

**What will
Scotland look
like when the
promise is
kept?**



**Plan
3124**

Plan 24-30 is Scotland's shared plan for keeping the promise by 2030.

It contains 25 route maps, organised under each of the five foundations of the promise. The route maps are national level plans, which outline for as many years as is possible:

- what must be delivered for the promise to be kept,
- who is responsible for doing it,
- when it must be done.

Each route map has a set of outcomes, which taken together create the vision for what Scotland will look like when the promise is kept. They are fully mapped back to the Independent Care Review and the promise's calls to action, ensuring Plan 24-30 stays true to what children, young people and care experienced adults said must happen.

This document contains these outcomes only, to give an overview of what Scotland will look like in 2030 when the promise is kept. To see what the work is, who is doing it and when it will be done, please visit:

<https://www.plan2430.scot/the-route-maps/>



Voice Outcomes

Documenting Decisions

- There is a shared, consistent and human language of care across services, free from overly professionalised and system-based terminology, ensuring that children, young people, families and care experienced adults are understood and supported with dignity. All reports and care records use simple, caring and plain language, written with the assumption that the child or young person will read them. The tone and content reflects respect, empathy and inclusion.
- Decisions, particularly within the Children's Hearings System, are recorded with accuracy, clarity and relevance - evidencing reasoning, respecting sibling relationships and avoiding unnecessary or historic detail.
- Those with care experience hold and own the narrative of their stories and lives, shaping how their experiences are understood and represented, and have control over how their information is shared. Decision makers are able to access the right information at the right time, with digital tools supporting ownership, and workforce knowledge recognised as key to effective decisions.
- Public discussion of care is free from stigma and sensationalism. Society and media portray care experience accurately and positively, celebrating love and belonging.

Listening

- Children, young people, and care experienced adults are listened to continuously and meaningfully, in ways that are relational, creative, and appropriate to age, stage, and circumstances. The workforce and decision-makers are given the time, emotional space, and resources to listen well, with the expectation that what they hear leads to change. Listening and participation underpin service delivery, regulation, and continuous improvement, embedding learning in everyday practice, and removing the need for future large-scale reviews.

Participation and engagement

- Children, young people, families and care experienced adults meaningfully influence decisions that affect their lives, with their voices and those of trusted adults prioritised over professional hierarchy.
- Children, young people, and care experienced adults understand and own their personal histories and care records, and are supported in accessing them safely and meaningfully.

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Family Outcomes

Universal family support

- The universal support system supports all families and identifies those who need support. A significant upscaling of universally accessible family support services has meant that the commitment to early help and support is realised through holistic, non- stigmatising, inclusive whole family support for all families that need it, for as long as they need it.

Intensive family support

- Scotland shares a clear, national understanding of the purpose and delivery of the ten principles of intensive family support. Intensive family support is proactive, and easy to access. Families no longer need to fight for help. Systems focus on empowerment and relational support rather than risk management.
- The principles of intensive family support will extend to kinship, foster, and adoptive families, recognising their continued need for wraparound, therapeutic help to build and sustain relationships and stability.
- Support is available for all families caring for disabled children and those with additional support needs. Where a parent has a learning disability, care planning is specific and supportive and mental health help and support is available at all stages of parent and carers' parenting journey
- Scotland's justice system protects children's relationships and rights when parents face imprisonment. Short custodial sentences are avoided; sentencing considers children's welfare; and wraparound support prevents trauma and separation.
- Children and adult services work together to support families affected by substance use and holistically assess children and young people within their families to support them to stay together when safe. Early, intensive and domestic abuse informed support is available and there is no penalisation of parents experiencing domestic abuse. Perpetrators of domestic abuse are held accountable and children and young people are protected from harm. Access to rehabilitation and support is more readily available.
- Families whose children are removed from their care are not abandoned. They receive therapeutic support, advocacy, and engagement to repair relationships and sustain wellbeing.

Poverty

- Poverty reduction reaches families on the edges of care and early help and support is universal, stigma-free, and financially competent.
 - No care experienced young person or family experiences poverty. Transitions to adulthood are secure and intergenerational cycles between poverty and care are broken.
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Care Outcomes

Advocacy and legal advice

- All children, young people and families in contact with the 'care system' and care experienced adults have access to independent advocacy and legal advice and representation if required.
- Legal professionals working with children and young people act with empathy, clarity, and respect. There are accredited specialisms in child law that embed understanding of children's rights, trauma, and wellbeing.

Decision making

- Decision making is honest and transparent and grounded in what children and young people need and want, with secure and loving relationships at its heart.
- Decision making takes account of the dynamics of brother and sister relationships and hears their voices, including in Children's Hearings.
- Decision making challenges traditional power dynamics. Family Group Decision Making is accessible to all children and families who want it in every local area in Scotland.
- The Children's Hearings System has been redesigned to better serve and listen to children and families, including by ensuring that children and their families are the whole focus of their system and their legal rights upheld and respected. This has included periods of testing, planning ahead to account for any changes to the numbers of children referred to the Children's Hearings System and a clear assessment of the decision-making structure. The core principles underpinning the Children's Hearings System are upheld and understood across Scotland.

Moving on and lifelong support

- Care experienced people experience joined-up, planned and lifelong support as they move from childhood into adulthood, with no gaps, cliff edges or fragmentation between support.
- Care experienced people are supported to stay in care for as long as they want or need, to move on when ready, and to return without stigma or barriers.
- Scotland delivers a holistic, lifelong 'good parent' approach, ensuring care experienced people can access support through any door, at any stage of life.

- Care experienced children, young people and adults experience greater equity of opportunity and improved life chances, supported by stable relationships and practical support.
- All those with parenting responsibility operate with a shared culture, values and purpose, enabling consistent, rights-based and relationship-centred delivery.

Relationships

- Scotland's understanding of risk recognises the danger of disconnection, including the risk of removing children and young people from loving, stable relationships. Decision-making balances protection from harm with the right to lasting, supportive relationships. Every child and young person is supported to sustain relationships that matter to them - with family, brothers and sisters, carers, and trusted adults - wherever it is safe to do so. Workers have the time, trust, and reflective support to prioritise relationships.
- Where families wish to stay connected but it is not safe to do so, systems ensure details are maintained so that reconnection remains possible if a child or young person wishes. Recording practices reflect the value placed on brother and sister relationships as a right and source of wellbeing. Decision making relating to brothers and sisters is accurately recorded and reviewed.

Stability

- When it is not safe for children and young people to remain at home, they live with consistent caregivers in safe, loving environments that meet their needs. Children and young people do not experience unnecessary moves, and relationships that matter to them are protected and sustained.
- When moves or transitions are unavoidable, they are carefully planned, relational, and informed. Support wraps around families and carers, and children and young people have time, information, and relationship support so that transitions do not feel rushed or unsafe.

Where children live

- Kinship care is valued as a vital part of family-based care. Kinship carers receive financial, emotional and practical support without stigma or bureaucracy, and are recognised as part of the broader workforce with access to reflective support and supervision.
- Adoption is underpinned by careful matching, transparency, and lifelong support. Families are helped to understand trauma and attachment and receive ongoing reflective help and support. Adoption breakdowns are recognised and supported compassionately.

- Foster carers are valued and supported to care with love and patience. They receive financial, emotional, and professional support. High-quality, values-based fostering is promoted.
 - Residential care operates on shared therapeutic values, providing stable, nurturing relationships. Rules are flexible to meet individual needs, and the workforce balances consistency with adaptability.
 - Secure care is used only when absolutely necessary, with therapeutic, trauma-informed approaches replacing punitive models. Children have access to education, their family where safe to do so, and a voice in their care. Transition out of secure care is well supported, with intermediate options and extended care where needed."
 - Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children receive the same standard of loving, rights-based care as all children in Scotland. Their cultural and religious identities are respected, and they are protected from harm, trafficking and distress.
 - Care for Scotland's children and young people remains the responsibility of Scottish Local Authorities. Scotland does not sell to other jurisdictions, upholding children's fundamental rights and keeping them within their communities, unless in exceptional circumstances.
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People Outcomes

Leadership

- Leadership across Scotland's 'care system' is values-based, relational and collective, enabling safe and loving relationships for children, young people, families, and care experienced adults through shared power, honest dialogue, ongoing learning, and a broadened understanding of risk.

Recruitment and retention

- There are enough skilled, confident and well-supported people, both unpaid and paid, to meet the needs of Scotland's children, young people, families, and care experienced adults. The paid and unpaid workforce have the time, resources, and capacity to provide the care and support required.
- Recruitment, induction and development of the unpaid and paid workforce prioritises values, relational qualities, and ability to care, ensuring that those working with and caring for children, young people, families, and care experienced adults can act with compassion and create nurturing, loving relationships.
- Employment conditions across the workforce supporting children, young people, families, and care experienced adults enable people to flourish, feel valued, and remain committed to their roles. This means they have fair pay, manageable workloads, and supportive environments that promote wellbeing and retention.
- The number and quality of kinship, foster, and adoptive carers exceeds the needs of Scotland's children and young people, ensuring they, particularly brothers and sisters, are cared for in families that can meet their needs and sustain relationships.

Rules, processes and culture

- A strong national values framework guides everyone working with or caring for children, young people, families, and care experienced adults. All organisations and Local Authorities understand and act on their collective parenting responsibilities, ensuring that workforce culture reflects kindness, empathy, and care.
- The system of rules and safeguards is reoriented around love and consistent relationships. Professional guidelines and boundaries support, not constrain, caring behaviour. Members of the workforce are trusted and supported to bring their whole selves to their roles and to act with compassion and good judgment.

- Scotland's understanding of risk is broad and distinguishes between crisis risk and everyday relational risk. Risk-taking is recognised as a normal part of care, and professional judgment rooted in trust, respect and love replace excessive proceduralism.
- Rules and processes do not prevent children, young people, and families from living ordinary, fulfilling lives unnecessarily. Regardless of where children and young people live, they are fully included in family life and community activities, supported by proportionate regulation and trust.
- Scotland actively works to ensure that children, young people, and adults with care experience are not stigmatised. Every care setting and public service fosters a culture of belonging, recognising care as an expression of love, not difference.

Workforce support

- All members of the workforce experience regular, reflective supervision, coaching, and feedback that prioritises emotional support, learning, and improvement. Reflection focuses on what matters to children, young people, and families, supporting the workforce to develop and sustain compassionate, relational practice.
 - Scotland's workforce are supported to manage the emotional labour of care, with recognition that many workers have lived experience of trauma. Trauma-informed systems of care ensure staff wellbeing, emotional availability, and confidence to exercise natural, thoughtful judgment.
 - Kinship, foster, and adoptive carers are recognised as an integral part of Scotland's children's workforce. They have access to supervision, reflective support, and opportunities for rest, underpinned by principles of intensive family support that sustain lasting, loving relationships.
 - Learning and development is designed to ensure that everyone working with children, young people, families and care experienced adults, across social work, education, health, justice, and care, shares a common foundation in child development, attachment, trauma, and rights. Training will be lifelong, role-appropriate, and promote collaboration across disciplines.
 - All those working with and alongside children, young people, and families create environments where children's rights are upheld, voices are heard, and concerns or feedback can be safely shared. Rights-respecting practice is embedded through reflective supervision, feedback loops, and organisational accountability.
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Scaffolding Outcomes

Data and information

- Scotland collects and uses data that reflects what matters to children, young people, and care experienced adults - supporting learning, relationships, and better decisions. Data is accurate, comprehensive, and representative, filling long-standing gaps such as equalities, sibling relationships, and adoption breakdowns.
- Scotland's data systems are integrated and interoperable, allowing visibility of journeys and outcomes across services, and improving accountability for change.
- The workforce is confident and supported to gather, interpret, and use data that reflects lived experience and relationships, not just statistics.
- Children, young people, and care experienced adults have control over their information and how it is shared. Decision makers are able to access the right information at the right time, with digital tools supporting ownership, and workforce knowledge recognised as key to effective decisions, meaning decisions are made and services are designed using diverse, high-quality data and lived experience to meet real needs, rather than repeating historical patterns.

Education

- Schools and local authorities uphold all legal entitlements for care experienced learners, ensuring equality of access and opportunity. All care experienced learners can access inclusive, flexible education with support tailored to their needs and experiences.
- Schools are trauma-informed, relational environments that prioritise nurture, wellbeing, emotional regulation and learning and eliminate seclusion, exclusion and restraint for care experienced learners.
- Teachers and school staff are confident, supported and relationally equipped to help care experienced children and young people thrive and feel they belong.

- Care experienced young people have consistent mentoring and financial support through school, college and university, ensuring positive, sustained destinations.

Governance

- Governance across Scotland's care system places children's rights and relationships at the centre. Leaders at every level are accountable for improving outcomes for care experienced people and demonstrate values-based leadership in action. Accountability frameworks align data, reporting and scrutiny to focus on outcomes that matter to children and families, minimising bureaucracy and improving collective accountability.

Health

- All children, young people, families, and care experienced adults have equal, stigma-free access to physical, mental, dental, and sexual health support through caring, nurturing relationships.
- Scotland delivers timely, trauma-informed mental health support that does not require diagnosis, avoids crisis and hospitalisation, and ensures sufficient inpatient capacity where needed.
- Community-based and family-inclusive therapies are available to all, supporting lifelong mental wellbeing and integrated adult-child services.
- Children, young people, and adults leaving hospital care receive continuous, planned, wraparound support to sustain recovery and reintegration into their communities.

Justice

- Children and young people are not criminalised or incarcerated. The response to behaviour is relational, restorative, and rights based.
- The justice workforce is supported and skilled to act relationally and trauma-informatively, replacing process-driven responses with understanding and care.
- All children's court cases are heard in environments that uphold their rights and allow them to effectively participate rather than traditional criminal courts. Alternative approaches have been developed, and more children are kept within the Children's Hearings System.
- The minimum age of criminal responsibility will be in line with the most progressive global governments.

- No child is placed in a Young Offenders Institution or prison, and young people who turn 18 while in Secure Care are not automatically transferred to a Young Offenders Institute.

Legislation

- Scotland has a clear legislative, enabling environment that keeps the promise.

Money and commissioning

- Scotland's care system does not allow profit or marketisation. Regulatory scrutiny ensures any surplus funds are directed back into the care and support of children and young people. Profit-based targets and incentives have been removed across all services.
- Local and national strategic planning aligns budgets and investment decisions around the needs of children and their families. Challenges in sustaining care are addressed through pooled budgets and coordinated approaches resulting in sufficient provision that meets children's and families' needs safely and locally.
- Systematic disinvestment from acute and crisis services has made resources available to support prevention and early help and support. Services that no longer meet need are refined or phased out, ensuring sustainable investment in what works.
- Commissioning is guided by principles of relational working, trust-based partnerships, and shared accountability, not cost-and-volume contracting. Longer-term funding arrangements promote stability and impact.
- The views of children, young people, and families are central to service design, commissioning and evaluation, ensuring decisions reflect their rights, needs, and relationships.

Rights and restraint

- Scotland fully upholds children and young people's human rights. Every child, young person, and carer understands and can access their rights, which are taught, modelled and embedded across all settings. If children are moved from their families, their rights will be upheld as a minimum standard for their care.
- Rights are upheld through relational practice rather than bureaucracy. Definitions of care experience and entitlements are inclusive and enduring, and systems address social and economic barriers that prevent nurturing care.

- Scotland upholds children's right to safety, dignity and relational support in all settings. Scotland is a nation that does not restrain its children unless in exceptional circumstances, and when it is unavoidable it is co-regulated, trauma-informed, lawful, recorded and used only to keep a child safe. The workforce are nurtured and supported, recognising their needs in this. Consistent definitions, safeguards and leadership cultures grounded in care and rights ensure restraint and seclusion is continuously reduced and monitored across all settings.

Scrutiny and inspection

- Scotland's regulation and inspection systems are centred on relationships and children's rights. Regulators work collaboratively to a single, coherent framework that reflects what children and families value.
- Scrutiny is supportive, reflective and developmental. Inspection and regulation promotes continuous improvement, upholds relational practice, and values care over compliance.
- All inspection and investigation focuses on children's lived experiences. Children's voices are integral to how quality is defined, assessed, and improved.

