



Lancashire Children and Young People's Plan

2024-2028



Introduction

Welcome to the Children and Young People's Plan 2024-2028, which sets out our vision and priorities to ensure that children and young people are safe, healthy, happy, develop skills for life and are active citizens who feel they have a voice and influence.

Our vision

Our vision is for Lancashire to be the best place in the UK and the best place for children and young people to grow up in, to thrive from early years into adulthood.

We want Lancashire to be an inclusive and welcoming place where children live in loving and nurturing families.

We will invest in children and young people to help build an increasingly prosperous and successful place by improving outcomes and providing young people with the skills for life, as well as opportunities for play and having fun.

In ensuring our children are starting well, we recognise the need for outcomes to improve faster for children and young people from vulnerable and deprived backgrounds.

Our strategy builds upon our understanding of our successes, the challenges we continue to face, feedback from partners and importantly, the issues that children and young people tell us about what matters to them.

Demographics

Lancashire is home to a diverse population of children and young people, who make up around 23% of our residents. Factors such as socioeconomic status, access to quality education, healthcare, and community resources can significantly impact children's development and well-being. For example, areas with higher levels of deprivation often see poorer health outcomes, lower educational attainment, and higher rates of absenteeism. Our *Lancashire Insight* web pages provides a range of information and data about children and young people living in Lancashire, including locality profiles which show some of the variation in experiences and outcomes across different parts of the county.

287,989 children and young people aged 0-19 live in Lancashire. 1,739 are children in our care and 1,529 are care leavers receiving services.

If we were to mirror the demographics of children and young people living in Lancashire, in a class of 30:

- 15 would be male and 15 female
- 7 would be eligible for free school meals
- 7 would be overweight by year 6
- 6 would live in low income families
- 6 would be persistently absent from school
- 5 would be black and minority ethnic
- 4 would receive SEN support
- 1 would have an Education, Health and Care Plan

There are 627 schools in Lancashire, with 92% rated good or outstanding.

What do children and young People Tell us?

The voice of children and young people lies at the heart of everything we do. They tell us they should have the space to express themselves, feel actively involved, listened to and to be able influence the decisions that affect them.

Our Children and Young People's Participation Strategy commits us to:

- Ensuring that children's views are taken seriously and, where appropriate, acted upon
- Providing appropriate information and facilitate the expression of children's views
- Providing a safe and inclusive space for children to express their views.

We have a multitude of groups that children and young people can get involved in including:

- Participation groups for 12-19 year olds (up to 25 with SEND or as a Care Leaver), delivered in local areas through our Youth Councils
- The Lancashire Youth Council
- LINX (Listen, Involve, Negotiate, Xpress), for those aged 8-17 years who are in our care, and a Care Leaver Forum for those who are 18 –25 years
- POWAR (Participate, Opportunity, Win, Achieve Respect), for those aged 12-25 years who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Culture Hacks within libraries, museums and archives, which supports young people aged 11-24 to run inspiring activities of their own.

For children and young people in our care and care leavers, we ensure their voice is heard during visits and in meetings. Assessments and plans are co-produced with their involvement and they have a say in the decisions made about them.

In 2024, over 20,000 children and young people from Lancashire took part in the Making Your Mark ballot of young people's opinion. Current key issues of importance in Lancashire include:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Crime and Safety
- Jobs, the economy and benefits
- Education and Learning.

We also seek targeted views from children and young people, such as those with special educational needs and disabilities. They tell us the things that matter most to them include:

- Friendships and their social life
- Their mental health
- Their education and work.

These issues, alongside ongoing feedback from young people, have informed our priorities and will help to shape the way that we deliver our services.

The way we work with Partners

Effective working with partners is critical to help to achieve our vision. Our Children, Young People and Families Partnership agreed five key principles when working together:

- Focus on the children, young people and families who need our support
- Focus on strategic priorities which raise aspirations and enable people to work locally to build on the strengths of people and their communities.
- Build on what works well
- Collaborate and share information
- Provide critical challenge to improve practice and outcomes.

Our response to children, young people and families is guided by our *Working Well with Children and Families in Lancashire* guidance. This emphasizes early intervention, open collaboration and using the least intensive resources necessary to support children, young people, and families.

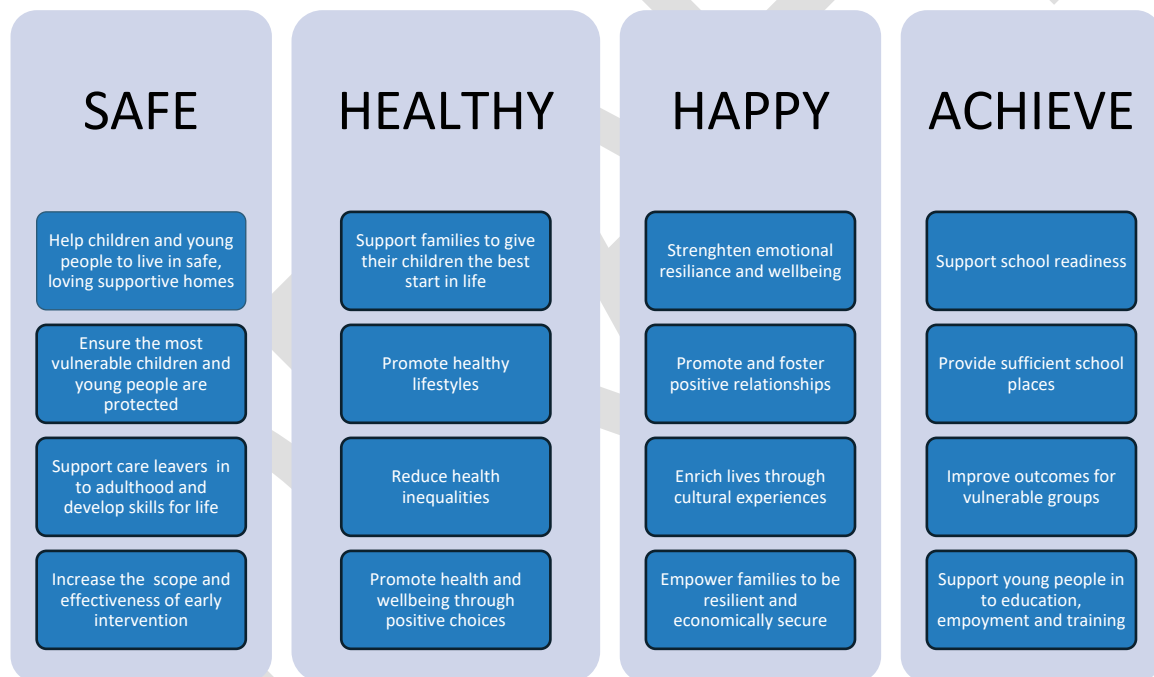
The outcomes we aim to see

Our plan aims to ensure that all children and young people:

- Are safe from Harm
- Enjoy healthy lives
- Are happy and have fun growing up
- Do well at all levels of learning and have skills for life
- Are active citizens who feel they have a voice and influence.

Our priorities

Our priorities which will support the achievement of these outcomes over the life of this plan will be underpinned by strong preventative approaches, which bring together multi-disciplinary teams to work alongside families and to help them live safely together.



How will we know we have made a difference?

Our success will be measured through a range of outcomes and narrative milestones. This will be embedded within our performance management arrangements, and a dashboard created to celebrate successes and alert us to challenges.

