sure Start helped improve their knowledge of Child Development.
- 89% agreed strongly that Sure Start provided a high quality service.
- 78% of parents agreed strongly that Sure Start helped identify issues/ concerns.
- 91% agreed strongly that child and parent services staff were helpful.
- 82% agreed that Sure Start helped improve their child development.
- 83% agreed strongly that Sure Start parent services helped them make changes in their families.
- 81% of parents agreed strongly that Sure Start parent services were high quality.
- 80% agreed strongly that Sure Start parent services helped them become more confident.
- 91% agreed strongly that Sure Start child only services were of high quality.

- 87% agreed strongly that Sure Start Child only services helped improve their child's development.
- 83% agreed strongly that Child only services helped identify issues or concerns.
- 82% agreed strongly that Child only staff were helpful.

Is anyone better off?

- 93% of Sure Start users reviewed (using 'Outcomes Star' model) improved in at least one of the following seven areas: physical health, emotional wellbeing, keeping your children safe, social networks, boundaries and routines, child development and home, money and work – 70% improving in at least two areas; 48% improving in at least three areas.
- Improved/maintained development of 98% of Sure Start children reviewed (using 'Outcomes Star' model).
- Improvement in the Speech and Language of 84% of Sure Start children or who remained at the highest stage of this measure (reviewed Autumn 2019 to Spring 2020).
- Improvement in the bilingual speech and language of 93% of Sure Start children or who remained at the highest stage of this measure (reviewed Autumn 2019 to Spring 2020).

Reporting Period:

April 2021 – March 2022: data in the Scorecard relates to 2020/21 (unless otherwise stated).

(Source: Strategic Planning Performance Group, DoH (former Health and Social Care Board) which administers the Sure Start programme on behalf of DE (unless otherwise indicated).)

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.7:

Provide access to books and to programmes which promote reading for enjoyment and a lifelong love of books. These programmes, for children of all ages, include the annual Summer Reading Challenge.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Access to Books

- 1,483,246 issues/renewals to children during the period.

Programmes

- 95 of 96 (99%) libraries offering programmes which promote reading for enjoyment. (Portstewart Library is closed pending re-opening in new premises (anticipated January 2022).)

Summer Reading Challenge

- 12,132 participants in this year's Summer Reading Challenge. 13,900 children registered and 149,622 books have been read.

Pilot Schools Project – Summer Reading Challenge 2021

- Libraries NI was one of 10 Library Authorities across the UK invited to take part in the Pilot Schools' Project for the Summer Reading Challenge. 12 schools in areas of social deprivation (urban and rural)

were identified by the Education Authority to take part, based on free school meals information.

How well did we do it?

Access to Books

- 427,722 issues/renewals to children in libraries serving areas of deprivation and rural areas.

Programmes

- All 42 libraries serving areas of deprivation and/or rural areas offered programmes promoting reading for enjoyment.
- As part of the pilot, every KS2 pupil in each school became a library member and was supplied with a library card. Frontline staff delivered the library cards and 'core materials' to schools before the end of the Summer Term when they either spoke with pupils face to face or via an on-line platform. 34.8% of pupils in the pilot schools borrowed library books for the Summer Reading Challenge.

Is anyone better off?

- Reading for pleasure contributes to educational attainment and outcomes (contributes to PfG Indicators 11 and 12 Education draft Delivery Plan).
- Participants in Rhythm and Rhyme are better off in terms of early language development, pre-reading skills, social skills and school-readiness (contributes to PfG Indicator 15 Child Development draft Delivery Plan).
- Participants in story times have the opportunity to enjoy language and stories and to read for pleasure which is an indicator for educational attainment.
- Participants in the Summer Reading Challenge avoid the 'summer slide' in reading levels which occur if children do not read over the summer period.

Reporting Period:

1 April 2021 – 31 December 2021

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.8:

Provide additional support for Newcomer pupils and Traveller children.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 1, 3, 12

How much did we do?

Newcomer pupils

Newcomer pupils: There are currently 17,664 Newcomer pupils in our schools (Annual enrolments at schools and in funded pre-school education in NI 2020-21). Support to Newcomer pupils is provided through the Education Authority's (EA) InterCultural Education Service (IES), which provides support to schools in meeting the needs of pupils for whom English language is a barrier, in the form of support for parent/teacher meetings, advice on pastoral care issues, basic language needs and curriculum support, intercultural awareness, diversity co-ordinators, interpreting and translating services, multi-lingual website, toolkit for diversity in primary schools, online Queens University Belfast accredited training course and a helpline.

In addition, schools receive additional funding per capita for Newcomer pupils to help them meet their needs. Examples of support provided include the appointment of a teacher/co-ordinator responsible for newcomer pupils, employment of bilingual

classroom assistants or language assistants, development of resources for teachers and parents, training for teachers, language support classes for pupils and/or parents, mentor and multi-cultural events.

Traveller Children

There are currently over 1,900 Irish and Roma Traveller pupils in our schools (Annual enrolments at schools and in funded pre-school education in NI 2020-21). Support for Traveller Children is provided through the EA's IES to build the capacity of schools to meet the educational needs of Traveller children and young people, by promoting whole school approaches to service development; promoting full inclusion and integration across all areas of youth education; promoting Traveller parental involvement and engagement; and assisting Traveller parents to support their children's learning and achievement.

Toybox

DE funded the Toybox project at £356,000 in 2020/21 – the project is aimed at reducing social and educational inequalities

experienced by Traveller/Roma children aged 0-4 years in eight key areas across NI. Toybox is delivered by Early Years – the Organisation for Young Children (EYO). Through Toybox support in 2020/21:

- 17 Traveller children enrolled in the Sure Start Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds;
- 37 children availed of other Sure Start support;
- 21 Traveller children enrolled in nursery/ preschools;
- 26 Traveller children enrolled in Primary 1;
- 1,768 remote/garden gate/play visits have taken place;
- 716 advocacy visits to Traveller families to help engage with the social and educational development of children;
- 121 parents engaged in their children's play development.

How well did we do it?

Newcomer Pupils

The IES and the additional funding factor is available to all schools with Newcomer pupils. 717 schools are receiving additional funding for Newcomer pupils. The number of Newcomer pupils in our schools is 17,664.

Traveller Children

The IES and the additional funding factor is available to all schools with Traveller pupils. 268 schools have additional funding for Traveller pupils. The number of Traveller children in our schools is 1,885 (Annual enrolments at schools and in funded pre-school education in NI 2020-21).

Toybox

100% of Toybox staff used the logical framework model, providing harmonised, evidence based decisions for forthcoming planning.

100% of Toybox staff are trained in HighScope which aims to engage children in learning.

Observation records completed for 100% of children engaging in the project.

100% of mums engaged in play sessions.

Parents participated in a Toybox questionnaire. Responses included:

- 90% of parents said it was important/very important to receive Toybox support on transitional issues.
- 78% of parents said it was important/very important to have cultural resources shared with the family.
- 92% of parents said it was important/very important to be signposted to agencies.

Is anyone better off?

Newcomer Pupils

Support through the IES is available to all schools who require it. Additional funding is provided to all schools who have enrolled Newcomer or Traveller children to help them meet their need.

The attendance figures below show a slight increase in attendance of Newcomer pupils from 89% in 2009/10 to 90.7% in 2019/20.

With regards to attainment, statistics indicate that the percentage of Newcomer pupils achieving 5+ GCSES A*-C (including English and Maths) is continuing to increase (from 21.1% in 2009/10 to 34.1% in 2019/20) however, this figure remains well below the achievement levels of non-Newcomer pupils.

The number of Newcomer pupils going into Higher Education, Further Education, Employment or Training has decreased from 91.1% in 2009/10 to 87.6% in 2019/20.

The limitations of these statistics should be noted. When Newcomer pupils achieve a good standard of English language, they will be no longer designated as 'Newcomers' by the school, and therefore the statistics will exclude pupils who were, but are no longer, designated Newcomers (Former Newcomers).

In 2019/20, 76.6% of Former Newcomers achieved 5+ GCSES A*-C (including English and Maths), against a Non-Newcomer figure of 76.8%.

Traveller Children

Attendance figures show an increase in school attendance of Traveller children from 66.2% in 2009/10 to 74.7% in 2019/20. While this increase is positive, it is still low in comparison to the rest of the school population (93.5% in 2019/20). The IES continues to work with Traveller families and schools to promote good attendance.

Toybox

Traveller parents have increased confidence when engaging with other professionals, practitioners and teachers about their child. The 2020/21 questionnaire responses demonstrated a high level of parental recognition of the value of play and learning. The importance of how parents interact with children and parents' attitude to education in the home was acknowledged in parental responses.

88% of parents recognised the importance of sending their children to school/setting regularly.

On Toybox parental engagement:

- 96% of parents read to their children;
- 72% supported their children with homework;
- 72% felt they could approach the teacher regarding setting related issues.

Reporting Period:

Newcomer pupils and Traveller

Children: April 2020 – March 2021

Toybox: April 2020 – March 2021

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.9:

Provide additional support to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to enable them to seek further education and qualifications, including providing sign language and personal development programmes for deaf children.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for the Economy & Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 8, 9

How much did we do?

Additional Support Fund

The Department for the Economy (DfE) provides £4.5m, per annum, through the Additional Support Fund (ASF) to assist Further Education Colleges (FE) provide the necessary technical and/or personal support required to allow students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to participate in either mainstream FE, or in discrete programmes.

In 2020/21, 2,942 students received support through ASF, which accounted for 6,847 enrolments.

Sign Language Provision

2020/21 Report

- Deaf awareness and basic sign language skills classes to 300 pupils in 10 Controlled Schools. (Carry over from 2019/20 programme delayed due to Covid-19). Plus an additional 54 school children of different

ages receiving BSL (British Sign Language) Level 1 Sign Language Training.

- A variety of Family Sign Language Courses to 54 families with deaf children, as well as providing Sign Language training at various levels for 12 professionals who work with young deaf children.

2021/22 Update

Planned provision of Deaf Awareness and Basic Sign Language of up to 550 School Children across all school sectors. (Dependant on ongoing impact of Covid-19).

Planned pilot programme working with 3 deaf children in a specific Primary school, providing Sign Language classes targeting teachers, peers and friends. (Dependant on ongoing Covid-19 restrictions).

Planned provision of Family Sign Language Courses and basic Sign classes for up to 66 families with supporting online BSL resources,

alongside providing Sign Language training to 6 professionals working with deaf children. (Dependant on ongoing Covid-19 restrictions).

How well did we do it?

Additional Support Fund

In 2020/21 for the 5,735 final year ASF enrolments, the *retention rate was 93.4%; this compares with 87.5% for other students not receiving support through this fund.

(*Retention rate is defined as the proportion of the number of enrolments who complete their study to the number of enrolments.)

Sign Language Provision

2020/21 Report

- 10 schools with 300 pupils are receiving 2 x 2 hour Deaf awareness and basic BSL course. This programme was delayed by the impact of Covid-19, however, the agreed target of 300 pupils participating was met and the project was 100% completed by May 2021.
- 54 school children, supported through additional Covid-19 support funding completed their training and achieved BSL level 1 qualifications.
- 22 families receiving Family Sign Language courses via zoom to improve communication skills in the family setting. This was a higher number than first expected, due to additional Covid-19 support funding being provided. 100% of participants completed the course.

12 families with young children received BSL training (via Zoom) to improve communication skills in the family setting. 100% of participants completed the course.

- 12 professionals who work with young deaf children received and completed BSL Training, part of which consists in signed stories and rhymes for education professionals.
- 6 families who have previously received some Sign Language training received and completed a 10 week refresher course to improve family communication skills.
- Through additional Covid-19 Support Funding, another 20 families received training in basic Sign Language.

2021/22 Update

- Schools Signing Programme – Provide Deaf awareness training and basic Sign Language classes for up to 550 children across all school sectors.
- 25 families are receiving Family Sign Language courses via Zoom to improve communication skills in the family setting.
- BSL training for 16 families with young children (via Zoom) to improve communication skills in the family setting.
- Basic Sign Language course to be provided for up to 25 families.
- BSL training - level 4 - for 6 professionals who work with young deaf children.
- 7 new BSL stories were added as a resource to families of deaf children with 6 signed family vocabulary videos added to YouTube.

Is anyone better off?

Additional Support Fund

Of the 5,358 ASF final year enrolments **completed** in 2020/21, 4,744 resulted in a qualification. This gives an ****achievement rate of 88.5%**.

(**Achievement rate relates to the percentage of the number of enrolments who complete their study and achieve their qualification to the number of enrolments who complete their study.)

Of the 5,735 ASF final year enrolments in 2020/21, 4,744 resulted in a qualification. This gives a **success rate*** of 82.7%**.

(***Success rate is the overall measure of performance, which is the proportion of the number of enrolments who complete their study and achieve their qualification to the number of enrolments.)

Sign Language Provision

2020/21 report

- Feedback from the pupils and schools involved in the 2020/21 Schools Signing programmes have shown that 100% of participants have expressed greater confidence in the use of sign language. Feedback has demonstrated that the programme has not only helped Deaf Children but also their hearing peers, allowing them to widen their perspectives and engage with Sign Language and those who use it.
- Feedback from those who completed the various Family Sign Language Courses, has shown 100% of those who participated have increased confidence in the use of sign language when communicating with their Deaf children/grandchildren and has highlighted a desire to progress in their learning to allow them to communicate more easily with their deaf family member.

2021/22 update

- Feedback from the Family Sign Online showed 100% of participating families experienced improved feelings of confidence upon completion of the course and all families indicated they would like to continue learning more sign language.
- Feedback from BSL for parents and professionals of young people - 100% of parents rated the course as both 'excellent' and 'extremely beneficial'. The professionals working in this field also echoed similar growth in confidence in both understanding of deaf culture and working with deaf children.
- Feedback from Primary Inclusion School - 'All the children very much look forward to their sign lesson each week – it has shown to be of immense benefit to the whole class and not just the deaf pupils.'

Reporting Period:

Additional Support Fund - 2020/21

Sign Language - This update provides an update on the projects funded in the period of 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.10:

Continue to provide funding to schools in areas of the highest social disadvantage to provide additional activities, classes and support for learning largely outside the normal school day to meet the needs of children and their parents, families and local communities through the Extended Schools programme as well as Full Service provision in two specific areas of socio-economic deprivation to enhance the educational attainment of disadvantaged young people.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Extended Schools

Over **£9m** of Extended Schools (ES) funding continues to be made available in 2021/22 to support schools with a high percentage of pupils from disadvantaged areas and/or who have a Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME).

494 schools and 142 clusters participated in the 2021/22 ES programme. Overall, this represents almost **44% of all schools and 40% of all pupils in NI**.

In 2021/22, a total of **2,050 additional services and activities** were delivered by participating schools before, during and beyond the traditional school day aimed at addressing educational disadvantage.

Based on average attendance figures provided by schools, **249,123 pupils, 85,165 parents and 33,812 community members took part** in ES activities during 2021/22.

Full Service

In 2021/22, **£770,000** has been made available to support two 'Full Service' programmes (£385,000 per project) operating in North and West Belfast which provide additional interventions over and above standard extended schools provision.

In the Full Service Extended Schools (FSES), based at the Belfast Boys' Model School (BBMS) and Belfast Model School for Girls (BMSG), a broad range of support was provided aimed at addressing the root causes of underachievement structured around the key pillars of Pupil Engagement, Parental Engagement, Community Engagement, Health and Well-Being and Transition.

A selection of key examples include **150 pupils received counselling support in BBMS, 62 pupils received support from a Personal Development Mentor in BMSG (2020/21 data), and P7 pupils across**

26 partner primary schools engaged in transition support programmes.

The Full Service Community Network (FSCN) directly provided a range of in-class support including early intervention, literacy and numeracy, transition, social and emotional support and training to **965 children and families** within the Greater Falls and Upper Springfield areas whilst also facilitating counselling support and wraparound services in 13 local primary schools for **807 individuals** (primary school children, parents and staff/professionals) delivered by external providers in 2020/21.

How well did we do it?

Extended Schools

100% of all schools identified as eligible for funding chose to participate in the ES programme in 2021/22.

63% of FSME pupils in NI attend schools that are participating in the ES programme in 2021/22 (according to the October 2021 school census 28% of pupils in NI schools are entitled to FSM).

100% of participating extended schools in 2021/22 are working collaboratively with other schools as part of an ES Cluster providing enhanced opportunities to meet the needs of local communities.

All ES services and activities were determined by schools in response to the specific needs of their pupils, parents, families and the wider community and incorporated a broad spectrum of provision. For example, in

2021/22, 18% of all ES activities (372 activities) directly focused on enhancing literacy or numeracy whilst 16% (327) promoted healthy lifestyles with a further 5% (106) delivering sporting or recreational opportunities.

Full Service

A case study compiled by the Girls' Model noted:

“During the primary school welcome interviews with parents it was noted that a girl who would be joining Year 8 may have difficulty with attendance, settling into school and making friends. The Attendance Officer and Personal Development Mentor visited her home during the summer and became a friendly face that she would recognise on her first day, which helped her feel comfortable during her first few weeks in school. She settled in to school well and joined many extra-curricular activities, including Friendship Club where her self-esteem and confidence were developed and she made good friends. She received intensive pastoral support during her first year in school and through to Year 12 due to the tragic death of a family member. In Years 11 and 12 she also received intervention support with the Personal Development Mentor to support her with her learning, examination and revision techniques. The support provided enabled her to continue with her education and she achieved 8 GCSE's grade A*-C and returned to study A-Levels.” (2020/21 data).

A case study compiled by the Boys' Model noted: “A very shy and socially anxious pupil would often eat alone at lunchtime and found the playground and canteen very difficult to handle. He was referred to the Attendance Officer for support, joined the FSES Connect Club (this runs at lunchtimes and offers a

quiet place or pupils to go and lunch), and also received counselling support in Year 8 for his school-based anxiety. He received support throughout Years 9-11 at different periods of his school career and he self-referred in Year 11 as he recognised that his feelings of anxiety were returning.

In Year 12, he didn't avail of any support as he felt able to cope with many of the issues that he faced in school. He achieved 7 GCSEs at A*-C including maths and English and is currently in Year 14 and hoping to go to University and study Performing Arts."

A range of positive feedback has been reported by schools on FSCN activities provided during 2021/22, for example:

"Maths support was relevant, structured and based on the needs of the children. The innovative lessons were delivered using a range of methods to meet the different learning styles, helped to raise the children's self-confidence... I can confidently say that the targets set and the work delivered met the needs identified."

Is anyone better off?

Both the Extended Schools and Full Service programmes continue to enable schools to offer a wide range of interventions and additional learning opportunities which support disadvantaged children and young people to overcome the barriers to learning associated with educational underachievement and help them to reach their full potential.

A significant number of pupils, their parents and members of the local community benefit from additional ES and FS resources, accessing specialist support services or taking part in a breadth of positive and enriching experiences which complement the formal curriculum and seek to enhance skills, improve health and well-being, promote parental and community engagement, raise aspirations and achievement, and support school improvement.

The programmes also provided an opportunity for schools to develop cross-phase and cross-sector partnerships with other schools; to strengthen relationships with families and local communities and facilitate interagency working between schools and a range of external partners.

Extended Schools

The Education Authority publish annual reports evaluating the positive impact of the ES programme ([Northern Ireland Extended Schools Information System \(niesis.org\)](https://www.niesis.org)). The data for 2021/22 shows that:

- **98% of schools reported evidence that their ES provision reduced underachievement;**
- **86% of schools reported evidence that their ES provision fostered health, well-being and social inclusion;**
- **87% of schools reported evidence that their ES provision improved life chances; and**
- **84% of schools reported evidence that their ES provision developed the integrated delivery of support and services.**

FSES

Data from the FSES demonstrates a long-term trend of improved attendance, GCSE and A level attainment during the life of the programme, including higher than expected proportions of the FSES cohort (pupils who had received a significant FSES intervention in their 5 years at school) in each school achieving GCSE Grade C or better in English and Maths when comparing baseline Progress Towards English (PTE) and Progress Towards Maths (PTM) assessment information.

Of the Year 12 pupils, 49% in Boys' Model and 44% in Girls' Model (2020/21 data) had a significant FSES intervention in their five years of school including counselling or mentoring, attendance officer involvement or parental support. Many of these pupils faced mental health issues, family break ups or school anxiety preventing the pupils in this "FSES cohort" from attending school or properly accessing the curriculum. The ability of FSES to put in place immediate support for pupils and families allowed these pupils to complete their education and achieve good GCSE results broadly similar to those pupils in Year 12 who have not had FSES interventions. This is testament to the support offered to these pupils in terms of pastoral and academic support.

Table: Percentage of pupils achieving at least 5 A* to C at GCSE incl. English and maths, 2020/21

	All Year 12 pupils	FSES Cohort
Boys' Model	63%	47%
Girls' Model	56%	46%

FSCN

Eight primary schools received FSCN literacy and numeracy provision at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with children being supported with one to one and small group learning interventions. The outcomes were as follows:

- 80% of children receiving early intervention Literacy support fully achieved the targets set by their teacher at the outset;
- 71% of children receiving early intervention Numeracy support fully achieved their targets;
- 82% of children receiving support with Transition and Social and Emotional support fully achieved their targets; and
- 75% of children receiving support with English as an additional language support fully achieved their targets.

Reporting Period:

2021/22

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.11:

Provide additional support for children and young people in care to help them achieve GCSE level qualifications, including developing Personal Education Plans and Care Plans (specifying education and training requirements as agreed with the young person).

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Education and Department for the Economy

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12

How much did we do?

Personal Education Plans (PEPs) were introduced in 2011 and a revised PEP has been piloted in primary schools. The new Children Looked After (CLA) Service, led by the CLA Champion has now been established within the Education Authority and following the success of the pilot scheme, it is anticipated that the revised PEP process will be implemented at the start of academic year 2022/23. The PEP is central to improving the educational experience of our CLA, both from an academic and whole-child perspective. The needs of the child/young person are identified in the PEP and when the revised PEP is implemented additional support will be provided to address them. The draft Adoption & Children's Bill includes a provision through which the PEP will be a statutory requirement.

DfE Careers Service has Partnership Agreements in place with 93% of publicly funded post-primary schools in NI, including Special Schools. Having these formal agreements in place provides a robust

vehicle for schools and careers advisers, to ensure that the careers services delivered are appropriate to the needs of pupils and ensures that specific measures are in place to support learners in the transition process. For the 2021/22 academic year the Careers Service had a target of providing at least 95% of pupils (circa 22,000 – 23,000) in their final year of compulsory schooling with face to face impartial and professional careers guidance including young people with a care background.

DfE Careers Service has Partnership Agreements in place with each of the 5 Health Trusts. The aim of this partnership is to ensure that all 16+ CLA young people have access to DfE Careers Services, which includes the opportunity for a DfE Careers Adviser to review each young person's current career pathway to ensure that they are on the right track and provide careers guidance as appropriate.

How well did we do it?

The PEP promotes positive educational outcomes for CLA in order for them to reach their full potential. It is the overarching education plan for the individual which builds on their views and brings together other education plans including the Individual Education Plan/Personal Learning Plan and a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The PEP also forms part of the legal care plan for the child looked after. All CLA will benefit from having a PEP in place.

In the 2021/22 academic year, the Careers Service delivered 20,300 guidance interventions to the year 12 cohort (88% of the 2021/22 cohort).

The Careers Service has specifically identified that 314 career interventions were delivered to young people under 18 years and 139 career interventions to young people 18+ with a care background in the 2021/22 business year. A total of 453 career interventions.

Is anyone better off?

Not known as yet until revised PEP is implemented.

In the 2021/22 Academic Year, as a result of careers guidance:

- 85% of Young People (YP) know more about their career options.
- 80% of YP are more aware of the skills needed for the jobs/careers they are interested in.
- 88% of YP understood the importance of looking at current and future job trends when planning their career.
- 76% of YP felt better prepared to make decisions about their career options.
- 72% of YP felt more confident about making decisions regarding their careers.
- 91% of YP were satisfied with the service they received from the Careers Service.

Reporting Period:

2021/2022 academic year

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.12:

Use an alternative approach to learning, including (1) enterprise and employability programmes and (2) Creative Learning Centres to provide the use and understanding of new digital technologies and new media, to engage and excite pupils.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 5

How much did we do?

April 2021 – March 2022

- Young people participating in online Creative Learning Centres (CLC) programmes – 17,050.
- Teachers participating in CLC continuing professional development (CPD) programmes – 5,566.
- Partnership and returning schools participating in CLC programmes – 95.
- Young people in community youth and hard to reach groups involved in CLC programmes – 1,626.
- 77% CLC partnership schools programmes delivered in areas of disadvantage.

How well did we do it?

April 2021 – March 2022

- Annual Target: 4,950 young people target exceeded by 12,100 or 240% by end of Quarter 4.
- Annual Target: 2,100 teachers target exceeded by 3,466 or 160% by end of Quarter 4.
- Annual Target: 90 participating schools achieved by end of Quarter 4 and exceeded by five schools.
- Annual Target: 70% of CLC activity directed at reducing poverty and social exclusion. Target exceeded by 7%.

Table - Young People Participating in Creative Learning Centre Programmes

Community and Hard to Reach Groups	10%
Young People in School Programmes	90%

Is anyone better off?

- 17,050 young people participated in online CLC digital technology programmes; 15,424 or approx. 90% in school based programmes and 1,626 or approx. 10% in community based programmes.
- 5,566 teachers participated in online Creative Learning Centre CPD digital technology programmes.
- 95 schools were involved in Creative Learning Centre partnership and continuing support programmes in the use of digital technology.
- 77% of all CLC activity with partnership schools has been delivered with a large catchment of young people from disadvantaged areas through participation with extended schools.

Reporting Period:

April 2021 – March 2022

Outcome 2: Children in poverty learn and achieve

Action 2.13:

Support young people to attain educational outcomes through Youth Work, including targeted provision for those who have barriers to learning, are disadvantaged, in areas of deprivation and who are at risk of disengagement.

Status: In progress - With youth services undergoing a phased restart following closure as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, the focus has been on re-engaging young people and has impacted on normal delivery. A new funding scheme which has replaced legacy funding arrangement and is based on assessed needs means it is no longer possible for a like-for-like comparison of previous update.

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 7, 12

How much did we do?

Youth Service delivery was significantly impacted by Covid-19, with all generic services stood down. Many youth work providers moved services online, with the focus of keeping in touch with young people and delivery focused on ensuring continued engagement.

Youth Services commenced a phased return from April 2021 with the focus on re-engaging children and young people and services were not fully operational until April 2022. Consequently this has impacted on what was able to be achieved over the period.

A new funding scheme was implemented by the Education Authority (EA) in April 2021 in line with the Department of Education's Priorities for Youth Policy. Funding is based on assessed needs of young people

(Regional Assessment of Need – EANI Funding – 2020-23) and supplemented by local assessment of needs.

The new funding scheme replaces a number of separate funding schemes into a single funding scheme, and incorporates funding previously provided specifically for Targeting Social Needs to enable increased access to mainstream youth services in disadvantaged areas.

Youth organisations apply for a range of funding awards at local or regional levels to deliver programmes to meet assessed needs. Consequently the former Extended Provision and Inclusion Schemes are no longer delivered.

A number of funding awards have been made to deliver targeted provision within specific areas **(Funded Groups – EANI Funding)**.

This includes targeted provision for those who have barriers to learning, are disadvantaged, in areas of deprivation and who are at risk of disengagement.

How well did we do it?

Organisations in receipt of youth funding through the new funding scheme are required to report to the Education Authority, but as the scheme has only been introduced from April 2021, organisational reports are not available.

Drawing on these reports, the Education Authority is required to submit a summary report to DE detailing the interventions and impact of targeted provision for those who have barriers to learning, are disadvantaged, in areas of deprivation and who are at risk of disengagement by the end of August 2022.

Reports for the 2021-22 period show that despite the impact of the pandemic, 8,705 programmes were delivered engaging 278,372 young people (while still less than pre-pandemic levels this is an increase from 1,957 programmes and 53,118 young people in 2020-21).

As a direct result of restrictions, 221 programmes which were planned for delivery could not proceed.

Is anyone better off?

The EA annually completes a Report Card on youth work provision to reflect delivery at the end of each financial year. The report card for 2022/23 will not be available until the summer of 2023.

While Covid-19 also impacted significantly during 2021-22, the report card on youth work provision for this period shows that despite youth services not being fully operational, 6,108 young people gained accreditation (increase from 1,672 in 2020/21) and 10,939 young people were assessed as having maximised their potential against youth work measures (increase from 916 in 2020/21).

A £5m summer activity programme was delivered between July and August 2021 as a direct response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated public health restrictions on children and young people (CYP). This programme aimed to re-connect, re-energise and re-engage CYP (aged 4 – 25 years) in non-formal youth work activities. 66,272 young people were engaged (58,665 in voluntary youth settings and 7,607 in statutory youth settings). Voluntary providers reported 35,834 young people's health & wellbeing outcomes improved (61% of total that engaged) while statutory providers delivered 1,679 physical activities, 1,428 outdoor activities and 19,592 healthy snacks. 85% of those engaging in statutory provision were more positive about re-engaging in education as a result of participation in the programme; and 4,180 additional young people engaged in core youth provision for the first time as a result of participation in the programme.

Reporting Period:

April 2021-March 2022

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.1:

Implementation of Early Intervention Support Service (EISS) to provide support for families with emerging vulnerabilities.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Table: Overall breakdown of work of Early Intervention Support Service (EISS)

Series 1	Total
Total Referrals	459
Inappropriate Referral	12
On Waiting List	89
Service Offered	358
Service Accepted	334
Service Declined Families	24

A coherent evidenced based EISS has been established providing access to EISS for 33% of families with emerging vulnerability with circa 650 families being supported annually across NI.

How well did we do it?

Table: Overall breakdown of EISS interventions

Total families successfully completing intervention	86% (333)
Families disengaged from service	12% (48)
Families escalated to Gateway	2% (8)

Jan 2021 – Sep 2021 there were 501 closed cases – 112 (22%) of families did not receive EISS as when contacted they did not wish to receive the EISS.

Table: Family Star Plus Measure of Progress (Cumulative from April 2016 – Mar 2021: Total 2,163 Families)

	% Made Progress	% No Change	% Drop Back
Physical Health (1,466)	48	44	8
Your Well Being (1,237)	74	23	3
Emotional Health (31,549)	81	18	2
Keeping Children Safe (503)	58	40	2
Social Networks (759)	65	33	2
Education & Learning (950)	66	30	4
Boundaries & Behaviours (1,928)	82	16	2
Family Routine (1,074)	69	28	4
Home & Money (95)	45	47	9
Progress to Work (34)	36	53	11

Is anyone better off?

Outcomes Star - Family Star Plus

The Family Star Plus focuses on ten core areas that have been found to be critical in enabling children and young people to thrive. Project workers agree with families which areas they want to focus on. Interventions would generally be focused on a maximum of three areas.

Table: How many service users improved? (April 2016 - Mar 2021: 2,163)

	Series 1
Total Completing Star (2,163)	100%
Improving in at least 1 area (2,040)	94%
Improving in at least 2 areas (1,703)	79%
Improving in at least 3 areas (1,209)	56%

Service User Feedback

Parent: “The service was amazing for our whole family. [Worker] was amazing and my son really enjoyed opening up to him and accepting help.”

Young person: “(practitioner) helped me start to open up about my problems and gave me different exercises to help me cope with anxiety.”

Family Support Hub: “NIACRO EISS is such a valuable service to the Family Support Hub. We know that families are in good hands with the team and that they will receive tailored support to meet their individual needs. It is an essential service we often refer to and see positive outcomes for families who engage.”

Reporting Period:

January 2021 - September 2021; monitoring data October 2021 – December 2021 is not available at time of report. Outcomes Star data included in the report is data recorded from introduction of Outcomes Star as the evaluation tool used for EISS from April 2018 – March 2021.

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.2:

Provide support for families through Family Support Hubs, bringing together representatives from statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations who work in local areas to provide early intervention services locally to help families address a range of issues, such as poor attachment or engagement with baby; improving the level of play/communication, poverty, healthy eating, budgeting and substance misuse.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

- In 2020/21, 8,405 families were referred through family support hubs, 815 more families than in 2019/20, slightly over a 10.7% increase. There were also 3,053 telephone enquiry/advice only calls in 2020/21, a slight rise since 2019/20.
- During the first six months April-September of the 2021/22 years, Hubs received referrals from 4,057 families, which included 4,503 children and 3,180 parents.

How well did we do it?

- In 2020/21, self referrals were the key referrer at 20%, compared to 15% in 2019/20.
- Community Organisations referrals were 12% compared to 4% in 2019/20.
- GPs referrals in 2020/21 were 10% compared to the highest referrers at 19% in 2019/20.

- School referrals were 8% compared to 11% in 2019/20 and Health Visitor referrals has had a slight drop from 8% to 7%.
- Gateway referrals were 6%, a slight increase from 2019/20 (5%), Sure Start and Paediatricians referrals are both 5%.
- In 2021/22, 88% of families were accepted and signposted, 5% further information was required, 4% were escalated to Gateway, 2% did not engage and 1% was unmet need.
- During the first six months April-September of the 2021/22 year, 83% of families were accepted and signposted, 7% where further information was required, 6% were escalated to Gateway, 2% did not engage and 2% was unmet need.

Is anyone better off?

- The Family Support Hubs collected a sample of 105 families with 143 children across the region during 2020/21.
- 100% of these families reported that the process of being referred to the Hub worked well and 101 (96%) reported positive outcomes for themselves and their children.
- 89 (85%) of families did not require onward referral to statutory services.
- Nearly half of the parents were referred to parenting support and followed by family support services. The children were in the primary and post primary school age range and referred for emotional behavioural support, family support and counselling/mentoring.

Reporting Period:

2020/21

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.3:

Expansion of evidence based training and practice in implementing the Infant Mental Health Plan and addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Tavistock courses - M7 (Diploma in Early Years) & M9 (Infant Mental Health Diploma) supported various HSC (Health & Social Care) and Community and Voluntary sector staff working on key roles with children, young people, families and perinatal and early years. This support is evaluated as being of importance in assessment and treatment in families with children at risk of not achieving key development milestones.

- M7 – 5 practitioners enrolled on two year course
- M9 – 13 practitioners enrolled on two year course

How well did we do it?

For students enrolled in 2020/21, 8 students completed year 1 of the M9 course and 2 students completed year 1 of the M7 course.

Current courses are ongoing. Information in relation to completion and course evaluation will not be available until September 2022 and September 2023 for the current cohort of practitioners enrolled on the courses.

Is anyone better off?

As a consequence of the training courses several practitioners that have completed the training in previous years have secured specialist posts in new models of service delivery that are being established across NI including ABC Pips in South Eastern Trust; specialist Health Visitor posts and Family Nurse Partnership supporting infant mental health workforce and service development; the Perinatal Mental Health Plan and Infant Mental Health Framework.

Reporting Period:

January 2021 – December 2021

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.4:

Extend the Family Nurses Partnership to all HSC Trusts to deliver preventative support to vulnerable first time, young parents to improve antenatal health, child development and parents' economic self-sufficiency.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Referrals and Enrolments

- Overall, 73.5% of eligible clients offered the programme prior to the end of December 2020 were enrolled on the programme.
- 99.9% of clients were enrolled by 28 weeks gestation.
- 98.8% of clients were aged 19 or under at LMP in 2020.

How well did we do it?

Client Retention at 31 December 2020

Table 1 – Client Retention Data as of the 31st December 2020

Attrition Rate	Enrolment	Retention Rate
1.7% - Clients Lost Inactive Pregnancy Stage (n=23)	1,345 Active Pregnancy Completers	98.3%
9.1% - Clients Lost Inactive Infancy Stage (n=102)	1,014 Active Infancy Completers	90.8%
7.6% - Clients Lost Inactive Toddler Stage (n=66)	720 Active Toddler Completers	83.2%

(NB: A three column, four row table containing figures in percentage of the Attrition Rate, Enrolment and Retention Rates for Clients on the Family Nurse Partnership Programme at 31st December 2020.)

Attrition rates are low at Pregnancy, Infancy and Toddlerhood stages of FNP Programme.

Attrition refers to the total number of clients who leave the programme or become inactive (have not received a visit for at least six months) during each stage.

Is anyone better off?

Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) - Toddlerhood

ASQ scores indicate child health and development at 24 months well within normal limits.

The ASQ and ASQ: SE are validated population level developmental screening tools that actively involve and encourage parents to be observant of their child's development.

Each questionnaire contains 30 items divided into five areas of development. The items in each area are arranged from easy to more difficult. The 30 items that relate to specific areas of development are followed by a section of overall questions that ask about general parental concerns. The five developmental areas covered in each ASQ questionnaire are communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social.

Table 2 – ASQ Scores of infants reaching 14 and 20 months Toddlerhood by the end of December 2020

Stage	At 14 Months		At 20 Months	
% ASQ data recorded	75.8% (n=635) of 838 infants reaching 14 months		80.4% (n=595) of 740 infants reaching 20 months	
ASQ Development Areas	% infants below consultation cut-off score	Average score	% infants below consultation cut-off score	Average score
Communication	4.6%	52.6	7.4%	50.8
Gross motor	7.4%	53.3	3.5%	56.1
Fine motor	3.9%	52.8	3.7%	55.1
Problem solving	3.9%	51.9	2.5%	53.0
Personal Social	2.4%	54.9	3.9%	55.3

(NB: A five column, eight row table containing the figures in percentages of the ASQ infant scores recorded at 14 and 20 months.)

Immunisation Status

Overall, 740 infants reached 24 months toddlerhood and 97.4% (N=602) had up-to-date immunisations.

Mastery (Intake and 24 months)

At Intake, 15.4% clients (N=175) had low mastery and 84.6% (N=959) of clients did not have low mastery.

At 24 months 13.5% clients (N=65) had low mastery and 86.5% (N=418) of clients did not have low mastery.

There was a reduction (-1.7%) in the number of clients who had low mastery from intake to 24 months for clients who had mastery recorded at both time points (N=458). 45.2% (N=207) of clients across all sites had a higher mastery score at 24 months than at intake.

Table 3 – Change in Mastery Score from Intake to 24 Months

At Intake	Low Mastery	High Mastery	Total
Count	175	959	1134
%	15.4%	84.6%	100%
At 24 Months			
Count	65	418	483
%	13.5%	86.5%	100%
Clients recorded at both Intake and 24 Months			458
% Change in Clients with Low Mastery from intake to 24 Months			-1.7%

(NB: A 4 column, 8 row table containing data on the numbers, percentages and total Mastery scores of Clients recorded at Intake and at 24 Months.)

Sense of mastery is a form of perceived personal control, a sense of control over the events in one’s life. Low levels of sense of mastery have been linked to mental and general ill-health. A high level of sense of mastery is associated with positive mental health. Sense of mastery acts as a mediator between stress factors and various health outcomes.

Reporting Period:

January 2021 – December 2021

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.5:

Delivery of the T:BUC Uniting Communities Programme, a cross communities initiative that uses sport, physical and creative activity to enhance individual and community development and tackle disadvantage through the delivery of training and activities to young people aged 11-24 years, which is underpinned by good relations and equality, that enables them to gain the confidence and skills to become advocates for social change in their own communities.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 5, 7, 9, 10

How much did we do?

- 995 total children/young people taking part in the Programme.
- 21 Uniting Opportunities projects successfully delivered.
(NB: The Uniting Opportunities Grant Scheme is one element of the Uniting Communities through Sport and Creativity Programme.)
- 555 participating in Uniting Opportunities.
- 64 Young Leaders taking part in the Programme.
- 8 Ambassadors taking part in the Programme.
- 23 organisations involved in the delivery of the Programme.
 - Gender: Male 50%; Female 45%; Non-Binary 2%; Other 1%; Not stated 2%.
 - Community Background: Catholic 51%; Protestant 25%; No Religion 13%; Muslim 6%; Other 2%; Not Stated 2%.
 - Ethnicity: White 84%; Black 8%; Mixed Race 3%; Asian 1%; Other 2%.

- Disability: Yes 21%; No 75%; Not Stated 4%.

How well did we do it?

- 96% of young people would recommend the Programme.

Is anyone better off?

- 95% of children and young people felt their confidence had increased during the Programme.
- 98% of children and young people believed their skills had increased.
- 97% of children and young people's attitudes have improved towards children with a different religious background.
- 98% of children and young people's attitudes have improved towards children from a different ethnic background.
- 74% of children and young people have developed friendships with young people from a different religion.

- 58% of children and young people have made a new friend from a different ethnic group.
- 93% of children and young people would be more likely to attend an event in an area associated with another community (after completing the Programme).

Reporting Period:

April 2021 – March 2022.

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.6:

Provide support to parents of children 0-3 years old in at least the 25% most disadvantaged ward areas, promoting physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of pre-school children, including parenting advice on nutrition, breastfeeding and healthcare.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

- Sure Start services were available in (at least) the 25% most disadvantaged areas in NI, as defined by the NI Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM) 2010. (Source: Department of Education (DE))
- The Sure Start budget was £27.4m in 2020/21. (Source: DE)
- Approximately £5.5m of the budget funds the 148 Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds in Sure Start.
- Services are provided by 38 Sure Start projects across NI.
- 37,376* children aged 0-3 were registered with Sure Start projects during 2020/21. (*Decrease in the number of registrations from 2019/20 due to fall in birth rate and global pandemic.)
- Provision is universal within Sure Start catchment areas and DE has introduced procedures to enable need to be met outside of the Sure Start boundary areas.

How well did we do it?

- 70% of children aged 0-3 eligible to receive Sure Start services registered for provision (based on estimated number living in targeted areas, based on 2011 census data).
- 58% of families registered, availed of at least one Sure Start activity during the period.
- 3,505 families which accessed Sure Start services, participated in a Sure Start Parental Survey. Of parent responses:
 - 91% would be extremely likely to recommend Sure Start.
 - 93% agree strongly that Sure Start had a positive impact on them and their family.
 - 83% rated their local Sure Start as excellent.
 - 90% agreed strongly that Sure Start Antenatal, Postnatal and Parent Only Services staff were helpful.
 - 79% agreed strongly that Sure Start Antenatal services helped prepare for the birth of their child.

- 85% agreed strongly that Sure Start Antenatal services were high quality.
- 86% agreed strongly that Sure Start Postnatal services helped them understand their baby and their baby's needs.
- 83% overall, rated Sure Start Postnatal services as excellent.
- 87% of parents agreed strongly that Sure Start Postnatal services were high quality.
- 83% agreed strongly that Sure Start helped improve their knowledge of Child Development.
- 89% agreed strongly that Sure Start provided a high quality service.
- 78% of parents agreed strongly that Sure Start helped identify issues/concerns.
- 91% agreed strongly that Child and Parent services staff were helpful.
- 82% agreed that Sure Start helped improve their child development.
- 83% agreed strongly that Sure Start Parent services helped them make changes in their families.
- 81% of parents agreed strongly that Sure Start Parent services were high quality.
- 80% agreed strongly that Sure Start Parent services helped them become more confident.
- 91% agreed strongly that Sure Start Child only services were of high quality.
- 87% agreed strongly that Sure Start Child only services helped improve their child's development.

- 83% agreed strongly that Child only services helped identify issues or concerns.
- 82% agreed strongly that Child only services staff were helpful.

Is anyone better off?

- 93% of Sure Start users reviewed (using 'Outcomes Star' model) improved in at least one of the seven areas: physical health, emotional wellbeing, keeping your children safe, social networks, boundaries and routines, child development and home, money and work – 70% improving in at least two areas; 48% improving in at least three areas.
- Improved/maintained development of 98% of Sure Start children reviewed (using 'Outcomes Star' model).
- Improvement/maintained progress in the physical health of 91% of Sure Start families' reviewed (using 'Outcomes Star' model).
- Improvement/maintained progress in the emotional wellbeing of 91% of Sure Start families' reviewed (using 'Outcomes Star' model).
- 51.7% of children living in Sure Start areas (aged 0-5 years) registered with their dentist (2020/21).

Reporting Period:

April 2021 – March 2022: data in the Scorecard relates to 2020/21 (unless otherwise stated).

(Source: Strategic Planning Performance Group, DoH (former Health and Social Care Board) which administers the Sure Start programme on behalf of DE (unless otherwise indicated.))

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.7:

Provide independent counselling support in post-primary schools and pilot a counselling and therapeutic support service, 'Healthy Happy Minds' in primary schools. The initiatives are designed to promote mental health and emotional well-being and support for pupils facing problems such as difficult home circumstances and bullying.

Status: In Progress

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12

How much did we do?

The Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) has been provided to post primary schools since 2007 and was expanded in 2011 to include special schools with a post primary cohort. The service is responsive to pupils' needs and operates as an integral part of a school's pastoral care provision. In 2019 the service was expanded again to include Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) centres. Counselling is provided each week to schools and from 2015 included the addition of a 'drop-in' session for pupils at lunchtime. Urgent requests from schools are also met by the providers. In 2021/22, 155,196 pupils were enrolled in post primary schools, including Special Schools and EOTAS, who could avail of the service.

Healthy Happy Minds, a pilot counselling and therapeutic support programme, has been introduced for all primary school age children. Alongside counselling, the pilot provides the opportunity for a broad range of therapeutic interventions to be tested at primary school level including play, drama, music, art and

equine assisted therapy. The pilot has allowed for innovative approaches to be adopted by schools and providers in responding to the needs of primary school children. The pilot commenced in 2021 and was initially due to conclude at the end of March 2022 but extensions were granted to enable the programme to continue until 31 March 2023. The pilot is subject to an independent evaluation to determine the appropriateness of these interventions for primary schools going forward and this, together with the budgetary position will determine the future of the initiative.

How well did we do it?

Counselling provides valuable support to pupils, assisting them during difficult periods in their lives. Counselling support also contributes to the broader agenda to improve educational outcomes for all pupils in providing help to address barriers to learning. Demand for the ICSS service is strong and during the 2021/22 academic year 36,855 counselling sessions and 9,621 drop-in sessions were delivered.

Demand for the Healthy Happy Minds initiative has also been strong with a total of 8,204 children from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 2 receiving individual therapy or counselling during the period November 2021 to June 2022.

Is anyone better off?

The importance of supporting the mental and emotional wellbeing of young people cannot be overstated. ICSS has provided significant support to thousands of pupils in this regard. During the reporting period, the top ten presenting issues included: peer issues, anxiety, behaviour, bereavement, academic, low mood, family, anger, self-harm and suicidal ideation. Through ICSS counsellors work with pupils to develop their resilience and build coping mechanisms in order to help them overcome the often, complex issues they face.

Pupil impact figures from school returns reflect the positive effect of the Healthy Happy Minds programme to date with 670 having a positive impact, 261 having a moderate impact, 33 having a negative impact and 38 unsure.

Reporting Period:

2021/22 academic year

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.8:

Promote positive mental health and provide frontline crisis intervention to prevent suicide.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Barnardo's Child Bereavement Service

From April to September 2021 the bereaved by suicide support service dealt with 43 referrals and have completed work with 10 children and young people and their families with an average number of 20 sessions each.

MACS Supporting Children and Young People*

MACS to provide a mentoring service for 35 young people between 16 and 25 years old.

MACS Floating Support to be provided to 40 young people between 16 and 25 years old.

MACS match of the Day Programme one to one mentoring to be provided to 25 young men in Belfast.

(*MACS is an organisation whose mission is to empower children and young people who haven't had a fair deal – to have a home, strengthen their mental health and be part of a community.)

The Link

48 Sessions of support for improved mental health and emotional wellbeing of high risk young parents aged 17 to 25 years to be held at the Drop-in Centre at the Link.

ND YMCA CHAT

40 Mental and Emotional Wellbeing sessions focusing on individuals suffering from stress through bullying, peer pressure, self-harm etc.

One to one mentoring support to be provided for 10 vulnerable young males.

Young People's Wellbeing Programmes

10 week fitness programme for 10 to 17 year olds.

Personal development programmes focusing on confidence and self-esteem.

Personal development programme for young mothers.

One-to-one mentoring service for young people with mental health and wellbeing issues.

Take 5 building resilience programme for 12-14 year olds.

OCN (Open College Network) qualification in peer mentoring and mental health awareness.

Children Bereaved by Suicide

Therapeutic support provided for children and young people. Packages of care provided for families.

Belfast Central Mission

Therapeutic counselling sessions especially for care experienced young people 16-25 years old.

PHA Short Term Funding Awards

84 short term funding awards which contribute to supporting children and young people.

Self-harm Intervention Programme

There have been an average of 79 young people per month under the age of 18 referred to the Self-harm Intervention service by mental health professionals.

From January to September 2021, 3,352 sessions of therapy were delivered to young people. Additional support is also available to families and carers.

Regional Mental Health Awareness & Suicide Prevention Awareness Training

Programmes are delivered directly to young people both in a school and a youth environment including –

- Connections Link Life.
- Aware Mood Matters Young People.
- PIPS Hope and Support facilitate Student Resilience courses.

- PIPS Hope and Support facilitate Gimme 5 and Be Positive Courses.
- Action Mental Health facilitate delivery of Mindset Adolescent.

Bereavement Counselling

In Southern locality, 16 children and young people bereaved by suicide attended counselling sessions delivered by PIPS Hope and Support 2021.

15 families/carers/guardians have been provided with psycho-educational support.

Mentoring Crisis Support

Mentoring and crisis support for children and young people in the Southern locality is provided by Start360.

Mental Health Awareness Training

Delivery of Mental Health Awareness Programmes to children and young people across the Southern locality.

Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP)

Emotional health and wellbeing group established in collaboration with CYPSP, Southern Health & Social Trust, Public Health Agency (PHA) and Community and Voluntary groups.

How well did we do it?

Evaluation from young people participating in Mindset Adolescent from April 2021 – June 2021 provided the following outcomes:

- 78.1% of young people indicated they had improved knowledge on mental health.
- 99% reported an improvement in attitude to mental ill health.

- 95% of service users rated the Start360 Protect Life service as “Very Good” or “Good”.
- 100% of Start360 service users self-reported that their confidence has improved.

Children and young people have reported an improvement through attending Barnardo’s child bereavement support service. The service has offered therapeutic sessions and packages of care across families.

Is anyone better off?

This wide range of initiatives has been provided regionally to promote mental and emotional health and wellbeing and to prevent suicide and self-harm.

This has ensured programmes being delivered directly to young age groups both through early intervention and through frontline services.

Reporting Period:

January 2021 – December 2021

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.9:

Develop and Deliver Early Years Obesity Prevention Programme to children 0-5 and their families.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Programme has been tendered, contract awarded to 'HENRY' and in place from 01 February 2020.

(Note: 'HENRY' is an organisation which provides support for families with their babies and young children.)

Programme delivery was due to commence in April 2020, face to face, however, was delayed to October 2020 due to online training and delivery adaptations.

From October 2020 – August 2021:

Group programmes were delivered in NI:

- 13 programmes delivered.
- 62 parents participated.
- 67 children (aged 0-5) engaged.

1:1 programmes were delivered in NI:

- 37 programmes delivered.

Training (from October 2020 – December 2021):

- Online Programme Facilitation Training was delivered to:
 - 68 HSCT (Health & Social Care Trust)/ Sure Start staff across NI.

- Training for Trainers (T4T) Course delivered to:
 - X3 Clinical Education Centre staff.
 - The T4T included training core & Group Facilitation skills training (GFT) for a further:
 - > Core: 49 HSCT/Sure Start staff.
 - > GFT: 7 HSCT/Sure Start staff.
- Raise, Engage, Refer training (awareness raising) was arranged for 48 staff.

How well did we do it?

Programme was developed in partnership with HSCT Health Visiting Teams, Sure Starts, Nursing colleagues and the Clinical Education Centre.

From October 2020 – August 2021:

Group programmes in NI:

- 62 participants started the programme, with 45 completing, a retention rate of 73%.
- We will report the % of participants from top 20% most disadvantaged wards in future reports.

- 89% of respondents felt that the programme was ‘Good’ or ‘Great’, while 79% would ‘Definitely’ recommend the programme to other families.

1:1 programmes in NI:

- Information on 1:1 programmes should be available for future reports.

Training (from October 2020 – December 2021):

- Online Programme Facilitation Training was completed successfully by:
 - 60 HSCT/Sure Start staff across NI (88%).
- Training for Trainers Course completed successfully by:
 - X3 Clinical Education Centre staff (100%).
 - The T4T included training core & Group Facilitation skills training that was successfully completed by a further:
 - > Core: 49 HSCT/Sure Start staff (100%).
 - > GFT: 7 HSCT/Sure Start staff (100%).

Raise, Engage, Refer training (awareness raising) was successfully completed by 47 staff (98%).

Is anyone better off?

Outcomes from Group programmes:

The outcome data analysed in this section is self-reported by participants via digital questionnaires.

Respondents answer a series of questions about their lifestyle at the start of the programme (baseline) and again when they complete the programme (completion).

When programme is further embedded, we will measure:

- Reduction in rate of children classified as overweight or obese at P1 stage.*
- Reduction in proportion of children on specified higher weight growth centiles.*
- Proportion of families with continued behaviour change 6 months after programme.
- Proportion of families with continued behaviour change 12 months after programme.
- The proportion of families reporting improvements in positive parenting.

(* Please note that these items will be reported using survey data that sits outside the HENRY programme, and the results must be caveated against other programmes/factors that may have impacted the percentages.)

Reporting Period:

Up to December 2021

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.10:

Train, support and resource midwives to deliver key messages to parents about how to promote and nurture healthy infant development.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 12

How much did we do?

Due to the impact of Covid-19 it was no longer possible to provide antenatal care and education to mothers in groups of 12.

To ensure mothers to be still had access to antenatal education the Public Health Agency as an interim measure purchased a multiuser online licence for the Solihull programmes in March 20. Due to the ongoing pandemic the licence has been renewed for a further year.

- Understanding your Pregnancy, Labour, birth & your Baby
- Understanding your Baby

This provides free access to mothers to be, their partners, grand parents and others supporting them on their journey to parenthood.

Total Registered Learners – 8,284

(Where the learner is registered and is able to access all of the courses associated with this sponsor's access plan(s)).

Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby

- 6,432 Learners have started this course.

Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby: for women couples

- 137 Learners have started this course.

Understanding your baby

- 989 Learners have started this course.

Training for Midwives

- 67 Midwives attended Solihull Foundation Training.

Solihull Foundation Training is provided to all Student Midwives as part of the curriculum.

Multiuser Licence purchased for Advanced Solihull Training for Professional in NI which can be accessed by Midwives.

Understanding Trauma.

Understanding Attachment.

Understanding Brain Development.

How well did we do it?

Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby

- 93% of course completers found the course helpful.

Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby: for women couples

- 100% of course completers found the course helpful

Understanding your baby

- 92% of course completers found the course helpful.

Is anyone better off?

Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby

- 90% of course completers recommend the course to others.

Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby: for women couples

- 100% of course completers recommend the course to others.

Understanding your baby

- 94% of course completers recommend the course to others.

Reporting Period:

April 2020 - October 2021 (Solihull online reports)

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.11:

Provide lessons about a healthy diet and how to plan and cook healthy meals safely as part of the required curriculum for children in years 8-10.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 4, 12

How much did we do?

- All post-primary schools must provide education in Home Economics (HE) to pupils at Key Stage 3, which has been a statutory requirement since the current curriculum was first introduced.
- HE contains three concepts, one of which is Healthy Eating. Within this key concept, schools have a statutory requirement to ensure pupils have opportunities to:
 - develop practical skills in the safe, hygienic, healthy and creative use of foods to plan, prepare, cook and serve a range of meals;
 - develop practical skills in the safe use of a range of utensils and appliances in the preparation, cooking and serving of a variety of dishes;
 - investigate the impact of storage, preparation and cooking on food; and
 - explore ways to achieve a healthy diet.
- The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) has developed a range of teaching resources

and guidance to support HE/Healthy Eating. These can be accessed on CCEA's website.

- Circular 2013/21 'Healthy Food for Healthy Outcomes Food in Schools Policy' was issued to all schools in September 2013.

How well did we do it?

- HE is compulsory for all pupils in Years 8-10, therefore, all pupils in these year groups are taught about Healthy Eating as part of the post-primary curriculum.
- A range of teaching resources and guidance to support healthy eating is available via CCEA's website.

Is anyone better off?

Children and young people are equipped with the necessary skills to make healthy food choices with a view to encouraging healthy lifestyles beyond school.

Reporting Period:

1 September 2021 – 30 June 2022 (2021/22 Academic Year)

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.12:

Deliver training to school children in relation to walking and cycling skills to encourage active and safe travel.

Status: In Progress

Lead Department: Department for Infrastructure

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 4

How much did we do?

The Active School Travel Programme (ASTP) works with schools to encourage and promote children to travel more actively to school (cycling, walking, scooting/skating or a park and ride/stride/scoot journey). The programme, delivered by Sustrans in NI on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the Public Health Agency (PHA), hopes to positively change behaviours.

Table - Numbers involved in ASTP by pupils, parents, siblings & teachers and schools.

	Pupils, parents, siblings & teachers
2016/17	11,036
2017/18	15,903
2018/19	18,070
2019/20	14,801

	Schools
2016/17	229
2017/18	289
2018/19	349
2019/20	408

Table - Pupils undertaking National Standard Cycle Training (Levels 1 & 2)

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
877	844	825	411

Table - Promotional activities, such as bike/scooter maintenance, bling your bike sessions, cycling and scooter skills, and safety awareness.

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
1,148	1,456	1,737	1,217

Table - Participations in promotional activities (one individual can undertake multiple activities).

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
64,933	80,323	85,813	63,643

Table - Total Contract spend.

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
£525,000	£450,000	£450,000	£450,000

How well did we do it?

100% of schools completed the 3 year programme since 2016/17.

Table - Budget Spent.

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
98%	100%	100%	100%

Table - Uptake in National Cycle Training (pupils).

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
91%	88%	86%	92%

Table - % of teachers and champions who thought ASTP had excellent/good impact on pupils' road safety awareness and getting pupils more physically active.

Road Safety Awareness			
2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
88	96	85	96

Physical Activity			
2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
90	96	No data	94

Is anyone better off?

Comparing the end of each year with the start, change in pupils travelling to school by:

Table - Pupils walking to school.

	Change in number of pupils:	Change in % of pupils:
2016/17	+500	+4
2017/18	+550	+4
2018/19	+370	+4
2019/20	No data (Covid-19)	

Table - Pupils cycling to school.

	Change in number of pupils:	Change in % of pupils:
2016/17	+400	+2
2017/18	+470	+3
2018/19	+450	+3
2019/20	No data (Covid-19)	

Table - Pupils being driven to school.

	Change in number of pupils:	Change in % of pupils:
2016/17	-1,360	-9
2017/18	-1,390	-11
2018/19	-2,950	-17
2019/20	No data (Covid-19)	

These results show a positive trend in behavioural change, with more pupils walking and cycling to school and less being driven to school when comparing the end of each year with the start of the year.

Table - Attendees obtained Level 1 & 2 National Cycle Training:

2016/17	79%
2017/18	85%
2018/19	93%
2019/20	89%

Table - Increase in number of pupils who travel actively* at end of year compared to start of year (* Walking, cycling, scooting & skating and P&R/combi journeys):

2016/17	25%
2017/18	29%
2018/19	49%
2019/20	No data (Covid-19)

Reporting Period:

2016/17 to 2019/20

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.13:

Implement the Sports Programme in schools which aims to provide a specialist coaching support to primary schools to deliver the Key Stage 2 Physical Education Curriculum.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Education

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 4, 12

How much did we do?

During the 2021/22 financial year, coaches from the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) & Irish Football Association (IFA) aim to deliver a minimum of 16,948 Physical Education (PE) sessions to a minimum of 22,300 pupils in at least 196 primary schools across NI to provide specialist support for schools to deliver the Key Stage 2 PE curriculum. The GAA & IFA will continue to target primary schools with high concentrations of social disadvantage.

How well did we do it?

The closure of schools, combined with social distancing measures and class bubbles, has meant that the GAA & IFA have had to re-think their approach to business over the last two academic years. The Sports Programme Work Plan for 2021/22 contains targets specific to the current environment which both organisations are operating in, including:

- the production of video clips to be used by schools on activities to develop movement skills, sports skills and games; and

- the production of information and resources on the benefits of physical activity on young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Up until 31 December 2021, coaches have delivered over 5,000 PE sessions to approximately 12,000 pupils in around 100 primary schools.

Is anyone better off?

The Sports Programme was recently independently evaluated and research findings reported:

- the programme has real impact with those that do not normally take part or take part less regularly;
- the programme enthruses, builds confidence and is something pupils look forward to regardless of their sporting background or ability;
- there is evidence that despite Covid-19 restrictions there is an uptake in wider activities;

- less active children now look forward to the sessions and are reporting increases in confidence and the ability to try new things and try again if things don't work;
- teachers place high value in the programme and have quoted a growth in pupil confidence, self-esteem, happiness, activity levels, wider health and other factors;
- there has been a particular value in the programme due to the Covid-19 restrictions and the fact it has carried on;
- teachers have also quoted their confidence, ability and enthusiasm growing for PE as well as wider school enthusiasm; and
- there has been an increase in appetite for more learning (in an appropriate setting) from staff as well as a desire to be more involved in the design of the programme to suit school needs.

Reporting Period:

1 September 2021 – 31 December 2021

Outcome 3: Children in poverty are healthy

Action 3.14:

Support uptake and prevalence of breastfeeding.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 4

How much did we do?

- Throughout 2021 all maternity units and health visiting services across the 5 HSCTs (Health & Social Care Trusts) have achieved and maintained UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) accreditation.
- Investment and maintenance of the UNICEF BFI Professional Officer role has enabled access to support with achieving and maintaining recognised best practice for the care of breastfeeding and formula feeding families, across maternity, neonatal, health visiting and Sure Start services.
- PHA funded a total of 8 UNICEF 2 Day online Breastfeeding Training courses in 2021 which benefited 96 health professionals and support workers working across HSCTs and Sure Starts.
- Tiny Life Breastpump Loan service were provided with additional support to maintain their service during Covid-19 and ensure access throughout NI.
- Neonatal Infant Feeding Posts are in place in each HSCT to support best practice for breastfeeding. Northern HSCT became the first unit to achieve BFI accreditation in NI.
- PHA Health Improvement supported the Neonatal Network to procure tablets (iPADS) and stands for incubators to facilitate remote visiting for parents in Neonatal Units across the 5 HSCTs.
- Breastival* continues to be funded to support World Breastfeeding Week in August each year. Breastival 2021 delivered 31 events from 1st to the 7th August.
(*Breastival is a festival which aims to support, normalise and celebrate breastfeeding as part of everyday life in NI.)
- In November 2021 a total of 156 health professionals and breastfeeding supporters working in NI were supported by PHA to attend the UNICEF BFI virtual conference.
- In June 2021 a total of 75 staff working in Neonatal Units in NI were supported to attend the UNICEF BFI Neonatal Virtual Conference.
- During the Covid-19 response it has been necessary to move Breastfeeding Support to online groups. The majority are funded and facilitated by Sure Starts.
- New Midwifery-led Neonatal tongue tie services have been funded by PHA and established in South West Acute Hospital (SWAH) and Altnagelvin Hospital. Belfast

HSCT are also funding and piloting their own new midwife-led specialist service which offers tongue tie assessment and treatment.

- PHA commissioned Ipsos MORI to undertake focus group research with women to explore their experience of breastfeeding during the pandemic. The report 'Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on breastfeeding support'^{**} was published in May 2021 and shared with key stakeholders. (^{**}Ipsos MORI report (hscni.net))

- The annual Breastfeeding Health Intelligence Brief was published in November 2021^{***} and while it is suggested Covid-19 may not have had a severe impact on breastfeeding uptake, prevalence figures are not yet available.

(^{***}HI Brief Breastfeeding 2021 FINAL Nov 21.pdf (hscni.net))

How well did we do it?

- Significant progress has been made in 2021 with improving breastfeeding support in our Neonatal Units.
- Antrim Hospital became the first Neonatal Unit to achieve a BFI Stage 3 award here. Royal Jubilee Neonatal Unit achieved a Stage 2 award and the Ulster Hospital gained a Stage 1 award.
- In partnership with the Neonatal Network and in order to support parental involvement for our most vulnerable parents 97 tablets and stands were provided to Neonatal Units to ensure a regional approach to increasing parental access and education.

- PHA funds Tiny Life Breastpump Loan service which loaned 74 breast pumps to mothers of ill and premature babies in 2020/21. 99% of requests for breast pumps were dealt with within 48 hours of first request and followed up with delivery of breast pump.
- Online access and PHA funding to attend UNICEF BFI Conferences has meant that in 2021 a total of 231 individuals including midwives, health visitors, Sure Start staff, neonatal nurses and voluntary breastfeeding supporters have attended UNICEF conferences online.
- The move to online training has meant that each UNICEF 2 Day course can facilitate 12 places rather than 16. We have compensated by supporting more courses with 96 staff benefiting in year.
- Provision of UNICEF training has meant that more than 80% of all midwives and health visitors have completed BFI training requirements.
- Breastival had its most successful and comprehensive program of events to date in 2021. Registering 3,311 tickets from 1,117 individual attendees, with over 57% attending 3 or more of the events during the week. The number of women living in Sure Start areas who engaged with Breastival was 243.

Is anyone better off?

- Progress with achieving and maintaining BFI standards across maternity and community services in 2020, now means that 100% births and 100% new birth visits are provided within BFI trained and accredited midwifery and health visiting services.

- Improving staff knowledge and skills in a strategic outcome of the breastfeeding strategy. Supporting a total of 327 health professionals and breastfeeding support workers to avail of UNICEF conference places and training, will translate into better information and support for women living in the most deprived areas of NI.
- Mothers living in Western HSCT who are experiencing difficulty breastfeeding due to a neonatal tongue tie, now have local access to assessment and treatment from a midwife specialist.

Reporting Period:

This reporting covers 1 January 2020 to 1 January 2021

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.1:

Provide specific support in rural communities.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11

How much did we do?

2021/22- £8.2m capital and resource budget invested in a range of Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation (TRPSI) Programme initiatives which aim to address poverty, social isolation and health and well-being issues in rural areas through a range of statutory and community and voluntary organisations working in partnership to develop and implement measures which tackle the needs of vulnerable rural dwellers.

Resource funded initiatives supported in 2021/22 include: The Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (ARTS), the Farm Family Health Checks Programme, Rural Community Development, the Rural Support Charity, the Social Farming Support Service, Employability schemes and Health and Well-Being projects.

The TRPSI Programme also funds capital projects such as: the enhancement of rural recreation facilities including Forest Park trails and facilities in collaboration with Councils and Forest Service, the regeneration of historic buildings in four

rural villages through the Village Catalyst Pilot Scheme, the continued support for the Your School Your Club initiative which support greater community usage of the school estate, the Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme which supports community and voluntary sector projects to address localised poverty and isolation issues. A scheme to increase the sustainability, development and recovery of rural micro businesses has helped over 600 businesses.

How well did we do it?

100% of the 2021/22 budget has been invested in providing support to rural businesses, dwellers and community and voluntary organisations across Northern Ireland.

Is anyone better off?

Over 900,000 rural beneficiaries have benefitted from TRPSI initiatives in 2021/22.

Reporting Period:

1 April 2021 – 31 December 2021

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.2:

Provide Road Safety amongst children and young people by providing material and resources to schools delivering Practical Child Pedestrian Safety Training and enhanced Cycling Proficiency Scheme.

Status: In Progress

Lead Department: Department for Infrastructure

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 4

How much did we do?

Practical Child Pedestrian Safety Training Scheme (PCPST)

Over two 3-year rolling periods (what was due to be delivered in the 2020/21 year was delivered in 2021/22), DfI aims to equip the new generation of children with road safety knowledge and skills and encourage more people to use sustainable means of travel. Walking to and from school would be an opportunity to work towards both these aims and increases physical activity working towards the 60 minutes a day recommended for children by the Chief Medical Officer. However, it is important that children have the skills to carry out this activity safely.

Schools participating

- 33 in 2015/16 - 2017/18
- 40 in 2018/19 - 2021/22

Pupils participating

- 1,312 in 2015/16 - 2017/18
- 1,485 in 2018/19 - 2021/22

Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS)

The Cycling Proficiency Scheme is delivered across Northern Ireland by primary schools. It has been in operation for over 50 years training over 450,000 pupils during that time. It aims to help develop children's skills, increase their confidence as cyclists and identify risks they may come across on roads.

- 252 schools participated in the Scheme.
- 53 of these schools were in areas targeting social need.
- 111 new teachers were trained.
- 4,405 children attained the CPS standard.
- 4,538 children wore helmets during training.
- £32,100 budget spent.

How well did we do it?

PCPST

- 100% of schools signed up for the led walks.
- 90% of schools completed Stage Three.

CPS

- 94% of pupils trained reached the required standard.
- 97% of pupils wore helmets throughout the training period.
- Of the 252 schools who delivered the scheme, 29% were urban and 71% were rural.

Is anyone better off?

PCPST

- Table 1 - Percentage with increased knowledge of pedestrian safety issues after this training, compared to before*. (*Before teaching commences, all children complete a Road Safety quiz. Children then complete a further quiz at the end of the training to allow before/after comparisons in pedestrian safety knowledge.)

Year	% increased knowledge*
2015/16	10
2016/17	13
2017/18	16
2018/19	10.5
2019/20	8
2021/22*	26

(*NB: what was due to be delivered in the 2020/21 year was delivered in 2021/22).

- This training is offered to selected primary schools in socially deprived areas. The scheme aims to help children in primary years three, four and five to gain and develop pedestrian skills, observe dangers and practice crossing roads safely via supervised training walks in their local area. The scheme uses the Skooter and Hattie workbooks to reinforce classroom theory.

CPS

- Before training 43% of children wore a safety helmet - after training this rose to 82%.
- Before training 9% of children carried out a safety check - after training this rose to 49%.
- Before training 16% of children wore bright/reflective clothing in daytime - after training this rose to 47%.
- Before training 42% of children wore bright/reflective clothing at night-time - after training this rose to 72%.
- Before training 19% of children cycled 1m from the kerb - after training this rose to 82%.
- Before training 23% of children looked over their shoulder before signalling or moving - after training this rose to 88%.

Reporting Period:

PCPST: 2015-22

CPS: 2021/22

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.3:

Increasing the social housing stock to improve access to suitable social housing.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 8

How much did we do?

Social housing in NI is delivered through the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) in a tri-partite arrangement between the Department for Communities (DfC), the NI Housing Executive (NIHE) and Registered Housing Associations (HA).

NIHE is responsible for the assembly and day to day management of the SHDP, which is a three year rolling programme of planned social housing schemes based on the identification and analysis of housing need by geographical area. The SHDP contains a range of housing types for housing families including homes for specific needs. However the number of homes to be provided in each programme year is governed by the amount of funding available from central government through DfC.

Registered HA's are invited on an annual basis to submit new schemes to NIHE to meet their identified need and new schemes are added to the SHDP on that basis. While the Department would seek to deliver an average target of 2,000 units per year this is constrained by the budget available.

From 2017/18 to 2021/22 a total of 8,422 units have been delivered.

How well did we do it?

In 2017/18 a total of 1,759 units were delivered against a target of 1,750 units.

In 2018/19 a total of 1,786 units were delivered against a target of 1,850 units.

In 2019/20 a total of 761 units were delivered against a target of 1,850.

In 2020/21 a total of 2,403 units were delivered against a target of 1,850.

In 2021/22 a total of 1,713 units were completed against a target of 1,900.

Is anyone better off?

The completion of 8,422 additional social homes helped reduce the impact of child poverty for these families by providing a stable and safe living environment.

Reporting Period:

2017/18 – 2021/22

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.4:

Deliver projects designed to promote social, economic, physical and community renewal in the 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12

How much did we do?

The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme supports a range of projects across 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas with a revenue budget of around £18m. Including:

- 47 projects with interventions designed to address social issues such as low educational attainment and poor attendance;
- 26 projects to address economic issues such as lack of skills and employability and 14 childcare projects primarily aimed to address worklessness;
- 73 projects to promote physical renewal to help create attractive, safe, sustainable environments;
- 126 projects to promote community renewal, including advice services, developing confident communities that are able and committed to improving the quality of life;
- 51 projects with interventions designed to address social issues such as health inequalities;

- 5 projects to promote community safety to help create safe environments.

How well did we do it?

An investment of around £2.5m across 47 projects to improve educational attainment.

Tackling barriers to learning:

- Almost 1,700 pupils whose attendance is measurably improved;
- Over 2,000 pupils whose attainment is measurably improved;
- Around 300 pupils whose behaviour is measurably improved; and
- Over 5,500 engaged in parenting programmes.

Improving Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy:

- Approximately 5,500 pupils directly benefitting from educational projects.

Closing the Gap Performance:

- Almost 4,000 pupils benefitting from educational projects.

Youth Services:

- Circa 11,000 pupils directly benefitting from youth projects.

Extended Services:

- 3,450 pupils directly benefitting from projects.

Investing £1.3m across 19 projects to tackling barriers to employability including:

- Improving of skills
- Adult education; and
- Mentoring projects.

Investing around £2.0m across 73 physical projects to:

- Develop and improve community facilities in deprived communities;
- Assist with maintenance of existing facilities; and
- Provision of Information Technology.

Investment of £6.8m to help empower communities and improve inter and cross community relations;

- Around 14,000 people participating in community relations projects;
- Over 35,000 people participating in community bonding projects that seek to develop trust and improve the quality of relationships within communities;
- Over 5,000 people volunteering for community development activities;
- Over 3,300 people receiving training in

community development skills/capacity building; and

- 380 people involved in projects that promote shared space.

Investing £130,000 across 5 projects designed to create safer environments:

- 13,000 people participating/attending community safety initiatives; and
- Almost 9,000 young people benefitting from youth inclusion/diversionary projects.

Investing £1.5m across 26 youth projects:

- 11,200 young people benefitting from youth projects.

Is anyone better off?

As a result of Youth Services projects, aimed at improving educational attainment, 300 accredited qualifications have been completed.

As a result of the 26 employability projects and 14 childcare projects aimed at addressing worklessness, approximately 150 residents were supported into employment. Support provided by 73 physical renewal projects which have developed or enhanced infrastructure including community facilities, has enabled the provision of a broad range of community services, whilst the improvements to the physical environment make the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas more attractive in which to live and to invest. 32,000 people using new or improved community facilities.

Reporting Period:

April 2020 – March 2021 (Neighbourhood Renewal Annual reports for period 2021/22 are not due for completion until Spring 2023)

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.5:

Provide tenancy support and temporary accommodation, where necessary, for young mothers.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 8

How much did we do?

Housing Related Support Services funded through the Supporting People (SP) Programme include the following provision which can support young mothers:

- 31 services for homeless families (23 accommodation based and 8 floating support).
- 10 floating support services for young people aged 16-25 years old, including young mothers.
- 1 service (6 units of accommodation based and 6 units of floating support) for homeless women, including young mothers.
- 23 services for both single women and women with children, who are at risk of domestic violence (14 accommodation based and 9 floating support).

How well did we do it?

SP services which provide support for young mothers continue to meet quality standards. These standards are managed through a SP framework of contract and performance management.

Is anyone better off?

Housing related support benefits young mothers to achieve a range of positive outcomes including; developing the skills and knowledge to gain and maintain accommodation, improving economic wellbeing, staying safe, increasing independence, managing physical and mental health, being involved in the community and getting into training, education and employment. These are realised through:

- 277 units of accommodation based and 691 units of floating support, assisting homeless families.
- 634 units of floating support assisting young people, including young mothers.
- 138 units of accommodation based support and 1,003 units of floating support assisting single women and women with children who are at risk of domestic violence.

Reporting Period:

2021/22

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.6:

Provide primary school pupils with safety and community awareness training, including how to prevent everyday accidents and dangerous situations and how to deal with them safely should they occur.

Status: Health Protection Branch are responsible for providing primary school pupils with safety and community awareness training, including how to prevent everyday accidents and dangerous situations and how to deal with them safely should they occur. Owing to the workload pressures as a result of Covid-19, efforts on the aforementioned areas did not take place in the 2021/22 year.

Lead Department: Department of Health

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 4

How much did we do?

Mid Ulster District Council

- Two Bee Safe events were held in January and February 2020. Over 1,300 primary 6 and primary 7 pupils from 51 local primary schools attended these.
- To mark Child Safety Week this year resources and tips were sent to all the Bee Safe schools contacts and also linked them to child prevention trust.

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

- 968 children attended week 1 of Bee Safe, however week 2 was cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Ards and North Down Borough Council

- 932 children attended Bee Safe programme.

Lisburn and Castlereagh Borough Council

- 1,300 children attended Bee Safe programme.

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

- 300 child safety awareness packs were distributed, highlighting the increased risk of spending additional time at home during lockdown, with information included on burns and scalds, safer sleeping and care in the sun as well as equipment such as hair straightener safety pouches and furniture safety straps.

Public Health Agency

- A total of 12 press releases or social media posts targeting parents were issued, in partnership with all Trusts, NI Fire & Rescue Service (NIFRS), Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and

11 councils to raise awareness of the risks of accidents in the home and how to deal with them safely should they occur.

How well did we do it?

- At each Bee Safe event the children took part in a range of interactive sessions and had the opportunity to hear information about Fire Safety, Internet Safety, Farm Safety, Road Safety, Water Safety, Electrical Safety, Bus Safety and Mental Health.
- 100% of the teachers attending rated the scenarios/presentations as either good/excellent. The feedback from the school teachers and pupils was positive.
- Resources were not available to collect feedback from families on the child safety awareness packs or the media activity but feedback from health professionals involved was 100% positive.

Is anyone better off?

- Feedback indicates that 100% of the teachers felt their pupils had found the event useful and 100% felt their pupils had learned something new from it.

Feedback indicates that 100% of families have learnt about home accident risks from the information in the child safety awareness packs and that the use of the equipment provided will have reduced the risk of an accident in the home.

Reporting Period:

Jan 2020 - Dec 2020

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.7:

Work with Housing Rights to tackle homelessness and housing problems in NI through the provision of free advice and representation to people who are at risk of homelessness.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 8

How much did we do?

£901,000 core funding was provided for 2021/22. Funding is used to provide a Housing Advice Service, support other frontline practitioners so advice is available locally and utilise evidence to identify issues and help improve housing legislation, policy and practice. The Housing Advice Service provides assistance regarding the prevention of homelessness, accessing accommodation, affordability and housing conditions. 11,770 cases were assisted during 2021/22 and homelessness prevented in 223 of these cases. It should be noted that the mitigations introduced to address the Covid-19 crisis and help people to stay in their homes reduced the risk of homelessness and impacted the work of Housing Rights accordingly.

How well did we do it?

During 2021/22, 11,770 clients were assisted with housing issues (including mortgage debt) and homelessness was prevented in 2% of cases (223). 10,998 cases closed and the help provided in 9,462 of those cases will lead to improved housing circumstances (86%). 94.5% of clients were satisfied with the service provided.

Is anyone better off?

During 2021/22, 11,770 clients were assisted with their housing issues and homelessness was prevented in 2% of cases. Help provided will lead to improved housing circumstances in 92% of cases and 89% of clients had an improved sense of well-being.

Reporting Period:

2021/22

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.8:

Provide comprehensive housing and homelessness advice to all who require it, free of charge, including pre-release housing advice and tenancy sustainment to all prisoners at all prisons/detention centres.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 8

How much did we do?

1. The Housing (NI) Order 1988 (as amended) identifies the NI Housing Executive (NIHE) as the agency tasked with responding to homelessness in NI. The NIHE has a duty to ensure that advice about homelessness, and the prevention of homelessness, is available free of charge to any person in NI.
2. The 'Beyond the Gate' service provides intensive short-term support to the most vulnerable prisoners on release to ensure they have a place to live and are connected with appropriate support services to help them sustain their home and successfully resettle within the community. The 'Beyond the Gate' project targets service users most at risk from homelessness and re-offending by providing a joined up, continuous service.

3. The NIHE continues to fund the Community Housing Advice Partnership (CHAP) which comprises of a consortium of agencies and supports generalist advice agencies throughout NI to deliver high quality advice on housing and homelessness in their community.

How well did we do it?

1. As part of our Housing Solutions approach staff will often refer households on to support that is specialist and impartial which will complement the advice and assistance offered by the NIHE, and other statutory agencies.
2. This 'Beyond the Gate' service continues to provide support to all 3 NI Prisons. Prisoners receive support both pre and post release through the 'Beyond the Gate' project with the following aims:

- help individuals engage with support services;
 - prevent homelessness;
 - increased ability to sustain tenancies;
 - increase the sense of wellbeing.
3. Representatives from the CHAP sit on the NIHEs Homelessness Local Area Groups which further enhance the inter-agency cooperation in the provision of homelessness advice.

Is anyone better off?

1. During 2021/22 a total of 15,758 households presented as homeless with 10,135 of these households being accepted as statutorily homeless. While all households who present as homeless

will be provided with advice the Housing Executive also provided 9,265 placements in temporary accommodation.

2. During 2021/22 the 'Beyond the Gate' project engaged with 96 individuals as part of a comprehensive housing and homelessness advice service. The 'Beyond the Gate' project also resulted in 310 referrals to additional support services.
3. The CHAP engages with 43 partner agencies on an ongoing basis. This results in the facilitation of training sessions/ seminars, provision of training to staff and the delivery of accredited training.

Reporting Period:

2021/22

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.9:

Provide Tenancy Support Assessments for all new Housing Executive tenants including a financial health check and identification of other needs (debt advice, budgeting, daily living skills, mental illness, and addictions), referring tenants to floating support services and other organisations to obtain the support required.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department for Communities

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 8

How much did we do?

Please note that Tenancy Support Assessments are not a single assessment process which we can quantify via our systems. It is part of the service that our Patch Managers provide to any newly signed up tenant.

1. Customer Support and Tenancy Sustainment Strategy and Action Plan (CSTSS)

The mission of the CSTSS is to ensure that our tenants' homes are the stable foundation upon which they can build happy and fulfilling lives by:

- supporting our customers throughout their housing journey;
- creating secure and sustainable tenancies;
- fostering stable and vibrant communities.

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has resulted in delays to planned delivery

including those identified in last year's annual report, and to account for the shift it has caused in the needs and priorities for supporting our tenants, approval was given by our Board to reset and extend the lifespan of the strategy and action plan to March 2024. Work has begun in drafting a Reset Plan which will review the activities, including those which will produce positive outcomes for safety, security and stability of the home environments of children, to be delivered under the Strategy. Our aim is to have this Reset Plan approved before the end of the current financial year.

We are currently undertaking research into 'Understanding Tenancy Terminations and Issues for Sustainment' – this research commenced in September 2021 with the aim of gaining insight and understanding of the reasons tenancies may end and how tenancy breakdowns could be prevented; determining awareness of support services offered by the Housing Executive; and understanding customer experiences. The project was designed using a stratified sampling

technique which will ensure adequate representation of young people's voices.

In 2021 we have committed to spend over £1.5m across 3 years as part of our Sustaining Tenancies Funding Programme. By the end of this financial year we aim to award over £850,000 to support voluntary and community projects which support our tenants in creating more resilient, sustainable tenancies in the short, medium and long term. This year, the funding priorities have been:

- Mental health and wellbeing of Housing Executive tenants or their households. This includes help to sustain a tenancy whilst managing or overcoming addiction.
- Tackling social isolation and loneliness of Housing Executive tenants or their households. This applies to all age groups.
- Practical skills, tools and resources for managing and maintaining a tenancy targeting Housing Executive tenants or those preparing to take up a social tenancy.
- Sustaining tenancies through projects that support Housing Executive tenants to manage their tenancies or engage with their community and reduce their carbon footprint or improve the local environment.

2. Financial Inclusion Strategy

The Housing Executive continues to work closely with our partners in Advice NI to ensure tenants with serious/complex debts are provided with the best possible advice and assistance both to resolve arrears and improve their financial wellbeing.

- Throughout 2021, the Housing Executive's Financial Inclusion Managers successfully worked with tenants across the organisation experiencing complex debt issues and/or rent arrears to help them maximise their benefits, budget effectively and safely, and make the most of their ability to switch between utilities and save money. They also worked closely with frontline staff, supporting the Making Your Money Work service, and providing training.
- Recruitment commenced in 2021 for three additional Financial Inclusion Managers in order to develop a more targeted service for housing and homeless applicants.
- As the Financial Inclusion Managers deal with more complex cases, in 2021 the Housing Executive rolled out a Benefit and Budgeting calculator to all frontline staff across NI, including Housing Advisors, Patch Managers, and Accounts staff. The calculator has equipped staff with the means to quickly and accurately perform a benefit check with their customer and create a personalised budget for their household at the point of housing application, and/or the beginning of a new tenancy. This Benefit and Budgeting app is also available on our website for all customers to use. In relation to Action 4.5, helping to maximise the income, and minimise the expenditure of young mothers will help alleviate child poverty and sustain tenure.

How well did we do it?

1. Customer Support and Tenancy Sustainment Strategy and Action Plan

As actions from the reset Tenancy Sustainment Action plan are currently in development there are no tangible/measurable outcomes to date.

In February 2021/22, the Sustaining Tenancies Funding programme awarded £877,000 to projects that will benefit our tenants and their families. We are currently ahead of our 3-year spending goal.

The draft final report of the 'Understanding Tenancy Terminations and Issues for Sustainment' research project is currently undergoing internal review.

2. Financial Inclusion Strategy

Making Your Money Work assessments have been routinely used with incoming tenants since October 2019.

Is anyone better off?

1. Customer Support and Tenancy Sustainment Strategy and Action Plan

It is envisaged that many tenants and their families, including children and young people, will benefit from the actions delivered under the reset Tenancy Sustainment Action Plan.

Many of the projects will produce outcomes for children living in Housing Executive homes. From these, we will provide a high-level summary of outcomes for children going forward.

The findings of the 'Understanding Tenancy Terminations and Issues for Sustainment' research project will assist us in effectively targeting resources and designing

interventions to help our young tenants achieve long, happy, and healthy tenancies.

2. Financial Inclusion Strategy

Throughout the 2021/22 financial year, the Financial Inclusion Managers received an average of 215 referrals per month. The Financial Inclusion Managers are able to maximise the benefit income of around one third of customers they engage with, and an average of 75-80% of tenants referred to them, engage meaningfully.

Since September 2021, the Financial Inclusion Managers have identified £1,016,891 of potential additional income for Housing Executive tenants.

In the second quarter of 2022, the in-house financial inclusion team will be expanded to double the number of Financial Inclusion Managers and introduce a new Deputy Financial Inclusion Manager role to deal with demand for this service, and facilitate increased financial inclusion for NIHE tenants living through a difficult economic climate.

To date, over 550 Housing Executive staff have been trained to use the Benefit and Budgeting Calculator, including all frontline staff. The offer of a benefit calculation is now an integrated feature of a customer's journey with the Housing Executive and is offered at various stages. At present, the offer of a benefit and/or budget calculation is taken up 10% of the time. The calculator facilitates benefit maximisation and the minimisation of rent arrears.

Reporting Period:

2021/22

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.10:

Work with key delivery partners to develop and roll out Early Intervention initiatives for children on the cusp of the Youth Justice system.

Status: In Progress

Lead Department: Department of Justice

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 7, 12

How much did we do?

The Youth Justice Agency (YJA) has continued to develop and embed its Earlier Stage Diversion (ESD) approach to divert children from the formal justice system at the earliest stage, with appropriate support. Children's Diversion Forums (CDFs - a multi-agency partnership including YJA, PSNI, Health Trusts and the Education Authority) are now operational across NI. The multi-disciplinary Forums agree together the best path for children to divert them whilst ensuring they are supported in less formal ways. Two key ESD initiatives are ESD voluntary referrals to YJA and Community Resolution Notice (CRN) Referral Scheme. The former involves a short period (usually 3 months) of intervention with children and their families and the latter involves one-off education sessions for children and their parents on issues such as violence, drug and alcohol awareness, and making better choices. Importantly neither initiative attracts a criminal record. Across 2021-2022 the upward trend in diversionary disposals continued with 1,095 CRN's delivered.

How well did we do it?

- 84.4% of ESI referrals were successfully completed across 2021- 2022.
- 98.2% of children and 99.0% of carers rated their experience of the ESD programme as either very good or good.
- 91.8% of children and 89.3% of carers felt that their experience with the ESD programme would help avoid further offending.
- 96.4% of CRN's were completed.
- 97.4% of children and 98.6% of carers rated the CRN Awareness programme as either very good or good.
- 96.8% of children and 95.2% of carers felt that their experience of the CRN Awareness programme would help avoid further offending.

Is anyone better off?

Trends in youth justice disposals continue to show an overall increase in the number of Earlier Stage Diversions delivered and a corresponding reduction in formal court orders, meaning more children are being kept out of the formal justice system. There has been a 60% reduction – across the last 6 years – in children reaching court. Crucially children availing of ESD interventions do not attract a criminal record. This positively impacts on their negating poverty issues later in life. Of the 847 children who attended CRN programmes in 2020-21, only 7.7% of children progressed further into the formal system in the following 12 month period.

In 2022-2023 additional ESD schemes will be developed and delivered to those young people who otherwise would be dealt with in the formal system.

Reporting Period:

April 2021 – March 2022.

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.11:

Deliver initiatives under the Tackling Paramilitarism Programme to assist children and young people under threat.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Justice

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 7

How much did we do?

Aspire Programme:

The Aspire project commenced in 2017/18 as a new initiative. It works with marginalised young men (aged 16 to 30) who are most at risk from being involved in paramilitarism and criminality.

From 01/04/21–16/12/21, 348 referrals for the programme were received along with an additional 42 referrals for mentoring only. There have been a number of re-referrals to mentoring services (meaning we are working with these young men for longer) reflecting the complex needs of the service users and especially during the pandemic. The Aspire team has continued to deliver both face to face and phone contact to service users across the whole of NI throughout the pandemic.

The Aspire Ascertain service delivery has operated since 2020. A total of 61 referrals have been received since 1 April 2021 – 39 for dual diagnosis, 18 for addiction and 4 for mental health. This service provides an

immediate and responsive approach to Aspire service users and addresses the issue of service users presenting with both substance misuse issues and complex mental health needs who often have difficulty accessing mainstream health services.

Funding of Youth Outreach Workers

The Youth Outreach programme places an Outreach Worker in areas which have been identified as experiencing high paramilitary activity. They aim to build relationships with young people who are not currently engaged with the youth services and who could be considered as higher risk of involvement in paramilitary activity. Across the areas (April 2021 – March 2022):

- 578 young people were involved through Engage* programmes (298 Core; 298 Peer & 36 siblings supported).

(*Engage' - Is a project focused on the developing needs of children and young people in identified areas of NI that have seen an increase in activities from criminal gangs, protests regarding policing and Brexit coupled with civil unrest, riots and interface violence. The project provides a range of Youth Work support in these areas in partnership with the Community and Voluntary sector.)

Evaluative Surveys are completed by young people through QUB research. Data was collected between April 2021 and March 2022 by participants on the programme completing an anonymous survey when their engagement began and again at the end of their engagement providing an overview of the young people and their needs, as well as to capture any changes that took place between these two time points. The data showed that:

- 50% of young people reported they were witness to paramilitary violence.
- 25% of young people reported they were threatened with paramilitaries.
- 8% of young people reportedly attacked with paramilitary violence.

Additionally, data also showed reductions in violence with young people:

- 43% of young people at baseline reported an intention to engage in violence.

Education & Support:

ENGAGE seminars for statutory youth groups took place on the following themes:

- Working with Complexities
- Restorative Action Plans
- Positive Peer Cultures
- Practitioners Forums
- QUB Training – Working with Complexities
- Domestic Violence Training to Statutory & Voluntary youth service staff
- EA Circle of Courage Training Delivery to 304 staff

Voluntary Youth Groups are working on their own Capacity Building Framework of Training, however additional training will be provided for all statutory & voluntary Engage Youth Workers in partnership:

- Restorative Action Plans
- Positive Peer Cultures
- Trauma Informed Practice
- Motivational Training

How well did we do it?

Aspire

A number of service users reported the following outcomes; securing stable accommodation, securing stable finances, improved health and wellbeing, support with relationships and desistance from crime.

One service user successfully completed their period of supervision with Aspire and four transferred to the PBNI (Probation Board for NI) generic team following completion of work with Aspire.

Service User Quote: “I really appreciate all the support I got during my 16 weeks. And to cap it off my mentor was able to help me apply for the Simon Community Tenancy Deposit Scheme Grant which was a successful application. This means now that I will be able to go for a private rental and my children will be able to have stay overs with me.”

Funding of Youth Outreach workers

Additional contact was made with 9,601 young people through Outreach. Youth Outreach Workers provided individual mentoring support to 282 young people in ENGAGE.

Is anyone better off?

Aspire

Of the participants in Quarter 3, 61% reflect progress in relation to mental health and wellbeing and 57% drug/alcohol issues.

PBNI have made 61 referrals to the Aspire Ascertain service with interventions focusing on addiction/mental health issues, coping strategies, harm reduction techniques and liaison with Community Addiction/Mental Health teams.

58% of service users have reflected progress in managing strong emotions. PBNI staff continue to deliver interventions in relation to coping skills; anger management and thinking skills. Victim awareness work was also completed with a number of service users.

Feedback elicited from exit questionnaires completed by Aspire service users reflects improved outcomes from support received from the Aspire team regarding resisting pressure to become involved in criminality in the future, in relation to addiction and mental health issues and an improvement in family relationships. All service users noted they were unlikely or very unlikely to commit an offence in the near future. All reported a positive experience of Aspire.

Funding of Youth Outreach workers

- Capacity Building for Youth Workers and Teachers' provided specific training. From evaluations, 95% participants stated the seminar delivery very relevant to practice.
- 100% of participants stated they gained a greater understanding of trauma and its impact on young people's development.

Education & Support:

- Youth Workers and key partners are better equipped to work with young people vulnerable to paramilitary influence.
- Training in supporting young people impacted by domestic violence.
- Collaboration between Education Authority and key partners is strengthened to support young people vulnerable to paramilitary influence.
- 106 OCN (Open College Network) Accreditations gained by young people within ENGAGE.
- 99 young people exited the programme and gained employment.
- 174 young people received new training opportunities.
- 43 young people involved in volunteering roles within the Youth Service.

Reporting Period:

Aspire Programme: April–December 2021

Youth Work Outreach: April 2021– March 2022

Outcome 4: Children in Poverty Live in Safe, Secure and Stable Environments

Action 4.12:

Work with delivery partners to strengthen healthy family relations of those in the care of the Northern Ireland Prison Service and actively promote the wellbeing and positive life outcomes for children affected by parental imprisonment.

Status: In progress

Lead Department: Department of Justice

Linked to Draft PfG Outcome(s): 7, 12

How much did we do?

As with the update of 2021/22 it should be noted that the global pandemic has had an impact on the capacity and capability to support and enhance family links.

Work to capture relevant performance measures for this work is being progressed. Some notable data is provided.

Visits

(Virtual visits were introduced in April 2020 in response to the global pandemic)

- Just over 23,000 virtual visits were facilitated by NIPS in 2021/22.*
- Approx. 1,500 in-person visits took place.*
- 57 responses were received to a recent Visiting Survey from the families perspective (March and April 2022).
- 26 of the 57 advised that children and young people attended the visits. (age profile at Table 1)

Table 1 - Visits Survey: from the family's perspective – age of children and young people involved in visits.

Age	Number
0-2	8
3-4	3
5-8	11
9-11	6
12-15	11
16-17	3
18-21	2

- 1,480 people in NIPS care surveyed for feedback on visits. (**September 2020).

(* This information is from the PRISM system and has not been statistically verified.)

(** No further updates currently available in respect of user survey data for this action. NIPS in partnership with VCS partners, will be seeking to conduct a survey in regard to this cohort.)

Support for families of those in custody

(NIPS funded)

- 1,120 referrals received to Family Links* programme for families of those in custody (NIACRO, 1 Apr 2021–31 March 2022).
- 207 referrals received to the Family Links* programme that were children (1 Apr 2021–31 March 2022).
- 528 hampers and 602 toy parcels delivered to families by Prison Fellowship (Christmas 2021).

(*The programme provides a range of practical and emotional advice and support to families of people in prison.)

Support to assist those in custody with family relations

(NIPS funded)

- 398 needs assessments completed by Barnardo's (Barnardo's, 1 Apr 2021 – 31 March 2022).
- 80 parents enrolled for programmes.
- 685 individual sessions.

How well did we do it?

Virtual Visits

Table 2: Visiting Survey from the families' perspective – challenges faced in virtual visits.

Issue	Not challenging	Quite Challenging	Very challenging
Other family life commitments	60%	28%	12%
The kids don't engage	56.4%	25.6%	17.9%
Tension	68.9%	22.2%	8.9%
Can make separation harder	40%	28.9%	31.1%
Length of contact	39.4%	30.3%	30.3%

Access to virtual calls

Table 3: Visiting Survey from the families' perspective – question – if you had access to virtual visits how often would you have these?

Frequency	Number of respondents
At least weekly	47
Fortnightly	2
Monthly or less	5
I have not had access to virtual calls	1
I do not wish to use virtual calls	1

Support for families of those in custody

Family Links - of those closed cases:

- 334 received practical support.
- 123 family sessions were delivered.
- 215 one-to-ones with parents.
- 115 one-to-ones with children.
- 2,206 phones calls managed.

(NIACRO, 1 Apr 2021 –31 March 2022).

Support to assist those in custody with family relations

- 40 group sessions delivered by Family Matters programme*.
- 50 families supported by Family Matters programme.

(*This Barnardos programme helps improve and maintain relationships between children and their fathers.)

Table 4: Visiting Survey from the families' perspective – challenges in person visits

Issue	Not challenging	Quite Challenging	Very challenging
Length of contact is too short	30%	46%	24%
Contact times	30.4%	45.7%	23.9%
Busy environment	50%	31.8%	18.2%
Childcare	75%	15%	10%
Family challenge	53.8%	25.6%	20.5%

Is anyone better off?

Virtual Visits

Table 5: Visiting Survey from the families' perspective – aspects that respondents found important about virtual calls

Aspect	Not important	Quite important	Very important
More people involved in interaction	7.4%	13%	79.6%
Reassurance	2%	12.2%	85.7%
Staying connected to the home	0%	3.9%	96.1%
Parenting support	10.9%	13%	76.1%
Increase in engagement	0%	13.3%	86.7%

Table 6: Visiting Survey from the families' perspective – aspects that respondents found important about in-person visits

Aspect	Not important	Quite important	Very important
Physical touch	1.8%	5.5%	92.7%
Reassurance	0%	10%	90%
Connectedness	0%	12.2%	87.8%
Parenting support	8.5%	14.9%	76.6%
Meaningful engagement	0%	10.2%	89.9%

Support for families of those in custody

NIACRO Family Links arranged a number of summer activities for young people and families including a family day at Belfast Zoo.

A new Family Links post has been created in Hydebank Wood College and significant work has been done to develop family relationships improving family connections.

Family Links facilitated zoom visits in their premises between dads in custody and their children.

A young male aged 14 was struggling with how strict his mum was with him because she didn't want him to turn out like his brother who is in prison on drug offences. Family Links had discussions with him and his mum together and individually resulting in more realistic boundaries being set enabling him to experience age appropriate experiences.

Family Links have advocated with social services around the importance of children understanding the family members' circumstances. Whilst this was challenging it has provided great emotional impact for the young people and families involved.

Support to assist those in custody with family relations

Improved knowledge of Parenting

87% of prisoners who worked with Barnardo's reported an improvement by the end of their intervention.

Ability to understand the impact of their own behaviour/choices on children/family

93% reported an improvement by the end of their intervention.

Reporting Period:

April 2021-March 2022

(Some data refers back to September 2020)



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