

Welcome

We have incredible, articulate and talented children and young people in our district who have shaped our new Children and Young People's District Plan 2025-28 and it is something for all to be proud of. We have made great progress during the last three years working collectively to improve the lives of children, young people and their families who live in the Wakefield District. We want to continue in building upon the last plan to ensure that children and young people receive the support they need to achieve their ambitions and reach their goals.

For the next three years to be a success, it is vital we carry on being guided by our children and young people every step of the way, listening to their views, ideas and contributions as we look to achieve what we have set out as our ambitions within the plan. I look forward to working together with children, young people, parents and carers, and all those who work or volunteer with children and their families in making this new plan a real success.



*Cllr Margaret Isherwood,
Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services*



Cllr Margaret Isherwood

Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

How the plan was made



The plan has been led by what children and young people living in the Wakefield District have said is important to them. This has been done through carrying out the most engagement activity ever seen when creating a district plan, with over 400 children and young people of different ages, backgrounds, ethnicities and cultures and also parents, carers and practitioners sharing their views.

Organisations who work or volunteer with children, young people and their families have said how they will support this plan. You can view their pledges here: www.wakefieldfamilies-together.co.uk/about-us/our-vision/

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in the production of this plan. Special thanks to those groups and organisations who have directly taken part in the engagement work to help shape and co-produce this plan:



How the plan will be delivered



The plan is looked after by the Children and Young People's Partnership Board, who make sure what is said in the plan happens.

The Partnership Board is made up of children and young people, along with lots of different people who work or volunteer with children and their families such as Councillors, Wakefield Council, West Yorkshire Police, Health Services, Voluntary and Community Groups, Housing and Education. All of these people meet on a regular basis to check progress is being made on the plan.

The Partnership Board on its own cannot make the plan a success and because of this, it works closely with other boards and partnerships across the district, who help deliver what the plan says it wants to achieve. It is also aligned to the Wakefield District All-Age Plan. A report is produced four times per year to share with children and young people on progress to date via the Wakefield Families Together website: www.wakefieldfamilies-together.co.uk/about-us/our-vision/

Looking back on what we've achieved together

It is important we look back at what we achieved working together during the last 3 year plan. Here are just a few examples:



Our Futures

- **You said:** We want to overcome digital poverty and make a positive difference to the climate
- **We did:**
 - Launched 21 WFConnect Cafés across the District, to help ensure everyone has access to technology and 12 libraries where children and young people can get online
 - £2m funding secured to switch council buildings from using gas boilers to renewable energy
 - Planted 60,000 trees and changed the way parks, greenspaces and countryside are looked after to help nature recover and thrive



Our Identity

- **You said:** We want to see individuality celebrated
- **We did:**
 - The 'Wakefield Where We Are' project, which showcased individuality through creativity. Supported by the Youth Association, Wakefield Museums and Castles and the British Museum. Exhibited in Wakefield One
 - Children and young people co-produced a Respect Charter to help make sure people are accepted for who they are



Our Education

- **You said:** We want educational outcomes to improve for all
- **We did:**
 - School Ofsted inspection outcomes improved from 81.6% in September 2022 to 88.7% in February 2024
 - The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) grading had a good level of development at 68%, 1% higher than the national average
 - Young Carer Champions in all the District's primary and secondary schools, have an advisory role in the Team Around the School (TAS) process



Our Health

- **You said:** We would like to receive support to live a healthy life
- **We did:**
 - Introduced Mental Health Support Teams to provide and enable emotional wellbeing support in all Wakefield schools
 - Increased the number of children and young people who receive early intervention so that they don't need CAMHS, this has helped us to minimise waiting times for emotional and mental wellbeing services
 - Happy Healthy Holiday activities took place over summer 2024. This included 56 providers across 78 venues with 22,331 places booked



Our Safety

- **You said:** We want more support and safer outdoor spaces
- **We did:**
 - Created a Be Water Wise campaign highlight the dangers open water swimming and how to help somebody who is in danger
 - Created Safe Zones in the district where you can access support by visiting a venue with a Safe Zone sticker in the window now included in the 28 Hate Crime Reporting Centres across the district
 - Held 1,772 'Team Around' meetings, with 71% of parents knowing where their local family, and youth hub is and trained over 200 practitioners in how to identify and respond to neglect

For more information on the work carried out during 2022-25 please view the latest [Children and Young People's District Plan 2022-25 Year In Review](#) and [Build our Futures Summit videos](#)

What we want to achieve over the next 3 years (Our Ambitions)



Many aspects of a child and young person's life contribute to them being able to thrive.

For some children and young people, being able to thrive is not always easy because of circumstances which are not in their control. We know from what children and young people have told us that some feel like they experience difference. For example, children and young people who live in poverty, are a young carer, have SEND, are LGBTQIA+, where English is not their first language, and those who live in care respectively can experience more barriers to be able to thrive.

We want all children and young people from all backgrounds to be ambitious and be encouraged by where they live to achieve. Part of what is included across the following pages aims to tackle the differences some children and young people experience.

As a Partnership Board over the next 3 years, we will show you how progress has been made, by keeping you updated.

Our vision is that:

Children and young people are happy, healthy, safe, resilient and hopeful for their future.

Our Safety and Feeling Loved



- I'm protected from harm
- I feel safe in the area I live and where I go
- I'm loved and accepted for who I am

Our Health



- I'm able to get good support for my emotional well-being when I need it
- I'm able to get support and services I need to stay healthy
- I'm encouraged to make positive choices about my life

Our Education



- I'm ready to begin my learning journey
- I'm happy and feel included in the place where I learn
- I'm able to push myself to achieve because my needs are being met

Our Futures



- I've got the skills and knowledge to move into adulthood
- I can travel across the district and my circumstances don't stop me from doing so
- I can overcome obstacles and setbacks to achieve my goals



This is what we know

- Most children and young people say they feel safe in the area where they live
- Some children and young people feel scared because of bullying
- Children and young people say they are spending more time online
- Smoking by parents is the most common factor seen which could be changed when a child has died
- All children's homes which are ran by the Council's Children and Young People's Services are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted.

This is what children and young people have told us



This is what we plan to do about it

- Children and young people to have access to good quality programmes which can educate on safety across lots of different areas
- Reduce smoking by parents
- Those who work or volunteer with children and young people access good quality learning on the best ways to safeguard and support children across lots of different areas
- All services who work or volunteer with children, young people and families sign up to the Respect Charter
- Ensure that children and young people who learn away from school can access support outside of their home if they need to.

Different cultures don't understand, as a traveller we get called horrible names

We are incredibly proud that all our children's homes which are ran by the Council's Children and Young People's Services in the district are rated good or outstanding, providing loved led practice for our children

I think young people have more support for their identity now, there are several groups which offer support

I'd like my street and park to feel safer at night... need more streetlights and cameras in ginnels and around shops

My carers are funny and believe in me. They try their best and want the best for me





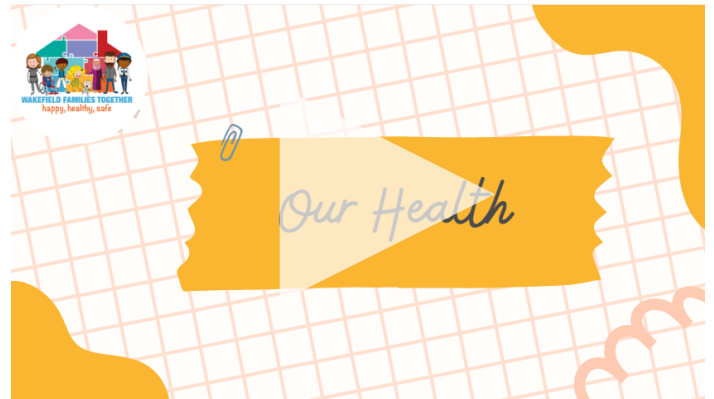
This is what we know

- Emotional and physical well-being continues to be important to children and young people and they want access to support in different ways
- Children and young people in Yorkshire and the Humber are more likely to have experienced tooth decay when compared to children living in other areas of the country
- Some children and young people are living with being overweight or obesity
- Continuing decline in children and young people drinking alcohol and smoking
- Increasing trend in children and young people who vape.

This is what we plan to do about it

- Increase and promote free and affordable healthy activities across the district for children and young people
- Continue to build upon the existing children and young people's mental health and well-being support offer
- Raise awareness amongst children and young people of the health risks in relation to gambling, vaping and drug use
- Provide an offer of support for children and young people who experience bed poverty
- Promote parent and carer healthier choices support including: sleep, oral health hygiene, nutrition, exercise, addiction, health in pregnancy.

This is what children and young people have told us



I don't focus because I'll think about vaping sometimes, and it just causes me to be disruptive, or be like not listening, because it just feels like I need that pull

More sports activity centres and activities offering free play time encourage children to make friendships as a way to improve mental and physical health

My school has a support hub, where you can go if we need to speak to somebody about our well-being

When I was younger, I had greater access to swimming pools than now

I do sports and athletics that give me good endorphins, I'm encouraged to be active

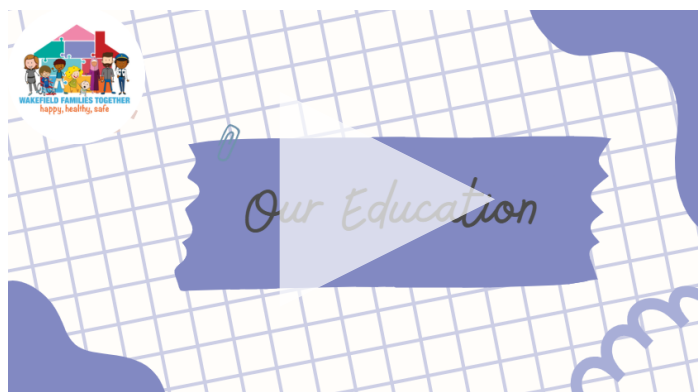




This is what we know

- Overall, children and young people achieve in school to a similar level as the national average
- Children and young people of secondary school age who are absent and persistently absent from school is a similar level as the national average, with primary school aged children slightly higher
- More children and young people are being home educated than in 2022 when the last plan was created
- Increasing number of children and young people being permanently excluded from school locally, in line with national increases
- Increasing national trend of children starting reception who are not school ready.

This is what children and young people have told us



I like that I'm able to leave lessons just before the end so I can beat the crowd and get to my next lesson. School has a dog which helps when I'm feeling worried

Have more staff at school who are understanding of what can affect my learning outside of school

I feel under pressure with discrimination and bullying at school

I'm proud of what I've achieved at school and my teachers have helped me to do this

This is what we plan to do about it

- Work towards identifying and supporting children and young people at an earlier point when presentations of SEND are suspected, putting reasonable adjustments in place sooner
- Improve the availability of translation and interpretation support for children and young people whose first language is not English
- Make stronger links with our home education community, helping to make sure those children, young people and their families are supported
- Raise awareness of the Young Carer's Cards in schools and check schools are responding to them correctly
- Talk to schools' individual School Councils to check children and young people are involved in helping to shape school rules.

I feel that sometimes my teachers do not know what my Young Carer's Card is





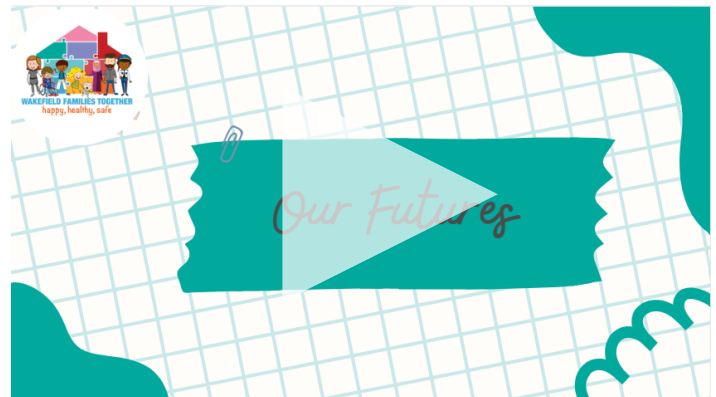
This is what we know

- Most children and young people are planning to get a job and/or continue with further education after finishing at school or college
- Most children and young people are optimistic or very optimistic about their job prospects in the future
- High number of children and young people say they see their future outside of the Wakefield District when they are an adult
- Social opportunities are lacking for some children and young people who feel less confident or socially anxious, lack social experiences and time to practice their skills for adulthood
- Some children and young people feel there are not many things to do in the district.

This is what we plan to do about it

- Increase the range of apprenticeships and paid work experience opportunities across the district
- Voice of children and young people to continue to be included in new plans and where decisions are being made
- Support for all children and young people in preparation for adulthood
- SEND awareness training for all who work or volunteer with children and young people, along with awareness for children and young people themselves
- Make sure children and young people are digitally included and have opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and experience in using technology.

This is what children and young people have told us



I've been supported to make a plan as to what I want to do after finishing school, know who can help me and steps to take to achieve my goals

In 5 years' time, I want Wakefield to be more inclusive of children with SEND

I'd feel bad if I didn't know how to read and write, so it's important I've equal opportunity

I worry in the future there will be more hate and discrimination towards people that might be different, this could be anything including hair/eye colour, skin colour, your race, your accent

In 5 years' time, I want to have money, have a roof over my head, food on the table and clothes on my back



This is how we'll know we've made a difference

Children and young people tell us that they can see a difference being made within the areas they've said are important to them.

Some of the key measures

- Tell us they feel safe and protected in different areas of their life
- Tell us they feel accepted for who they are and feel a sense of belonging
- Tell us they are able to make positive choices
- Tell us their voice is heard

The data tells us there are positive changes being made to the areas that children and young people tell us are important to them.

- Schools health survey and JSNA (joint strategic needs assessment) findings
- National and regional data findings
- Local service data of organisations who work or volunteer with children and young people
- Research findings

The Wakefield Families Together support offer continues to meet the needs in the areas children and young people have said are important to them, so they are able to access the right support at the right time.

- Building on the early help support offer
- Children, young people and their families know how to access their local Family and Youth Hub
- More support for children and young people in helping to work out their next steps in life
- More translation and interpretation support



Plan on a page

All children and young people are happy, healthy, safe, resilient and hopeful for their future.

Achieving the vision

Everybody who works and volunteers with children, young people and their families will support the delivery of this plan, by working towards these **four ambitions**:

- **Our Safety & Feeling Loved**
- **Our Health**
- **Our Education**
- **Our Futures**

The Children and Young People Partnership Board will make sure that progress on the plan is regularly checked by receiving reports on what is being achieved and what still needs to be done.



Our Safety & Feeling Loved



- I'm protected from harm
 - I feel safe in the area I live and where I go
 - I'm loved and accepted for who I am
- Have good quality programmes which can educate on safety across lots of different areas
 - Reduce smoking by parents
 - Good quality learning on the best ways to safeguard and support children across lots of different areas
 - Sign up to the Respect Charter
 - Make sure those who learn away from school are able to access support outside of their home

Our Health



- I'm able to get good support for my emotional well-being when I need it
 - I'm able to get support and services I need to stay healthy
 - I'm encouraged to make positive choices about my life
- More free and affordable healthy activities across the district
 - Build on the existing mental health and well-being support offer
 - Raise awareness of the health risks of gambling, vaping and drug use
 - Provide an offer of support for those who experience bed poverty
 - Promote a range of healthier choices support

Our Education



- I'm ready to begin my learning journey
 - I'm happy and feel included in the place where I learn
 - I'm able to push myself to achieve because my needs are being met
- Identify and support children and young people with SEND early
 - Increase translation and interpretation support
 - Make stronger links with our home education community
 - Raise awareness of the Young Carer's Cards in schools and check schools are responding to them correctly
 - Make sure School Councils are involved in helping to shape school rules

Our Futures



- I've got the skills and knowledge to move into adulthood
 - I can travel across the district and my circumstances don't stop me from doing so
 - I can overcome obstacles and setbacks to achieve my goals
- More apprenticeships and paid work experience opportunities
 - Voice of children and young people to continue to be included in new plans and where decisions are being made
 - Support for all children and young people in preparation for adulthood
 - SEND awareness training for all
 - More opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and experience in using technology

WHAT SAFETY AND FEELING LOVED MEANS TO ME



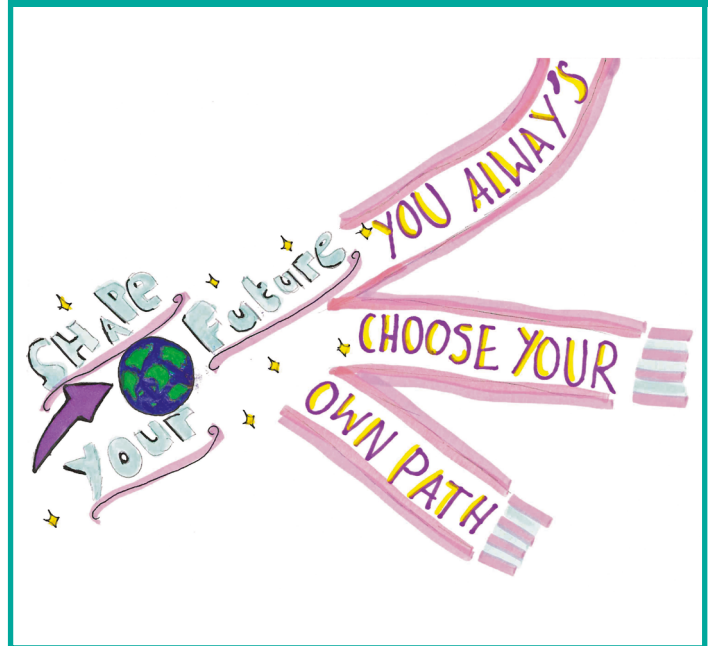
WHAT HEALTH MEANS TO ME



WHAT EDUCATION MEANS TO ME



WHAT OUR FUTURES MEANS TO ME



For further information...

