

HIGHLAND THIRD SECTOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES GROUP

Activity report to The Highland Council on January 2019

This report and presentation is the first of its kind – an opportunity for the Commissioned Children services provided by a wide range of Third Sector partners to showcase their work and how it contributes to the health, wellbeing, education and sustainability of the Highlands.

There is a long and proud tradition in the Highlands of working in partnership with agencies, communities and Third Sector. Innovation and collaboration are, and always have been, essential in the area. In the current and future climate of budget constraints, mixed with increasing needs and expectations, we must all work together to meet the ever-changing challenges and aspirations of our communities.

As Third Sector we are proud to be working with, serving and supporting our communities. We believe a collaborative approach with children and families is central; they are also key partners in the future of Highlands.

Third Sector organisations tend to work in a holistic and person-centred way, often with children, young people or families who have become disenfranchised with Public Sector services. The independence of the Third Sector enables greater trust by service users. The Third Sector works with some of the most vulnerable and marginalised children, young people and adults in Highland. The Third Sector works in a user-led way or with significant service user involvement; it is often community based and/or led, with a focus on early intervention and building resilience.

Partnership working with the Third Sector fits Highland Council strategic priorities and aspirations as and National Policy.

Indeed, in “Local Voices, Highland Choices”, The Highland Council Programme 2017-2022, it states:

.. we will be led by the guiding principle that to be an effective Council, we need to be a listening Council, and the planning and delivery of services across Highland must be done in a collaborative and inclusive way.

However, what is clear is that we will be most effective working collaboratively across the chamber, with our partners and communities in the best interests of all our citizens

And:

“The Council will also support community bodies to do more and target support to particular people and places in most need.”

In the Foreword to The Highland Community Planning Partnership (CPP), David Alston, the then Chair of Highland Community Planning Board said:

“The Highland Community Planning Partnership (CPP) seeks to build on this strong foundation by bringing together public agencies, third sector organisations and other key community groups. We aim to work with the people of Highland to plan and secure resources where needed for the provision of services which improve outcomes, with a view to reducing inequalities. The Highland CPP has been tasked with the development of the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP). The HOIP outlines our aspirations for Highland and the specific actions we will undertake to deliver them, and has been developed following extensive engagement with communities across Highland.

“The Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP)’s main ambition is to tackle the issues that lead to inequalities. In doing so, we will make the Highlands a fairer place, so that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of our region. We will do this by listening to our communities and working with them to make Highland an even better place to live, work and play.”

Christie Commission on The Future Delivery of Public Services (2011) identified as a priority: *“Maximising scarce resources by utilising all available resources from the public, private and third sectors, individuals, groups and communities.”*

We ask that members agree the following:

- Note the report and presentation about the contribution the Third Sector makes to Highland Council, Highland CPP and National Priorities
- Acknowledge the vital role that Third Sector plays in the success of Highlands and in supporting those most in need of services.
- Agree to a presentation and report every 6 months to allow further and deeper understanding of the work of Third Sector in partnership with Highland Council, other agencies, families and communities in Highland.

Impact of Third Sector Children and Families Services

Below are a small selection of examples of the impact on children, young people and their families of work carried out by commissioned services to meet The Highland Council priorities as identified by the Redesign Board.

Priority: Services for Looked After Children (including placements)

Homeless Trust: Planefield House provides an inspiring, supportive environment to young adults, who have left local authority care, where they are empowered to develop independent intellectual and critical thinking, life skills and risk related resilient strategies. Person centred support at the Unit focuses on increasing the young adult's confidence, education, work and recreational activities, self-esteem, independent living skills and accountability to their communities.

"Planefield has saved me." "Things would have worked out differently for me if it hadn't been for the care and support from Planefield staff"

Who Cares? Scotland: *Journeys in the North* was a core aspect of participatory activity between April and July, with children and young people from Highland playing a leading role. It was a highly ambitious creative engagement project stretching across the North of Scotland, bringing local artists alongside 60 care experienced children and young people and their friends to create powerful works of art on the theme of 'journeys'. It culminated in a major public exhibition in Inverness in July, with over 300 visitors, formally opened by Children's Minister Maree Todd MSP alongside many Care Experienced Young People.

Participant: "the best three days I ever had in my life" Attendee: "It was amazing. I was quite overwhelmed by the depth of story revealed in the art work, poetry, song lyrics and video across the day. The standard of work was so high - it is wonderful to see so much talent among these young people. I do not think anyone could have gone and come away as the same person."

Priority: Support for alternative education packages which avoid Out of Authority Placements or enable the return of young people to Highland

Glachbeg Croft Centre: Glachbeg is a small croft located on the Black Isle, run for the purpose of providing tailored one-to-one support for individuals with a wide range of Additional Support Needs. Once a placement has been agreed upon Glachbeg provide the greatest range of support possible to ensure the individual feels welcomed and part of the Glachbeg "family". Being able to form a trusted bond with their member of staff, with the croft itself and with the other staff and placements present in a safe, supportive environment is a key part of developing a sense of personal belonging.

Case study about a young boy of 11 who has been attending Glachbeg since the age of 7. The placement was in response to behavioural

challenges at school that reduced school attendance, with a risk of exclusion. Over time, new skills were learned and self-confidence grew enabling improved attendance and productivity at school. The 'safe space' provided by Glachbeg has enabled him to work through stresses without the destructive behaviour that led to his need of Glachbeg in the first place.

Priority: Edge of Care Support (intensive support to families)

Home-Start: Families come to Home-Start for support because they feel lonely and isolated, or are struggling with mental health difficulties, have low self-esteem or need support with their children's development. By the time their support comes to an end, over 90% of families feel their children's emotional and physical health and wellbeing has improved; the parents feel less isolated; parental health is improved and parents feel more involved with their child's development. (Figures from Home-Start Impact Report 2017)

"I feel, looking back to when I was referred to Home-Start, that I have come so far and achieved so much and I feel that thanks to Home-Start I can continue, with confidence in building mine and my family's future.... Most of all I feel confident and excited about moving forward with life and I do feel that is down to the support of Home-Start and my amazing volunteer. Thank you."

Priority: Support for young carers

Tykes: Added value of the impact of Tykes to families is estimated by external evaluation (Mackay Consultants) is equivalent to £1.2 million per year.

Case study from external evaluation: 17 years old living alone due to father in Prison. Mum and Dad separated and Mum lives in England. Young person with Tykes for just over 1 year. Tykes supported young person to move into a smaller home; provided clothing and equipment for his home; took young person shopping fortnightly; helped with forms, electricity etc.; liaised with school to enable young person to carry on and finish course; supported young person to visit Mum at Christmas and then for him to move and live with her permanently.

Connecting Young Carers: Some examples of good practice from Connecting Young Carers include: Young Carers Positive Award – a resource supporting the identification and support of young carers in Highland schools; working alongside Inverness College to help them gain a quality award in supporting student carers enabling a more positive transition for young carers; running Young Carers Ambassador Group to take a lead in how the service is delivered and who designed and supported the running of an event for a visit from HRH Princess Royal.

“My time in the project has been amazing, I’ve met so many new people who have turned into close friends for life. My confidence has grown and so has my socialising with other people”

“My time was great. Made new friends and learnt new things. Great to get a break every now and then”

“Thanks so much for all you do. It makes such a huge positive difference to young lives. She loved her time away with you” (parent)

Priority: Support for children with a disability (including Autistic Spectrum Disorder)

Children in Highland Information Point+: CHIP + are trusted by parent/carers as staff listen reflectively and empathise with challenges families face, helping to increase their resilience and well-being which leads to better outcomes for children. The support provided by CHIP+ relieves pressure on statutory services and resources by ensuring parent-carers receive early intervention to avoid escalation to crisis; enable de-escalation of crisis situations; maintain relationships between parents and professionals and contribute to collaborative efforts to avert need for residential care/out of area placements.

*“It was huge. At the time I was a single parent with an ASD son who was not being supported educationally and was really struggling. The support I received made all the difference to his life and mine. It sounds dramatic but just having someone listen to you and support you is so important.”
(Parent-Carer, Dec 2017)*

*“CHIP is a life line for so many families. There is nowhere else to go. It's really boiling down to parents having to seek, create and provide, emotionally, physically and financially for their ASN children... It is so emotionally draining, everything is a battle. You want your energies to be the best parent you can be rather than spend time trying to find out information, best education provision, if your child is entitled to any support and then trying to jump through the hoops for them to access it.”
(Parent-Carer, Mar 2018)*

National Autistic Society: The National Autistic Society’s service provides information and advice to parents and carers across Highland about autism and related issues. They have a very close relationship with other charities, especially CHIP+ where joint working enables delivery of sessions that one charity alone could not facilitate. Other charities and organisations are signposted as needed e.g. Connecting Carers, Citizen’s Advice Bureau. There is very little duplication but with each service having particular expertise to bring. They also support the library at the Pines and have a very close relationship with the Highland Council run Pines training facility.

“I am so grateful to know that there is such support available.”

“Absolute font of information and the library is excellent”

“Advice offered has been invaluable and has made a positive impact on my son’s life.”

“I’ve spoken to you a number of times and have always found your advice very practical and helpful.”

“I know I am not on my own”.

Priority: Support for Kinship Carers

Children 1st: The benefit of the relationship-based approach taken by Children 1st ensures time to engage with families and to really listen to them. This is what the Carers have said they really value, but it takes time to build up trust and confidence to really engage and help families to be honest about the reality of the pressures and strengths of being a Kinship Carer.

“If I am struggling I can talk about it to Children 1st. I also find meeting and listening to other carers’ advice is good and they know how you feel”
Parent

“Helped with mental health a lot” Child

Priority: Child-care provision including wrap around care

Care and Learning Alliance: CALA carries out a wide range of services throughout Highland including direct delivery of Early Learning and Childcare ensuring there is local provision in all areas. There is close collaboration with The Highland Council who acknowledge that they could not deliver the current funded hours, nor scale up to 1140 hours without these partner centres. Some examples of other work to support children and families include: Toddler group and family support, including targeted groups: by singing, reading and talking the children have developed their communication skills and the parents’ confidence has increased. Opening Doors employability project: Last year 23 mentees took part, 5 of whom were young people with caring responsibilities and almost half had a disability or additional support need. Support for members groups means that other services are also supported and sustained across all areas. The parenting work in Inverness prison is unique in UK and has supported dads to increase confidence and parenting skills. The high-quality training in learning and play is for all including practitioners, childminders and teachers and supports creativity, learning and development.

Support in Inverness Prison “I recently had a Dad attending his first children’s visit session with his one-year old son. When the children had left, he thanked me for the session and said he felt like a Dad again.”

Family support: “Very friendly and caring to both children and parents. They care about every child and support each child’s individual needs.”

Health Visitor: “Thank you so much for this update. I saw Mum about three weeks ago . . . she looks so much happier- well done.” Parent *“CALA Family*

support made a huge difference when otherwise I would have no support network" Parent

#Opening Doors "(it) was the start of my life. Before #Openingdoors I felt that I couldn't achieve anything as I had no education and didn't think I would ever be employable. I now work in a nursery! I'm so happy and content as I have achieved everything I set out to do."

Priority: Information, advice, advocacy and other services

Crocus: The teenage group, run in partnership with Youth Highland, have had a hugely busy year! In the summer of 2017 we had a residential trip to Loch Eil where the young people began planning a 'Grief Brief' resource for use to train school staff and other professionals in supporting bereaved young people. The result of this has been an amazing package including a Grief Brief poster, training sessions designed and delivered by the young people, video testimonies and some pretty funky hoodies. The young people have delivered the training to groups in Alness Academy, Kinlochbervie High, Farr High and Dornoch Academy as well as part of a wider training day in Inverness and to youth groups in Balintore. Having gone through this process, the young people involved reported feeling much more confident and able to take a lead in managing their own support and have successfully transitioned into universal youth services with the support of Youth Highland.

"Our daughter treasures the things made at Crocus. She finds comfort in these. She couldn't wait to go back after the first session - she said it was her favourite club to go to. It was so nice to hear laughter coming from the room - it sounded like they were having a really good time".

Highland Children's Forum: HCF continues to listen to children and young people with Additional Support Needs to ensure those voices shape policy design and service development. HCF also promotes effective participation through sharing of consultation methods and approaches across sectors. Recent consultations about young people in transition out of school and those who are of school age but not in full-time education have suggested that the policy of the Highland Practice Model no longer what needs to change: it is the practice on the ground that is inconsistent. HCF is changing direction to empower young people to be more directly active in influencing policy and practice. Involving young people with lived experience in presenting information to the Care, Learning and Housing Committee about the policy of a Joint Transition team was a key factor in that strategy development.

"I think [HCF] are already doing an excellent job. I have found [staff] exceptional in understanding points made and distilling these into useful points for improvement in respect of service providers. The key is that HCF should have approachable, non-judgemental and knowledgeable staff and you definitely have that." Parent in response to service evaluation survey

Third Sector Support to The Highland Council

12 organisations of varying size with a Service Level Agreement contributed to this report. 20 organisations are currently part of the Children and Families Services Group, but the short time scale for preparation of this report means that not all were able to present data in time.

Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of information about each of the contributing organisations: the purpose and activities of their Service Level Agreement and the Highland Council priorities to which these contribute.

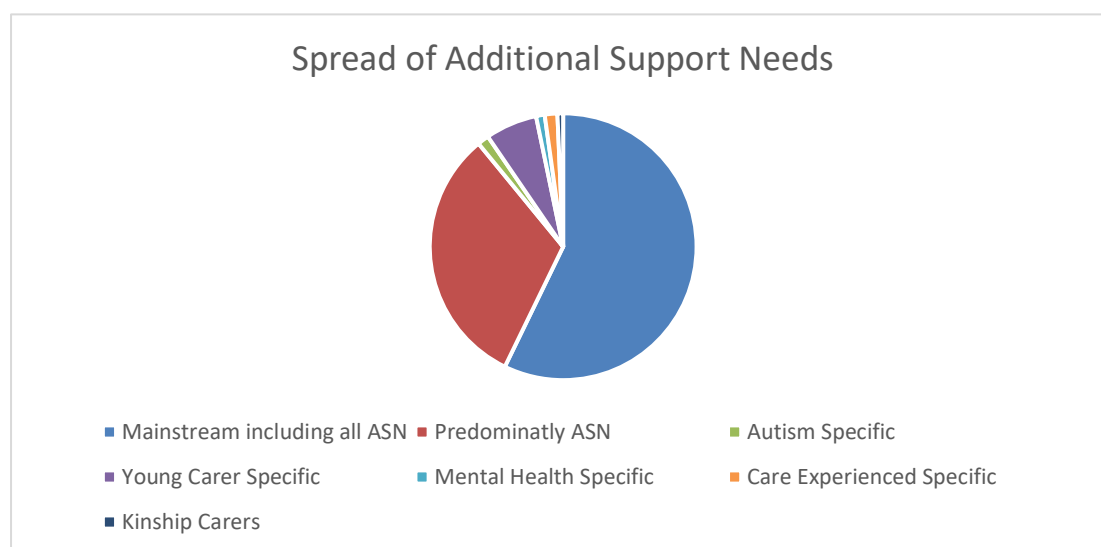
The following is information amalgamated across the contributing organisations. Many children, young people and families will access more than one service and therefore be counted more than once. This will be especially true of those children and families with complex needs. The numbers below represent the total number of children, young people or families accessing activities offered by the organisations, rather than the total number of actual children, young people or families accessing any service.



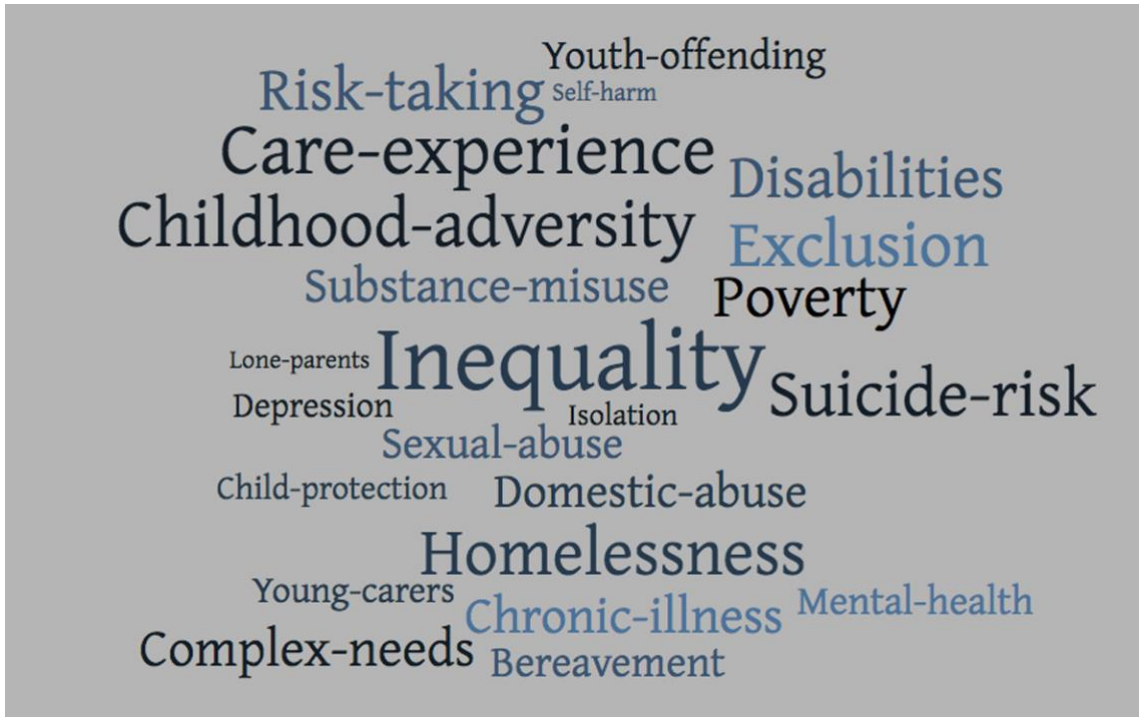
8742 children
receiving a
service



2713 families
receiving a service



Additional Support Needs of Participants as Listed by Organisation



Examples of vulnerability of service users

Geographical range of service:

Just over half of the organisations included in this report work across Highland. The others work in one or more specific area/s of Highland where need is high. Often these have been community led when local needs have been identified. No two Highland communities are the same, and often a local solution is more appropriate than a Highland-wide approach.

National Profile:

Almost all organisations are part of a national group, are affiliated to a national group or otherwise feed into the national picture in their area of service.

People working for these 12 Third Sector organisations:



Employees: 218 equating to approximately 134 full time equivalent posts (FTE)
 Bank staff: 110
 Volunteers: 131
 Organisations spent an average of 76% of SLA on staff costs

Additional monies outside of the SLA brought in to Highland by the Third Sector to support vulnerable children, young people and families for the 9 organisations who provided this information was £684,619 pa. This money would not necessarily be available without the contribution made by The Highland Council.

Appendix

Organisation	Main Purpose of SLA	Main Activities of SLA	Unique Selling Point	FHC Outcomes	Performance Indicators
CALA	To provide quality play, early learning and childcare services for children and families across Highland and support others to do so. To provide holistic and targeted family support to parents and provide opportunities for employment and training for the sector. To support delivery of funded ELC including meeting expansion to 1140 hours by 2020 and working in partnership with Highland Council. To provide a staffbank agency to support temporary absences in the sector and ensure sustainable services.	We work in partnership across all agencies, including children and families as stakeholders, to deliver best practice, through provision of: Early learning and childcare (ELC); support to other providers in sector including HR and management; staff training and development; support to parents and families in the community and in their own homes; parenting skills support: support for play; support to vulnerable groups (e.g. dads in prison and Gypsy Travellers); Gaelic toddler group and ELC provision; employability support to young people experiencing challenges; staff bank relief agency; partnership working and innovation to find positive solutions especially in rural areas.	Only 3rd sector organisation of its type that delivers, supports, develops, trains and promotes quality ELC across all of Highland. Access to quality early years provision, childcare and family support means children have the very best start in life and also that communities are sustained. Supporting young people into jobs in rural areas also helps ensure thriving communities. CALA's positive partnership approach means it is uniquely placed to find innovative solutions and new models of working that support the future	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15	2, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 39, 46, 52, 53, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60

			growth of all areas the region.		
Children 1st	To work with kinship carers and/or placed children /young people to strengthen the family as a placement and nurturing environment for the child/young person to meet their developmental and wellbeing needs by: helping families to identify and articulate areas for change, and a support them to make progress towards outcomes identified together; strengthening kinship care families' connections to local supports including informal networks and universal/local services and resources.	Kinship care support & advice; Kinship coffee mornings; 1-1 work with children & young people; 1 to 6 sessions with parents/carers; Group work with mums/ female carers; Consultation/training to professionals; Outreach service to outlying areas; Direct work and training in schools; Social events to help engage marginalised families that we work with.	Therapeutic, holistic support and advice available to the whole family by a service that is not involved with the statutory process.	1, 7, 8	1, 2, 45, 49, 50, 51
CHIP+	The delivery of information, support and advice services to parents and carers of children and young people with additional support needs (ASN), and the professionals who work with them.	Contact with parent-carers by phone/email or face-to-face – to provide information, support and advice relating to Additional Support Needs, predominantly education-focused, and fulfilling some of the Statutory Duty around the Additional Support for Learning Act (2004;2009). Development and provision of information packs for parent/carers. Information also provided in bulletins and social media. Contributions to local	Only organisation providing this service; staff have knowledge, skills and experience across ASN	1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14	34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 52, 58

		networks, improvement groups and professionals.			
Connecting Young Carers	To improve outcomes for young carers, increase identification, awareness and support for young carers in Highland.	Provision of: short breaks and respite; learning and development opportunities that support young carers in their caring roles; awareness raising and training to pupils and parent groups, teacher and other professionals/community groups; enabling young carers to co-produce the service and feed into national policy; 1:1 support with young carers; signposting to other appropriate sources of help; support access of individual funding; setting up and supporting young carer groups in response to particular need in a community.	Part of the only Carers Centre in Highland, the service benefits from close working with the adult service ensuring the whole family receives relevant help and information if required.	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14,	
Crocus	Deliver bereavement support services to children living in Highland in order to help them to understand and manage the grief that is experienced as a result of the loss of a significant person in their life.	Group sessions, 1-2-1 support, family sessions, social events, training to professionals working with young people, creation of toolkits for use by professionals working in Highland, residential activity weekends, consultation, remembrance days for groups of children, supports for parents/carers in how to help their child through grief.	Only dedicated bereavement service for young people in Highland that can provide tailored support from 1-2-1, groups, residential, family support sessions, training & consultancy	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14	8, 10-14, 33-35, 38, 40-42, 44

Glachbeg Croft Centre	To contribute to the educational programme for youngsters of school age who have Additional Support Needs recognised through their Child's Plan and to provide a suitable environment that allows progress and positive experiences to be achieved. To create, mould and advance educational tasks and activities that match and further an individual's skills and abilities.	Practical work involving animal care, from small animals to livestock; Liaise with educational staff to focus on aspects of an individual's development that ensure the right targets are being set and worked towards; Develop tasks specific to the individual that can help them engage with curricular activities within a classroom environment; Learning personal responsibility through good practice of health and hygiene and health and safety guidelines; Developing meaningful life skills such as baking and cooking, along with the ancillary skills of cleaning and tidying up; Developing the means to constructively engage with others and to learn from people with more experience and knowledge; Planning and creating personal projects, such as paintings, cards, decorations and woodwork.	Offer one-to-one placements that can be tailored to meet almost any need, thanks to the breadth of facilities available at this working croft. We have small animals through to livestock. We are able to meet the needs of almost any individual and work with them in a constructive way that is of genuine, focused benefit without trying to force a placement to fit within pre-packaged tasks and services not designed for them.	6, 7, 10, 13	35, 37, 57
Highland Children's Forum	To carry out consultation work with children and young people with additional support needs to contribute to policy development and service design, promote participation.	Consultation with children and young people; Report writing; Presentation to policy making bodies; Recommendations to practice guidance; Contribution to improvement processes and QA and inspection; Promotion of	Listening to children and young people with Additional Support Needs including those with learning and communication challenges	11, 12, 13, 14	60

		participation including training delivery; Sharing of tools for participation			
Homeless Trust	Supported Accommodation & General Support. To provide a place of safety and support for young people who are leaving Local Authority Care and to prepare them for independent living.	Employability upskilling; Cooking; Shopping; Maintaining accommodation; Tenants Rights & Responsibilities; Keeping Healthy (Sports & Therapeutic); Security and support.	Service User involvement in business side of Service appropriate to age and understanding	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	1, 12, 13, 45, 48, 55
Home-Start East Highland	Home –Start East Highland will recruit and train Volunteers to offer support, friendship and practical help to families living within East Highland and who have at least one child under the age of five	Strengthen emotional wellbeing of parents to improve the quality of life of their children; reduce isolation; improve access to services; reduce the need for intervention from other services; enhance parental ability and capacity to care and meet the needs of their children.	Parents helping other parents. Only organisation in the area that supports parents with young children in the family home. As well as referrals from statutory agencies, anyone can self-refer. The service is tailor made to meet the needs of the family and children. Regular review visits with the family ensure the service continues to meet their needs.	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14	1, 2, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 43, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 56, 57 and 60.
Home-Start Caithness	The organisation will recruit and train Volunteers to offer support, friendship and practical help to families living within Caithness and who have at least one child under the age of five.	Strengthen emotional wellbeing of parents to improve the quality of life of their children; reduce isolation; improve access to services; reduce the need for intervention from other services; enhance parental ability	Parents helping other parents. Only organisation in the area that supports parents with young children in the family home. As well as referrals from statutory agencies, anyone can self-	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14	2, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 43, 50, 51, 52

		and capacity to care and meet the needs of their children.	refer. The service is tailor made to meet the needs of the family and children. Regular review visits with the family ensure the service continues to meet their needs.		
National Autistic Society	The provision of information and support to parents and carers on autism specific topics.	Answer queries on autism related topics (received by telephone, email or face to face) and respond with appropriate support; Facilitate information talks and coffee mornings at The Pines in Inverness (in association with Chip+); Support the Pines Library; Update information relevant to the service on The Pines website.	Only autism specific service for parents and carers in Highland, with national expertise, integrated with Pines facility	9, 13	5, 8
Tykes	Support for young carers in Sutherland	To work with statutory and voluntary agencies to support and encourage young carers' educational achievements and help them access normal childhood activities to provide them with respite from their caring role, thereby helping them to cope with their situation; To promote the general health and well-being of young carers by providing opportunities to raise confidence and self-esteem, and	No one else provides a similar service in Sutherland.	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	4, 6, 12, 17, 18, 26, 28, 34, 36, 38

		help identify the value of their role - personally to their families and within their communities, so that their conditions of life may be improved; To build a network of support for young carers in Sutherland and the surrounding area by raising awareness of young carers and their issues within local services and in the community			
Who Cares?	<p>The service in Highland provides independent, individual advocacy support alongside a broad range of participation/engagement/influencing opportunities for children and young people who are in care or have experience of being in care. The service promotes the participation and agency of Care Experienced Young People in decision-making that affects them both individually and collectively.</p> <p>Over the past year the Who Cares? Scotland service received 330 referrals, and provided support to 120 of Highland's care experienced children and young people.</p>	To work in partnership to raise awareness and secure action on issues affecting young people who are in care or have experienced care; to provide independent, individual advocacy support to children and young people enabling their participation in processes impacting on their lives, including Child's Plan meetings, Court processes, Children's Hearings and LAC Reviews, helping to ensure that their voice is heard; to assist young people in accessing service and support and progressing appropriate appeal and complaints processes; to provide information and advice including in relation to the full range of children's rights; to encourage and enable young people to engage	Independent Advocacy for Care Experienced Young People, promoting participation, engagement and influence.	All of FHC Outcomes as they relate to Highland's looked after and care experienced children and young people	Full range of Indicators

		<p>with a diverse range of local, regional and national opportunities, events and decision-making processes to build confidence, connection and self-belief, and shape progress on issues of national and local importance to them and their peers; to involve young people in consultation, engagement and action on a variety of themes that shape their lives.</p>			
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