

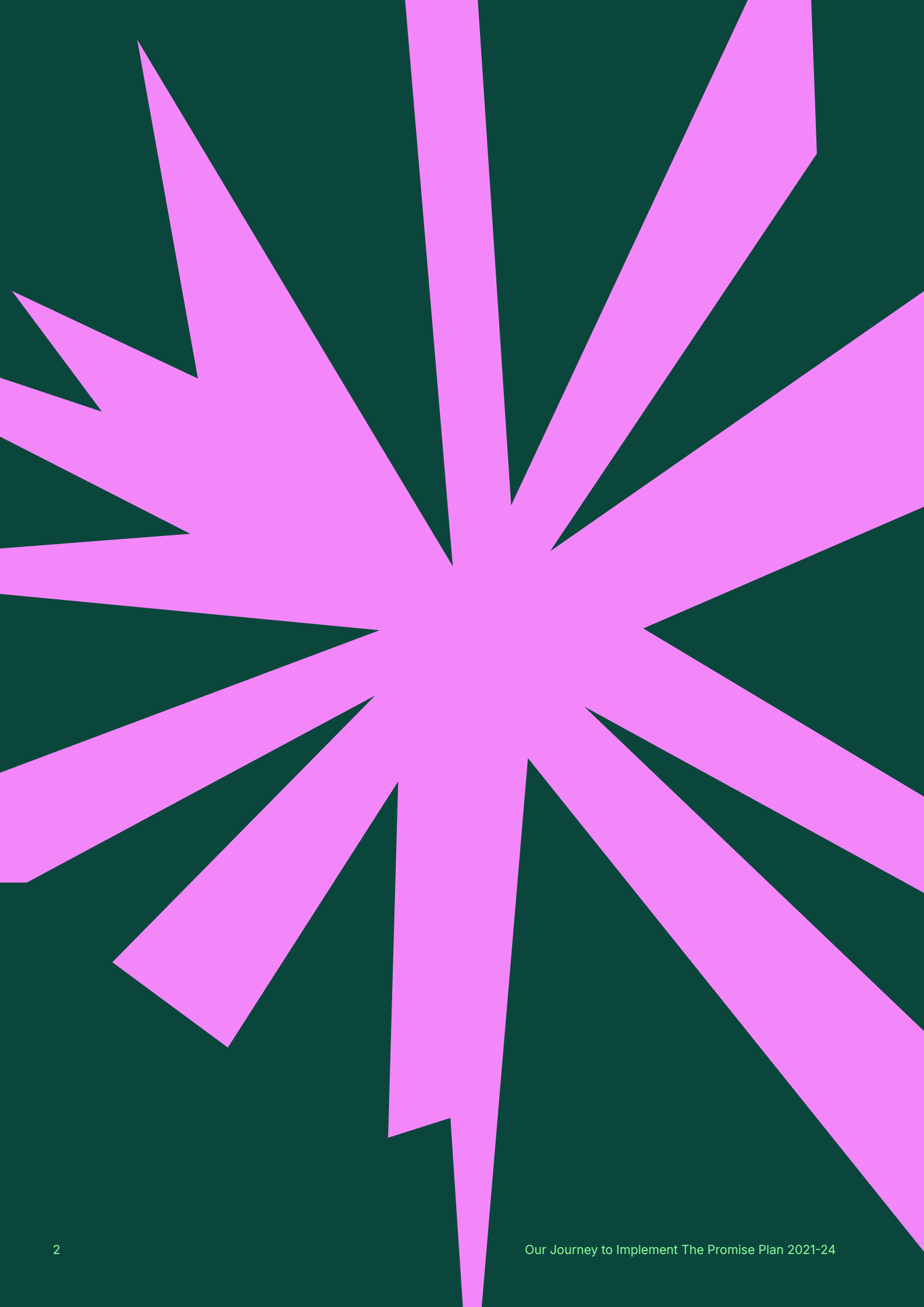


# OUR JOURNEY TO IMPLEMENT THE PROMISE PLAN 2021-24

May 2024

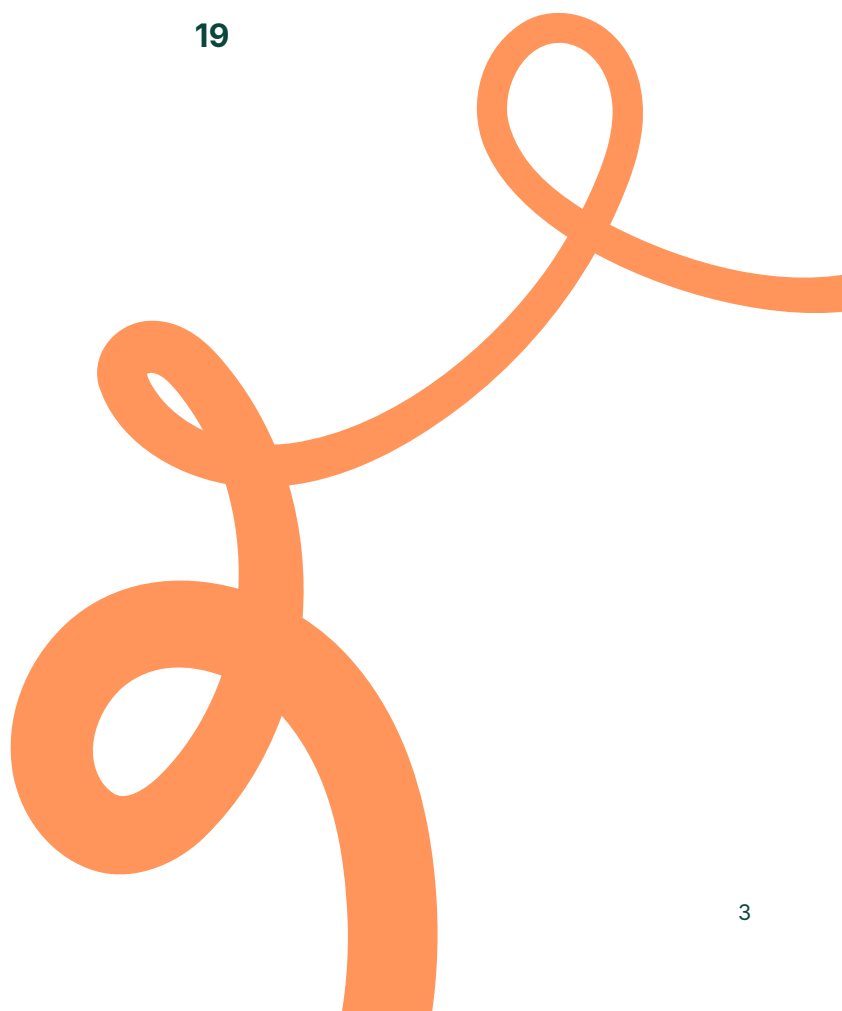
**BARNARDO'S**  
**SCOTLAND**

Changing childhoods.  
Changing lives.



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# Introduction

For over 150 years, we've been changing childhoods and changing lives. Since the very beginning, we've been helping children, young people, and families feel safer, happier, healthier, and more hopeful. Across Scotland, we offer a wide range of services where we actively engage with and learn from the children, young people and families we support. By making sure their voices are heard in our research and influencing work amongst decision-makers across the UK, we can help change children's lives and the systems around them for the better.

In this report, we'll share the progress we've made to #keepthepromise throughout the organisation. We have done this by considering our progress under each of the priority areas within Plan 21-24: A Good Childhood, Whole Family Support, Supporting the Workforce, Planning and Building Capacity.

Whilst we acknowledge there's still much work ahead, we're proud of the groundwork we've laid to pave the way for positive change and brighter futures. Recognising the scale of the challenge, we've reached out to Promise Scotland for support and attended the Design School to shape our implementation plan. Despite obstacles, we've witnessed positive impacts on children, families, our workforce, and partners throughout Scotland. Our main goal has always been to ensure that any changes we implement are meaningful, impactful, and long-lasting, with the voices of children and families at the forefront.

To achieve this, we've focused on several key areas:

- Supporting our workforce in understanding The Promise and its importance for them and the families they assist, in line with our values.
- Developing a clear strategic vision that addresses operational needs and local requirements.
- Enhancing communication processes and platforms to encourage learning and sharing across the organisation.
- Strengthening external partnerships and collaborations.
- Providing tailored support to services and teams to address the specific needs of children and families.



**I'm thrilled to share this report with you, updating on how Barnardo's Scotland is putting The Promise into action. We've been actively involved in the care review process and fully backed the resulting reports in 2020. Despite challenges like Covid and financial pressures, we're focused on training our team so they can be equipped to support all children, young people and families in the best possible way and spreading the word about The Promise among our staff and volunteers. Our aim for Plan 24-30 is to continue to make meaningful changes for children and young people. This report covers our progress since 2021 and next steps. We're dedicated to improving services, advocating for change, and involving young people. There is still much to do but we are more determined than ever to #keepthepromise."**

Martin Crewe, Director, Barnardo's Scotland



# A Good Childhood

At Barnardo's, we've been focusing on The Promise foundation of voice during Plan 21-24. Our main aim has been to make sure children, families, and the people we support have more chances to speak up.

To do that, we wanted to create opportunities where young people connect with each other and maybe even form a national group, all driven by their own voices. So, we teamed up with Articulate Cultural Trust and kicked off the Article 12 activism project. The project spanned over a year and engaged over 50 young people involved from 11 different services across Scotland. The initiative brought young people together to talk about The Promise, Children's Rights, and how to make sure their voices are heard loud and clear in their local communities.

The project has been an exciting platform for bringing different activities to life across Scotland. We've now set up several projects to get young people involved, like co-designing their own spaces, reviewing the paperwork we use, and giving them a chance to speak up about what really matters to them.



**“I was really nervous about coming today, I nearly didn't. I am so glad I pushed myself to attend as I've met lots of lovely people and feel relaxed and was able to share what was important to me.”**

Z, age 21



**“It was an amazing experience for everyone to be involved in. Such a relaxed nurturing environment. Hopefully this is just the beginning of our Article 12 Activism journey.”**

Staff member



**“I liked doing the poster, getting to colour it in any colour. I feel the same about rights. It was good to say stuff that was important.”**

C, age 9

## **C.H.A.T.T. (Conversations Help All to Talk)**

Our Dundee Child and Family Support Service and Families Linked in Project noticed a need for more engaging learning opportunities in schools that resonated with pupils. By leveraging our existing partnerships with education providers and combining two of our Dundee services, we created a pilot project to test this idea.

We collected feedback from pupils, families, and teachers, and identified key themes like relationships, substance use, and mental health. Our partners found that although these topics were covered in schools, they were often taught in isolation and lacked real-life context.

The pilot aimed to integrate these topics and make them more meaningful and relevant to the pupils' experiences. We held pre-workshop discussions with class teachers to gauge their comfort levels in teaching lessons related to these themes. Our goal was to boost confidence in both children and teachers to have conversations about difficult topics.

Over a six-month period, 150 primary 7 pupils from three schools took part in the pilot. Here are the outcomes:

- Transformed how training is delivered.
- Increase in confidence and open communication.
- Pupils feedback they felt comfortable and able to ask questions.
- Data highlighted an increase in confidence from pupils.
- Improved relationships between pupils and teachers

### **Comments from the class teacher:**

**"I loved the interactive elements where the children could work in groups and discuss their feelings, I loved the use of the Drug Boxes which helped to promote discussion and many questions."**

### **Here is what the children said:**

**"I like how we got to talk about stuff without being embarrassed."**

**"It was really interesting and fun."**

**"I liked that there were good explanations. It was helpful."**

**"It was open for any opinion."**

**"I liked being able to talk to someone about my worries and problems."**

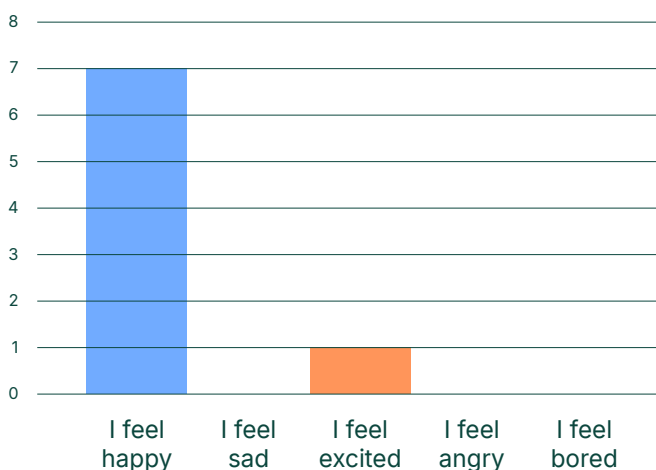
**"I really loved viewing the drug boxes and the drunk goggles. Overall, everything was a blast".**

## Caern in the Community

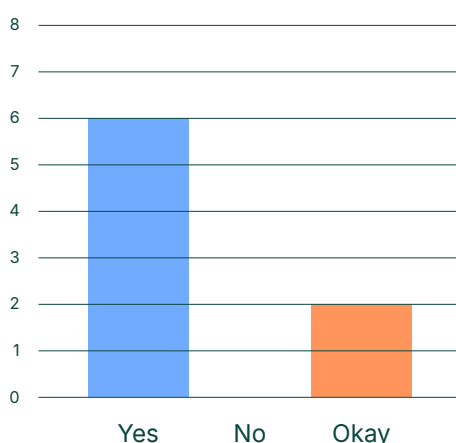
The Caern service supports neurodiverse children and their families in Edinburgh and across the Lothians. Following on from their Article 12 day, the team decided to improve on how they hear the voices of the children they support whilst updating their use of technology and becoming more inclusive.

Our Promise Participation Co-ordinator and Rights Development Worker provided a training input on the use of digital tools during a staff development day. Mentimeter was chosen as the preferred tool as most appropriate and user friendly. The children trialed the use of the tool and gave positive feedback. The use of Mentimeter in seeking the views now embedded for all group work and family work.

### How do you feel today?



### Have you enjoyed holiday club?



## Write Right About Me

Linksfield Residential Service teamed up with Aberdeen City Council and other third-sector partners to improve how we capture the everyday moments and memories of our young people. Write Right About Me (WRAM), is a collaboration of agencies, aimed at making sure children, young people and adults are more strongly heard in their records. We also joined forces with third sector and local authorities to change the way we write about young people.

Over the past year and a half, Linksfield have embedded these changes into their work. And what's even better is both our young people and our staff have been buzzing with positivity about the impact these changes have brought to the service.

**“WRAM has changed the way we think/ feel about the young people support. Over the last 3 years we have learnt that young people need to feel that we understand them and by using language that is nurturing we allow ourselves to feel these emotions. Staff have reflected that removing words such as “aggressive” has allowed them to re-think how they can describe an incident through a young person’s eye. One young person expressed that they felt the notes were personal to them and enjoyed hearing about how great the goals they scored at football were. Something that might have been missed out historically to focus on more negative parts of a YP day.”**

Team Manager Linksfield

## Continued Connections

Another area we are currently exploring is the connections between children, young people, and staff in Plan 21-24. The Promise emphasises nurturing relationships between carers and young people. We're updating procedures with our People and Policy teams to sustain these connections even after staff changes.

Currently, teams manage ongoing connections and we've seen good relationship-based practices. Our goal is to act in the child's best interest, guided by their voice. We want staff to feel supported, understanding how this aligns with The Promise and our safeguarding protocols.

For example, in our fostering service, we're helping an almost 18-year-old starting university. They plan to stay in student halls while staying close to their foster carers. This keeps their connections intact, highlighting the importance of continued connections.

## Barnardo's Scotland Adoption Service

Adoptive parents are at the front and centre of our adoption services and participate in our "Preparation for Prospective Adopters" training sessions. We wanted to make sure that real-life experiences are embedded into what we do and shared openly. Plus, we've been offering opportunities for our adult adopters to better understand the complexities involved when working with both adopters and birth families.

The adoption support team wanted to make sure families know about The Promise and to hear their thoughts. One opportunity offered was 'Cooking through Connections'. Families came together and cooked with their children. The day also included fun activities based on The Promise foundations. Understanding what was important to the families we supported helps us plan future events and support that meets their needs.

**"It was nice to meet other families, I would have enjoyed being able to speak a little more with other adults."**

Parent

**"Over the last year we have continued our journey to ensure the voices and experiences of the children and young people we care for are heard and included in our day-to-day practice, to improve the lives of our looked after children. We have held children's events, built around The Promise, and observed, listened, and acted on what our children continue to express regarding what is important to them.**

**I was delighted to welcome our replacement promise development lead into post and we have worked collaboratively to embed the promise across our Family Placement, using the voices of our children in Scotland to improve practice, not only in Scotland but throughout the UK. One of those achievements as a result, will be the introduction of children's questions to every foster carer panel across Scotland commencing May 2024. We recognise that we still have many improvements to make, but we remain committed to The Promise, which is held at the heart of our own values of changing childhood, changing lives."**

Anne Whyte,  
Assistant Director – Fostering and Adoption



# Whole Family Support



## Staying Connected

Barnardo's and Aberdeenshire Council secured funding to create a space for brothers and sisters to spend time together and have fun. Inspired by Siblings Reunited (STAR), this project will receive mentoring to help set it up. We're looking for suitable community spots in the Peterhead and Fraserburgh area, like village halls, where siblings can meet and carers can get to know each other. The goal is to create a natural, nurturing environment, different from formal settings.

Besides organising fun activities and resources, workers will gather information about the children to create family trees, eco-maps, and memories. This helps the children stay connected long-term. The project is now in the implementation stage and we've identified families who will help shape the design and delivery of the new service. The current working title is called "Staying Connected" but the families and young people will be involved in choosing a name that is meaningful to them.

## Welcome Service

Responding to the devastating war against Ukraine, we recognised the urgent need to reach those children, young people and families who were arriving in Scotland to seek refuge and wanted to ensure they had the support they required. This led to us creating and mobilising Barnardo's Scotland Welcome (Ukraine) Service.

To make sure we could provide the best support possible, we made sure our team included people with Ukrainian heritage – some who had been displaced themselves. Their personal experiences added a deeper understanding of the culture and language, making it easier for us to connect with families and provide support across Scotland.

We're committed to putting the Whole Family Approach at the heart of the Scotland Welcome Service. We've encountered families spanning generations – mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, and children, each facing their own unique challenges. By taking a holistic view of their needs, we were able to provide the support they needed to settle in and thrive here in Scotland. Our early intervention approach has helped families on the brink of crisis slowly regain a sense of belonging and safety.

Focusing on the foundation of people, we've been diving deep into what The Promise means to the children and families who have been displaced from their homes.

The Voice foundation has been especially crucial in guiding everything we do. Our Barnardo's Scotland Promise coordinator and Welcome staff organised various activities to make sure the voices of those we support are heard loud and clear. These activities included our Article 12 Artivism project, group sessions for young people, a national event celebrating their first year in Scotland and a chance to meet with the Children's Commissioner's office to share their thoughts on their strategic plan "Your Rights, Our Plan."

## HMP Edinburgh visitor centre

When visiting HMP Edinburgh, everyone starts at the Visitor Centre, which families find warm and welcoming, but when moving to the prison visiting room, they feel this warmth is missing. After families shared their views with us, we worked with the Scottish Prison Service to improve the experience. By taking a family-focused approach, we were able to listen to everyone affected by imprisonment, including those in HMP Edinburgh, to make positive changes.

Young people said they felt stigmatised and invisible through circumstances they had no control over and wanted to be included and heard in making positive changes. And families told us they wanted to design a dedicated space that would give them more opportunities to play, learn and relax with their family member who was imprisoned.

**“I liked being included in the plan and asked about my opinion, it made me feel like I was needed. I loved giving my ideas. I really like how the room is now, it looks how I thought it would. I think all the kids will love all the new toys that are out and will now have a safe environment to be with their families. I really like how colourful it is.”**

Young person aged 16



**“It was good to be asked to get involved. I asked for the space in the corner, I asked for the bubble lamp with the fishes. I wanted the mirrors and the beanbags. The room is good now and the little ones will like it. I wouldn’t mind being asked to help again it was good fun. If we ever did it again, I’d be able to draw the room as I know I can draw now.”**

Young person aged 12



**“The items have made a huge difference to the children’s visits. Offering a wider range of play opportunities and ways for the kids to engage in different activities while bonding with their dad.”**

Parent



**“My children are really happy. I have one child with autism and the sensory toys are perfect for him! It has been helpful for his dad to engage with him during children’s visits.”**

Parent

The partnership of Barnardo’s and SPS working together allowed the wishes of the young people to become a reality and is having a positive impact on the time spent with their family member.

## **Mockingbird**

Working with The Fostering Network, we introduced the Mockingbird model to our Fostering East service. Our first constellation began in 2021, with another starting in 2023. The Mockingbird model is inspired by the support and relationships of an extended family. It helps children, young people and foster families build a strong, caring community. This involves creating a ‘hub home’ with an experienced carer acting as a ‘grandparent,’ surrounded by nearby homes that form a ‘constellation.’

The aim is for the caring community to mirror an extended family, so that children can develop relationships not only with their own carers, but also with other children and carers. Everyday childhood experiences are encouraged, such as sleepovers and playdates. The service builds a network around a child, helping to provide stability, and if a foster care arrangement is put under strain, a child can go and stay with the hub home or move into another home within the constellation.

We currently have 8 families in our original constellation. There are 8 foster children and 1 young person in continuing care. The carers can be couples or single carers and some are short break carers. Our newest constellation currently has 6 families with 7 foster children and 1 young person in continuing care.

**“We have seen a community grow with the implementation of Mockingbird.”**

Supervising social worker, Fostering East

**Our Young People have shared on what they love about being part of the Mockingbird family:**



**Our foster carers have highlighted the following benefits:**

**“Having friends and an extending family.”**

**“Having regular time with other foster carers and children, allows us to share experiences.”**

**“Having that support of other carers giving the young person the sense of extending family support, allowing sleepovers and joining in on other activities.”**

**“We are now a large family with the support that it gives us.”**

# Supporting The Workforce

**“The workforce needs support, time, and care to develop and maintain relationships. Scotland must hold the hands of those who hold the hand of the child.”**

The Promise, page 21

Barnardo's Scotland has recognised that investing in development of our staff is key to keeping The Promise.

As Plan 21-24 rightly states, “Children experience the ‘care system’ through people” – we want to make sure the people working at Barnardo's are well equipped with knowledge and understanding of what The Promise means for them.

Barnardo's Scotland has an Assistant Director who has lead responsibility for embedding The Promise. Since 2021, we have also invested in two specific and dedicated Promise roles, working across our community-based children's services and our specialist fostering and adoption teams. The Promise Participation Co-Ordinator and Promise Development Lead for Family Placement have responsibility for coordinating and supporting the development of local plans within services.

Barnardo's Scotland small and dedicated Promise ‘team’ were able to attend The Promise Scotland Design School training in 2022. This work was pivotal, allowing the team to connect and reflect on Barnardo's way forward and giving space for planning.

## Promise Keepers

‘Promise Awareness’ training sessions were created for all of Barnardo's Scotland colleagues, volunteers, and foster carers and embedded into our induction process. To date we have trained nearly 500 Barnardo's colleagues and 30 Barnardo's foster carers. Once attendance has been completed, Barnardo's colleagues, volunteers and foster carers are referred to as “Promise Keepers”.

**“Really great grounding in what The Promise is, what it aims to do and Barnardo's role in it. Excellent balance between being informative but not overloading with information. Superb follow up resources provided via Trello Board.”**

Staff, December 2022

**“I found the workshop very engaging and interesting; the session was informative and has increased my knowledge greatly of The Promise and what it means to all Barnardo's and ignited my desire to find out more.”**

Staff, August 2023

## Promise Champs

We devised a two-day Promise Champs face to face training course. This aims to develop connections with The Promise and children's rights, share practice and experience, improve participation and connect with others. The additional support provided post training works towards building a community of champs across Scotland and have reconstructor sessions and regular contacts throughout the year. Staff have shared the impact the training has had on them and their practice below. Over the past 18 months, we've trained 48 colleagues through The Promise Champs course.





## Internal Communications

With all The Promise related activity happening across Scotland we wanted to make sure there was a variety of ways to communicate, recognising that not everyone learns in the same way. With this in mind, we developed a quarterly newsletter for all staff and, utilised our internal communications to create a Promise Keepers page. The page hosts regular updates on Promise activity and shares resources across the organisation. To keep the conversation going, we also host quarterly Promise Keepers online Teams sessions, which is open for all staff to attend. The Keepers' conversations allow staff to come together to share practice, hear updates, talk about the challenges and have included focused inputs from another agencies.

## Barnardo's Staff Conferences

During 2023 we ran Promise awareness workshops during our internal staff conferences. The activities focused on People, Care, Scaffolding, Voice and Family and allowed time for reflective conversations around each of the foundations. More than 150 staff members attended across Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. From these sessions, we were able to collect the views of our staff and embed them into actions within our Plan 21-24. Feedback from the 7 sessions was very positive and examples of some are listed below:

**“The creative aspect has made it really easy to engage with others.”**

Glasgow

**“Brilliant stations which allowed reflections on daily practice.”**

Edinburgh

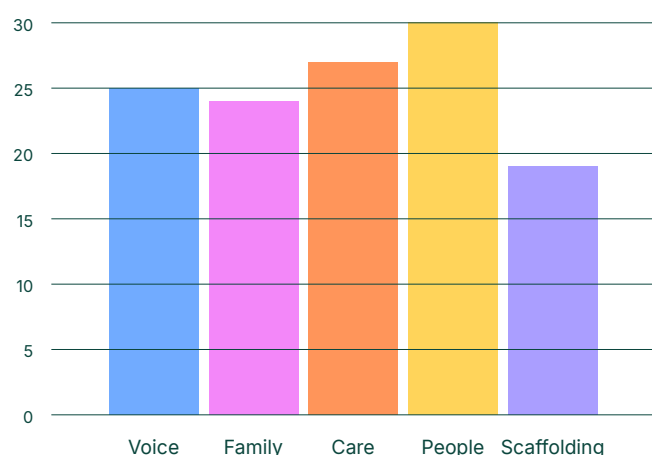
**“Loved the interactive stations, keen to hear about future events.”**

Aberdeen

## What activity did you enjoy the most?



## Will any of the activities be helpful in your practice to promote The Promise?





## Barnardo's Works West

Barnardo's Works West in Glasgow supports young people to be able to join the workforce.

The service ran a 12-week employability program focused on the childcare sector, aiming to incorporate The Promise into the training. The goal was to enhance the young people's knowledge and skills for their work placements. Barnardo's Works West and The Promise Participation Coordinator created child-centred workshops with practical examples for the participants.

As young people felt there were no resources suitable for their age group, they collaborated with us to create something that would raise awareness of The Promise. By being involved in the project, they also earned an additional qualification, SCQF Level 3 Step to Work, which they can include on their CVs.



One young person shared:

**“We did lots of great and interesting activities about The Promise we learned about the**

**5 things it ties into which is (family, voice, care, people and scaffolding) we built our own scaffoldings with Lego blocks and spoke about the people we have in our life that give us support, we done an activity with string about our likes and dislikes that all connect and also made posters of The Promise for teens and what The Promise meant for young people. I think The Promise is a great thing to support young people to help and understand their needs.”**

Clifford Graham, Assistant Director for Employability Training Services:

**“The Promise reminds us to keep advocating for young people, so they get the opportunities that many others take for granted. The learning journey for many young people, including care leavers, does not end at the school gates. It is vital that we work hard to create opportunities with a wide range of partners to help achieve this goal. This includes employers, Local Authorities, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Government and our fantastic 3rd Sector Partners.”**

## Each and Every Child

We reached out to Each and Every Child to support us in our journey of reviewing and reframing the language we used. Training was provided to our staff and foster carers with 122 members attending.

One staff member shared:

**“It was a very thought-provoking training session; I thought I had been using language in the correct way but after coming along it made me rethink my practice and I'd encourage all staff to join.”**

We continue to work alongside Each and every Child during 2024, who are part of our Strengthening Communities and Working Together conference in May and have training sessions planned for both staff and foster carers over the coming months. This is a continued area of development that we will strive to make progress on.

# Planning

**“National partners have a significant role to play in ensuring a new context for funding, investment and planning.”**

The Promise, page 32

**“There must be strategic, needs based planning for children so that they are provided with warm, relational, therapeutic, safe, loving environments when they are required. Scotland must make sure that its most vulnerable children are not profited from.”**

The Promise, page 112

As one of the largest charities in Scotland for children and families, we advocate for positive policy and practice changes across sectors and political parties. We work with partners to amplify the voices of the children and families we support to make sure we are speaking up about The Promise and its key priorities.

Over the last few years we have done this in several ways – putting The Promise front and centre of the [Barnardo's Scotland Local Election Briefing for Candidates](#) in 2022, as well as speaking out consistently with other third sector partners about the need for investment in holistic family support services.

In May 2023 we joined with partners in the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) to host and participate in a one-day conference<sup>1</sup> to explore how the third sector is innovating and driving better outcomes for children and families in need of family support service. The conference explored different examples of collaboration and how the Scottish Government's Whole Family Wellbeing Fund could further support that positive change.

The Scotland policy team actively reviews opportunities to positively influence decision-making and ensure policymakers are aware of our support for The Promise.

We regularly engage with public consultations as well as Scottish Parliament legislation – recent examples include our engagement with MSPs on our support for the Children's Care and Justice Bill, as well as our response to the Scottish Government's consultation on a proposed Care Leavers Payment.

Barnardo's National Children's Rights & Advocacy Manager was a member of the Collaborative Redesign Project for the Children's Hearing System led by Promise Scotland. The views and perspectives of children and young people from within Barnardo's were fed into the project team tasked with developing proposals to redesign the pre-hearing process ensuring that only the 'right child or young person is referred to the Children's Hearing System at the right time'. Barnardo's was also represented on the Scottish Government's Resourcing and Implementation Group for the Children (Care and Justice) Bill, to represent the views of advocacy providers for children and young people as the Bill progresses through the Parliamentary process.

We have also engaged strategically with The Promise Scotland by participating in the Stories of Change Conference in February 2024:



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ccpscotland.org/our-work/whole-family-support-the-power-of-prevention-keeping-the-promise-for-children-and-families-across-scotland/>

All of our policy work is informed by our services, and we also seek to work collaboratively with other partners.

In addition to our direct policy and influencing activity, we have also been involved in key regional collaborations.

## The Highland Strategic Partnership

The Highland Strategic Partnership was set up as a cross-sector partnership of agencies (statutory and voluntary) working collaboratively to improve outcomes for children and young people across Highland. The Alliance aims to “design and deliver improvements, in line with The Promise across the continuum of services from early family help to alternatives to care, all the way through to prevention and return from out of authority care and support for leaving care”.

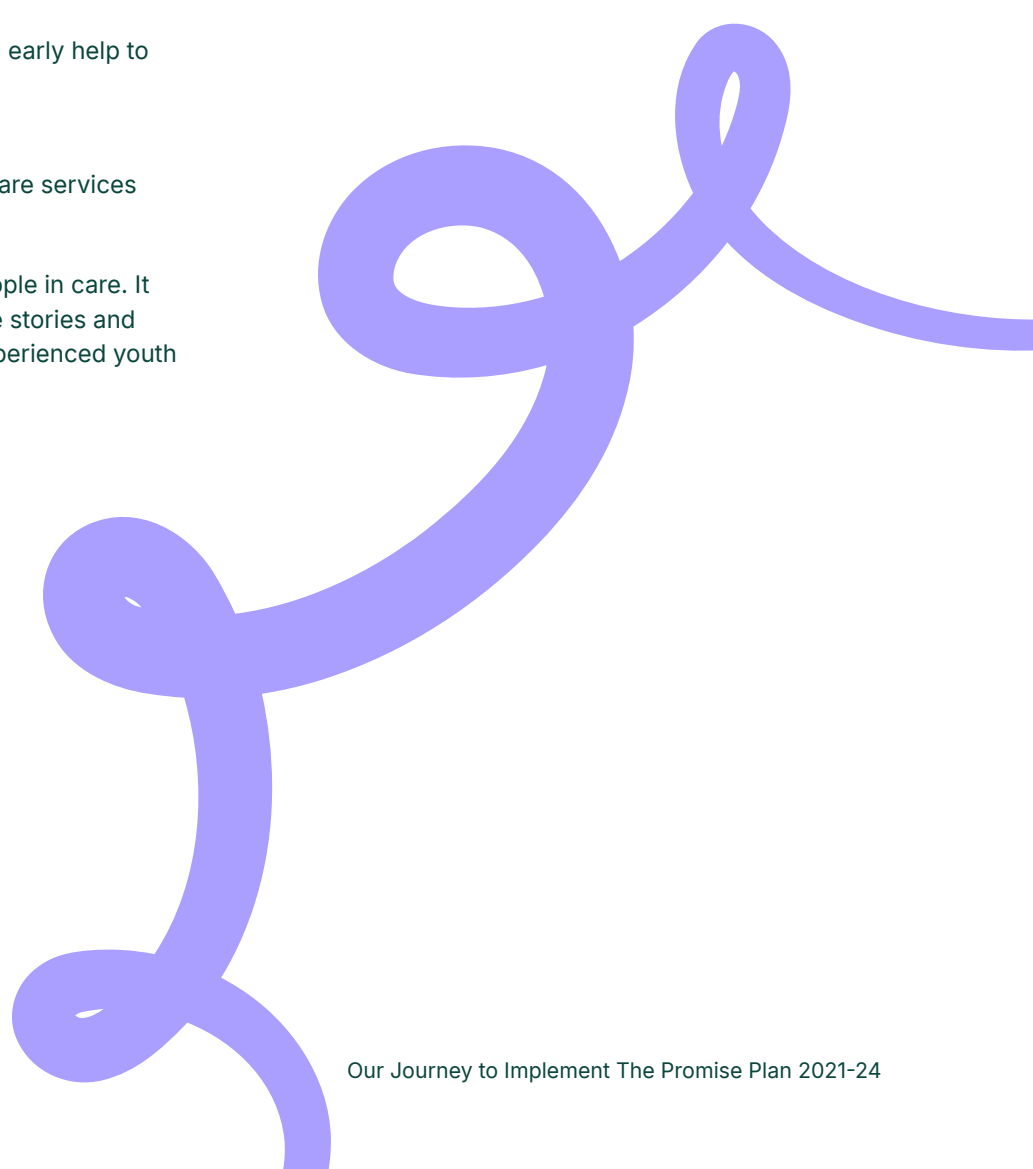
Working collaboratively, the Alliance set out to address gaps in services for children and young people, share resources to strengthen their scaffolding of support and embed children and families’ voices at the center of service design in the Highlands. The three priority themes identified were:

1. Improving support to families from early help to intensive support
2. Improving in care services
3. Improving leaving care and after care services (Moving On)

They created the book to help young people in care. It tackles their struggles in finding relatable stories and information. Now published, any care experienced youth can use it to capture their own journey.

Barnardo’s Highland is really listening to young people in the Highlands and championing The Promise goals. They’ve started using a different writing style called “Write To Me” in their records for young people moving on and those in their care family. This change in writing creates a more family-like approach to caring for these young people. Instead reading a formal record of events like in the Independent Care Review, they can read a diary of letters about their childhoods, written in the style of a parent style – something more personal and loving.

Many partners in The Alliance provide crucial support and resources for young people Moving On. Barnardo’s reviewed our Springboard service in Autumn 2023, using a Promise Lens. By consulting with Alliance partners, we gathered diverse perspectives and identified recommendations for collaborative changes. Now, we’re focusing on implementing these recommendations, including improving language, data pathways, and collaboration across agencies. We aim to support care-experienced parents, enhance wellbeing supports for youth, promote relational practice, and provide ongoing workforce support.



# Building Capacity

We understand that achieving meaningful change requires connections, teamwork, and partnerships. Over the past year, we've been strengthening our collaborations with key stakeholders. We know that for change to last, we must not only enhance our own capacity but also work closely with local authorities and other organisations. While funding processes can sometimes slow progress with competitive pressures, we're committed to collaborating.

We've supported 55 services and appointed 48 Promise champions to enhance our ability to listen to and support children and families. Our goal is not just to make improvements, but to make sure they're lasting and empowering.



## Children's Rights

At Barnardo's Scotland, The Promise work we do is closely tied to advancing children's rights. This helps our staff, children, young people, and families grasp what the UNCRC really means for them. It's aim is to make sure everyone knows and respects the rights of children.

## Projects from 2021-2024

### Rights Service Assessment

We've integrated a Rights Service Assessment across our services to make sure our policies and practices align with the UNCRC. This annual review helps us create a development plan, supported by training and advice on The Promise.

### Rights Network

We've set up a Rights Network with colleagues from across Barnardo's Scotland. This network allows us to share innovative practices, discuss challenges, and learn about the UNCRC and Human Rights Act. Each month, we focus on a specific "Right of the Month" with practical examples from our team and external partners. Topics have included baby and toddler rights, throughcare and aftercare rights, refugee rights, and education rights.

## UNCRC Art Draw

In 2023, we held an art draw where children and young people submitted artwork about what specific UNCRC rights mean to them. We received over 80 pieces, which we've turned into resources to raise awareness and understanding of the UNCRC in our work.

## Promise Champs and Rights Reps

Many of our rights reps are also Promise Champs, promoting and upholding rights and changes related to The Promise. We've had sessions to guide them on how to support children, young people and families effectively.

## Training on Children's Rights

Training for our staff always connects children's rights to The Promise, equality, diversity, inclusion, and safeguarding. In 2024, our Voice and Influence team will hold four training sessions in Scotland, developed with various managers and coordinators to ensure a consistent message about The Promise.

## Collaborative Projects

Our National Children's Rights & Advocacy Manager contributed to the redesign of the Children's Hearing System, incorporating the views of children and young people from Barnardo's.

We are also part of the Scottish Government's Resourcing and Implementation Group for the Children (Care and Justice) Bill, representing the views of advocacy providers as the bill progresses through Parliament.

# Next Steps On Our Promise Journey

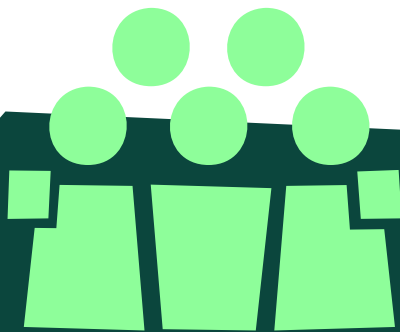
This report has captured some of Barnardo's activity in relation to The Promise so far, but we know we still have so much more to do. Our next steps include:

- Reviewing and developing Barnardo's Scotland strategic plan, using Plan 24-30 – to continue the momentum of progress already made within our organisation.
- Further develop our systems and processes for recording families' stories and ensure we can evidence meaningful impact.
- Continue to strengthen our relationships with external partners.
- Continue to develop services through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund

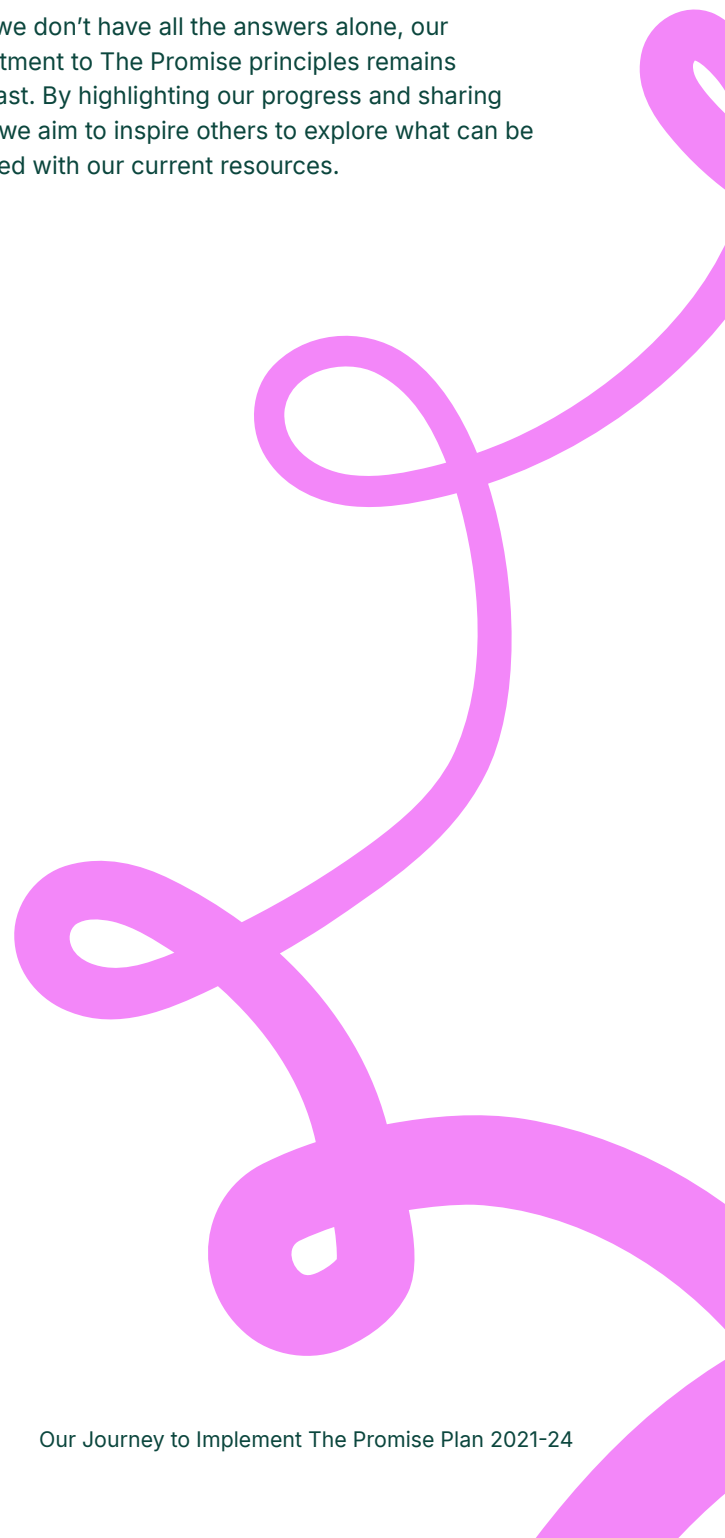
This impact report has given examples of how Barnardo's has begun to implement The Promise – we know that there is still so much left to do, both as an organisation but also for Scotland as a whole.

We have big challenges ahead of us, including the rising costs affecting the families we support and an uncertain future where public service budgets are being continually stretched.

While we don't have all the answers alone, our commitment to The Promise principles remains steadfast. By highlighting our progress and sharing ideas, we aim to inspire others to explore what can be achieved with our current resources.



**As we look forward to Plan 2024-30 we were eager to work with others to continue to influence the Scottish Government to make the right choices in the months and years ahead. Together, we can turn the vision of Keeping The Promise into reality for children and families across Scotland.**





# Thank You

**“As Assistant Director with lead responsibility for embedding The Promise, I am proud of the work that has been done so far and is evidenced within this report. None of this would be possible without the leadership from our promise development roles, our external partners, and the hard work from all of our services across Barnardo’s. It is clear we still have a long way to go but we are committed to this journey and are excited to continue to improve lives for children and families in Scotland.”**

Faith Watson, Assistant Director

**“The past two years in this role have been very rewarding, supporting services to embed The Promise into practice. Having the flexibility to be innovative and creative in the ways we support the teams, whilst being realistic and practical in the current economic climate is something I’m proud of. We want to aim high to make the improvements for those we support, relationships are key to this movement for change and I’m excited to be part of what we can achieve together.”**

Louise Wakeling, Promise Participation Coordinator

**“The Promise development role started in 2022 and I came into post in March 2023. My predecessor set the foundations for supporting fostering and adoption colleagues, carers and young people to gain awareness on how we can make changes to #keepthepromise. It is evident that there is still a long way to go to make the necessary changes and to ensure that we implement what we have heard from young people as important to how they experience care. However, what is clear is the commitment and passion that people have to our young people and to make this happen.”**

Viv McCurdy, Promise Development Lead – Fostering and Adoption

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Names have been changed to protect identities.

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