

Local Child Poverty Action Report

Year 6
(2023/24)



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Foreword

We are delighted to present this joint report between Midlothian Council and NHS Lothian demonstrating the strong commitment to working together to reduce inequalities and child poverty. Whilst both of our organisations have a statutory duty to report on our child poverty work, what we have reported here is based on significant partnership work across the public, community and voluntary sectors: this work cannot be done by our organisations alone.

This sixth annual Local Child Poverty Action Report sets out our recent work to tackle child poverty and our plans to achieve the outcomes set out in the Single Midlothian Plan 2023-2027 that:

- No child or household is living in poverty

We have made the reduction of poverty the priority for our local collective effort. This means that we have worked together to consider how to increase the money that people have in their pockets through the efforts of our local Trusted Partners and income maximisation services that are local, welcoming and non-stigmatising. We have also worked together to increase local employment and training opportunities as we know that good work that is well paid is a good route out of poverty.

In the coming years, we will continue to work together, across our collective service areas and with our partners to provide responsive and preventative support to children, young people and their families.

Fiona Robertson
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Executive Summary

Outcomes achieved in 2023-24

This report describes work that has been undertaken to address child poverty across Midlothian in 2023-24, highlighting areas of impact.

- Community researchers have been trained in ethnographic techniques to capture lived experience feedback from Midlothian residents
- We continue to provide person-centred help to address barriers to work for parents through our Parental Employability Service.
- Strengthen financial wellbeing pathways have been implemented across Health Visiting, Midwifery and the Family Nurse Partnership service to maximise income and address infant food insecurity.
- Continue to provide holistic support to help deliver improved outcomes for children, young people and families through our Family Wellbeing Service.
- There has been an increased awareness of child poverty and routes to support amongst Midlothian based workers.
- There has been focused communications to promote the uptake of Free School Meals, Clothing Grants, Educational Maintenance Allowance and National Entitlement cards.

Key areas for development in 2024-25

- Identify a key suite of indicators to inform our actions going forward and produce a dashboard
- Implement the actions identified from the income maximisation review
- Work with the community researchers to theme their findings and report back to Midlothian Community Planning Groups and work with them to co-produce local solutions to the barriers to addressing child poverty. The researchers will be supported to look at different models of lived experience panels to ensure the long-term sustainability of embedding the voice of lived experience in community planning.

Strategic Context

This Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR) 2023-2024 provides an update of actions taken locally to prevent, reduce and mitigate the consequences of child poverty in Midlothian, and our future plans.

Our 2023-27 Single Midlothian Plan¹ outcomes for the next 4 years are:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and learning outcomes
- No child or household living in poverty
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030

Within the Community Planning structure, the Child Poverty Working Group will continue to be responsible for delivery of the annual Local Child Poverty Action Report. The reports will be approved by NHS Lothian and Midlothian Council prior to submission to the Scottish Government.

The Child Poverty Working Group reports to the 'Midlothian will work towards reducing poverty' thematic priority group of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP). Actions contained within the Child Poverty Action Plan (2023-27) sit across, and are taken forward by, the CPP thematic groups.

The Child Poverty Working Group will continue to:

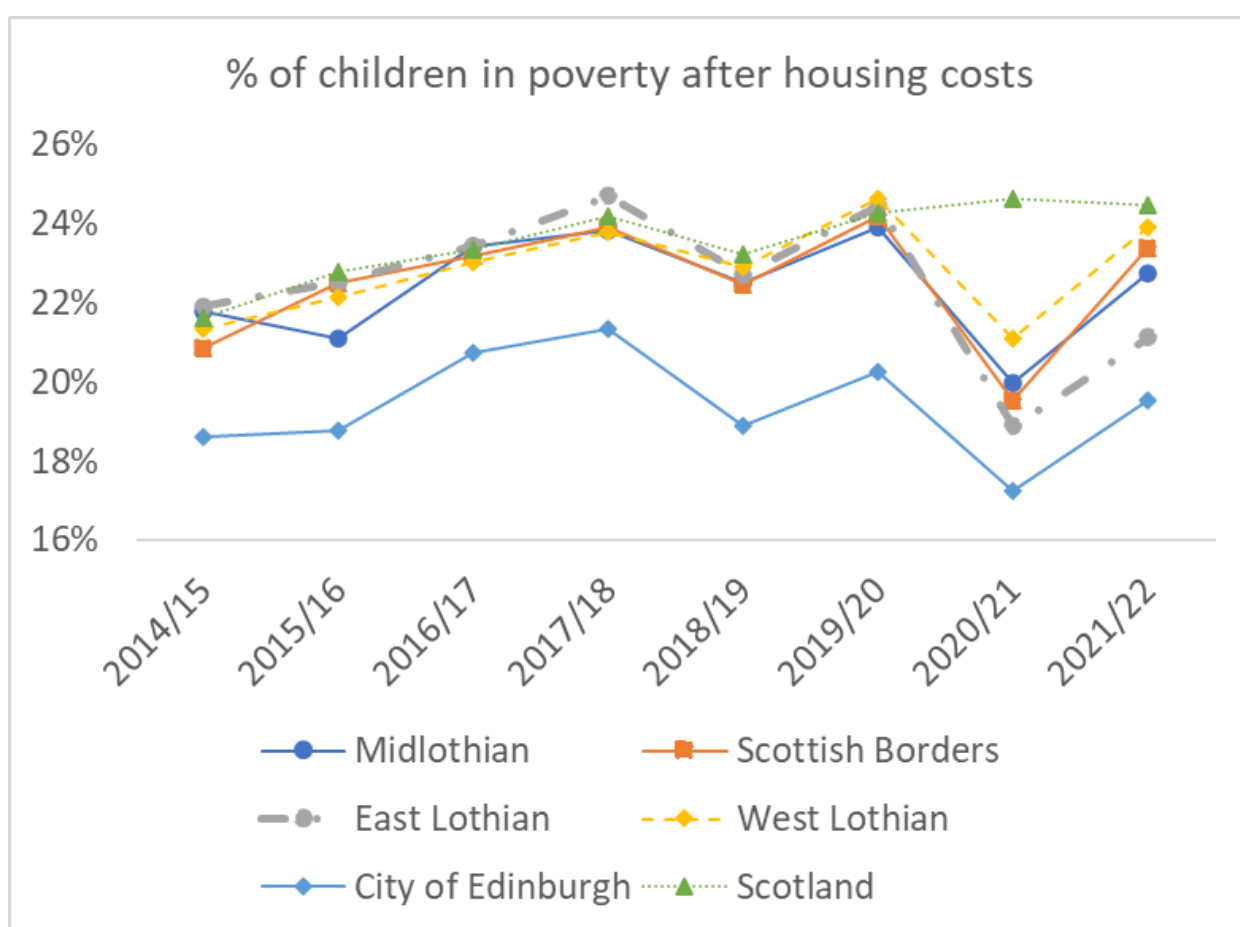
- develop and drive forward the Midlothian Child Poverty Action Plan;
- identify gaps and develop solutions to prevent and mitigate the impact of child poverty in Midlothian;
- ensure the voices of those with lived experience of poverty are heard;
- ensure publication and dissemination of the Child Poverty Action Report;
- monitor the progress of actions in the Midlothian Child Poverty Action Report and support implementation of these where required; and
- ensure key messages in relation to child poverty and the LCPAR are communicated to groups and networks across Midlothian.

¹ https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200284/your_community/214/community_planning_in_midlothian/2

What does our data tell us?

In 2022-23, a number of data sources were examined to establish the picture of child poverty in Midlothian, including children living in low-income families by school catchment area and children living in poverty (after housing costs). Further work has been ongoing with the Improvement Service and national partners during 2023/24 to establish an agreed set of indicators for poverty.

Percentage of children living in poverty (after housing costs), 2014-23²



Source: [End Child Poverty – Child Poverty After Housing Costs 2015-2023 \(Published June 2024\)](#)

² https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Child-Poverty-AHC-estimates-2015-2022_final.xlsx

It is estimated by End Child Poverty that in 2022-2023, 23.2% of children in Midlothian (4,592 children) were living in relative poverty (after housing costs). Midlothian follows a similar trajectory to neighbouring local authorities who were all below the Scottish average of 24% of children living in poverty in 2020-23. Our focus remains on longer-term trend data, which displays a small increase from 21.8% in 2014/15 to 23.2% in 2022/23. Caution is advised when interpreting year-on-year changes in local areas. Due to sampling issues during 2021/22 related to the Covid-19 pandemic, additional caution may be required in interpreting these statistics.

To estimate the percentage of children in poverty figures, researchers at Loughborough University developed a method using administrative data on rents for local authorities, combined with household-level data from the [Understanding Society](#) longitudinal survey to estimate the relationship between housing costs and the relative risk of being in poverty before and after housing costs. This information is used to adjust the 'before housing costs' statistics for local authorities.

The extent of child poverty across Midlothian

Child poverty rates vary across Midlothian localities. The Improvement Service data has projections for 2024 per datazone area and highlights the extent of child poverty across Midlothian.

Datazone area	2024 projections from CPOP
Dalkeith	41%
Mayfield and Easthouses	36%
Gorebridge	30%
Penicuik	23%
Newtongrange	23%
Bonnyrigg	21%
Loanhead	19%

(Source: [Midlothian Profile 2023/24, based on data from 2019](#))

Community Planning Outcomes Profile for new averages: [CPOP](#)

Number of children living in poverty (after housing costs), 2014-23³

Midlothian is one of the fastest growing local authorities in Scotland. This growth places increased demands on services which aim to tackle poverty. Between 2018 and 2028, the number of households in Midlothian is projected to increase at a faster rate than the rest of Scotland. The Midlothian population increased from 89,637 in 2017 to 97,020 in 2022. Of the 2022 population, it is estimated 18,287 are in the 0–15 age bracket⁴ with around 1,000 Midlothian families each year facing the financial challenges of a new baby. The table below displays the numbers of children aged 0-15 years who are living in households with incomes (net of housing costs) that are below 60% of the UK median income.

Number of children living in poverty (0-15 years old):

	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	East Lothian	West Lothian	City of Edinburgh
2022/23	4,592	4,937	4,679	9,440	17,907
2021/22	4,590	4,963	4,765	9,364	17,339
2020/21	4,180	4,445	4,390	8,723	16,142
2019/20	4,583	5,292	5,589	9,326	17,980
2018/19	4,385	4,683	5,195	8,435	16,222
2017/18	4,339	4,966	5,058	8,987	17,911
2016/17	4,337	4,984	4,933	8,871	17,706
2015/16	3,922	4,941	4,730	8,622	16,102
2014/15	3,952	4,562	4,606	8,280	15,624

The increased number of children living in poverty in Midlothian is reflective of a population swell in the under-15 years and working age populations. Larger families (those with three or more children) are affected by the two-child limit to Universal Credit. In Midlothian, the number of affected families is higher than in other Lothian areas, affecting 34 per 100 larger families in receipt of Child Benefit in Midlothian (Source: DWP/HMRC).

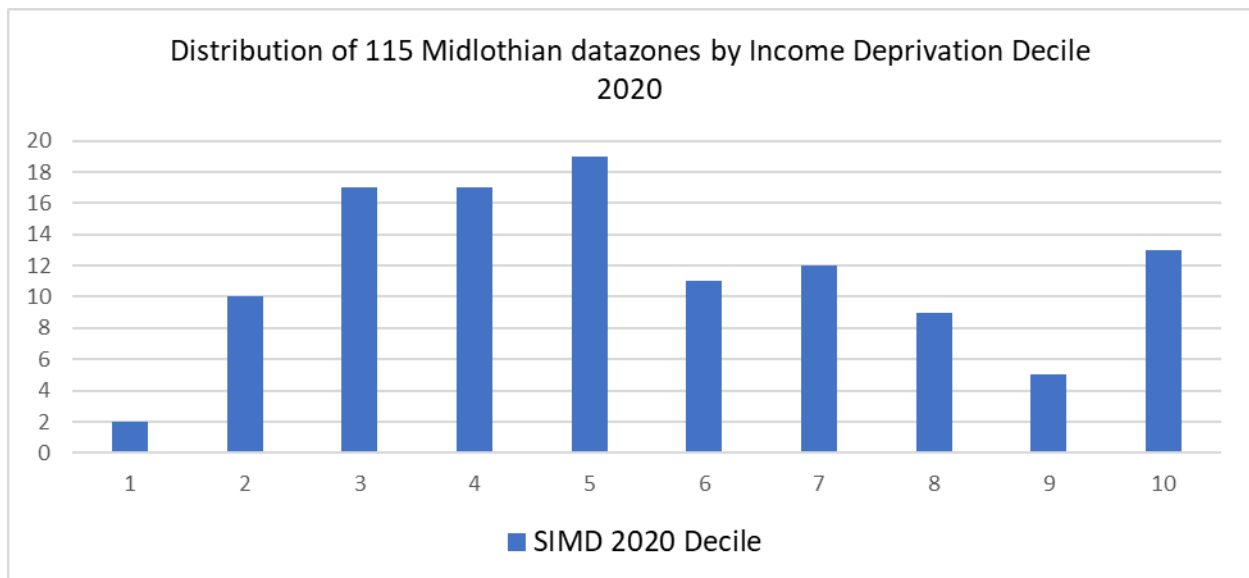
The Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population of Midlothian is also growing. Available census data from 2022 is now available, currently 4.5% of Midlothian population are from a minority ethnic background, and 6.8% within the school aged population. Foreign-born nationals may differ from the rest of the population in terms of entitlement to support through the benefit system, be more vulnerable to the consequences of labour market or health issues where such entitlement is less, and be less familiar with sources of financial and other assistance available to them. It is recognised that particular BAME populations may face tougher challenges during the cost-of-living crisis.

³ https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Child-Poverty-AHC-estimates-2015-2022_final.xlsx

⁴ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/council-area-data-sheets/midlothian-council-profile.html>

Income Deprivation - SIMD 2020

In Midlothian, 10 Datazones are in the most deprived Datazones in Scotland by *multiple deprivation*. According to SIMD 2020, 12 Datazones in Midlothian are in the 20% most *income deprived* Datazones in Scotland, which includes 2 Datazones in the 10% most *income deprived* in Scotland. The graph below shows how many Datazones in Midlothian are in each income deprivation decile.



Understanding the areas in Midlothian where the population is most income deprived will help us to target and measure actions to reduce child poverty. This data will be used as one source of information to inform the development of a Child Poverty Index and Poverty locality maps, using multiple data sources that will ensure a more robust data set.

Child Poverty Indicators

Out of work benefits

In September 2024, 2.3% of Midlothian residents (1,375 residents), were receiving out of work benefits⁵. This included a greater number of female than male claimants; 750 and 625 respectively.

Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods

Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods are a collection of payments which provide parents or carers who get certain low income benefits or tax credits with financial support during pregnancy and the key early years of a child's life. There is a single application form that enables an individual to apply for any relevant Best Start Grant Payments - Pregnancy and Baby Payment , Early Learning Payment and School Age Payment as well as Best Start Foods - a recurring four weekly pre-paid card payment which can be used towards the cost of purchasing healthy foods including fresh, dried, tinned and frozen items.

Rather than indicating what they wish to apply for on the form, applicants provide details about themselves, their partner, all dependent children, and any details about their pregnancy and expected children. When the application is processed, Social Security Scotland determines which elements of Best Start Grant the client is eligible to receive and makes a payment to the client to cover all applicable elements. Social Security Scotland will also determine whether the client is eligible for Best Start Foods.

Applications and payments for Best Start Grants and Best Start Foods in Midlothian from 2018/19 – 2023/24 are detailed below:

Best Start Grants and Best Start Foods applications 2018-2024:

	Applications for Best Start Grant - Pregnancy and Baby Payment	Applications for Best Start Grant - Early Learning Payment	Applications for Best Start grant - School Age Payment	Applications for Best Start Foods	Total Midlothian applications
Number	3,675	2,965	2,220	5,950	9,550
Total value	£759,944	£628,671	£655,028	£1,082,078	£3,125,722

⁵ [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/)

Best Start Grant & Best Start Foods applications 2018-24:

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Applications received	350	2,240	2,240	1,705	1,570	1,445	9,550
Applications processed	320	2,090	2,115	1,710	1,625	1,615	9,475
Applications authorised	225 (71%)	1,485 (71%)	1,480 (70%)	1,160 (68%)	1,075 (66%)	925 (57%)	6,350
Applications denied	90 (28%)	525 (25%)	605 (29%)	395 (23%)	500 (31%)	655 (40%)	2,770
Applications withdrawn	5 (1%)	80 (4%)	30 (2%)	155 (9%)	50 (3%)	35 (2%)	355
% processed authorised	71%	71%	70%	68%	66%	67%	69%
% processed applications denied	28%	25%	29%	23%	31%	29%	27%
% processed applications withdrawn	1%	4%	2%	9%	3%	4%	4%

(Source: [Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods: high level statistics to 31 March 2023 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/best-start-grant-and-best-start-foods-high-level-statistics-to-31-march-2023))

Scottish Child Payment

On 9 November 2020, Social Security Scotland began taking applications for Scottish Child Payment. At the beginning of the application process, individuals can choose to make a joint application for Scottish Child Payment, Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods. If they choose to do this, the applicant completes one application form for all of these benefits.

To make it easier for families to access the support they are entitled to, Social Security Scotland began, on 28 November 2022, to award Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment and School Age Payment automatically to eligible families in receipt of Scottish Child Payment. These awards, made to individuals who are in receipt of Scottish Child Payment and who have an eligible child within the relevant Early Learning Payment or School Age Payment application window, happen automatically without the need for a new application.

Scottish Child Payment is intended to provide regular, additional financial support for families already in receipt of qualifying benefits to assist with the costs of caring for a child. From launch to March 2024, 6,920 applications were received for Midlothian, of these 6,860 were processed and 5,635 authorised⁶.

⁶ [Social Security Scotland - Scottish Child Payment: high level statistics to 31 March 2024](https://www.gov.scot/social-security-scotland-scottish-child-payment-high-level-statistics-to-31-march-2024)

Scottish Child Payment applications Feb 2021 – March 2024:

	Launch to 31/01/21	2021 -2022	2022 – 2023	2023 - 2024	Total
Applications received	1,990	1,045	2,810	1,075	6,920
*Applications processed	1,540	1,315	2,740	1,385	6,860
No. of applications authorised and % of processed applications authorised	1,420 (92%)	995 (76%)	2,355 (86%)	865 (62%)	5,635 (82%)
Value	£68,620	£1,062,950	£3,603,865	£8,085,885	£12,821,320

Young Carer Grant

Young Carer Grant is a yearly payment of £359.65 (rising to £383.75 from 1/4/24) for young carers in Scotland. To be eligible for Young Carer Grant, carers must be 16-18 years old and have been caring for 1-3 people for an average of 16 hours a week for at least the last 3 months. Young Carer Grant is paid once a year, up until the age of 19yrs.

Young Carer Grant applications Oct 2019 – March 2024:

	From launch to March 2020	From launch to March 2021	From launch to March 2022	From launch to March 2023	From launch to March 2024	Total
Applications received	30	65	75	85	95	345
*Applications processed	25	65	65	75	90	325
Applications authorised (% processed apps)	20 (80%)	40 (62%)	40 (62%)	35 (47%)	55 (61%)	195 (60%)
Value	£6,300	£12,499	£11,707	£11,704	£19,777	£61,998

Job Start Payment

Job Start Payment is a payment to help young people in Scotland with the costs associated with the transition into employment after a period of time out of paid work. It's a one off payment of £314.45 available to young people in Scotland who are on certain benefits, and need help with the costs of starting a new job. If the person has a child, they could get £503.10

Job Start Payment Applications Aug 2020 – March 2024:

	2020-21 (from Aug 20)	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total*
Applications received	30	90	20	20	160
*Applications processed	25	80	20	30	155
Applications authorised (% processed apps)	10 (40%)	30 (38%)	5 (25%)	10 (33%)	55 (34%)
Value	£2,800	£8,585	£1,201	£2,551	£15,137

* Applications are processed once a decision has been made to authorise or deny, or once an application is withdrawn by the applicant

Child Disability Payment

Child Disability Payment provides money to help with the extra care and mobility costs that a child or young person living with a disability might have. In 22 November 2021, Child Disability Payment launched nationwide to all new applicants living in Scotland.

Child Disability Payment	Nov 21 – June 2023	2023-June 2024	Total
Applications received	860	615	1475
Applications processed*	615	685	1300
Applications authorised	515 (84%)	495 (80%)	1010 (78%)
Value	£7,199,980	£10,595,640	£17,795,620

[Social Security Scotland - Child Disability Payment: high level statistics to 30 June 2024*](#)

Applications are processed once a decision has been made to authorise or deny, or once an application is withdrawn by the applicant

Clothing grants and Free School Meals

Midlothian Council provide children from low-income families with free school meals (FSM), and money to help towards buying school clothes. An award provides a pupil with one free meal each day they attend school and a BACS payment to cover holiday periods.

FSM Registrations	2020/21*		2021/22*		2022/23*		2023/24**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Primary	624	14	489	14	367	16	458	19%
Secondary	636	12	707	13	743	13	936	15%
Special	50	57	57	61	102	100	30	45%
Total	1310		1253		1212		1320	16%

(Source: These figures are taken using census information from September each year)

* In 2020/21, universal FSM was provided for P1-P3.

**In 2021/22, universal FSM was provided for P1-P4.

**In 2022/23, universal FSM was provided for P1-P5.

Clothing grants	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Primary	£125,280	£165,490	£171,900	£163,530
Secondary	£60,890	£128,380	£129,060	£136,650
Special	£1,060	£4,290	£4,320	£4,920
Total	£187,230	£298,160	£305,280	£305,100

Clothing grants are now paid at:

- £120 for primary pupils (£100, 2018/19)
- £150 for secondary pupils (£100, 2018/19)

Pupil Equity Funding

All schools continue to work towards stretch aims focused on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. This was the second year of setting stretch aims and head teachers were able to use knowledge of their school's attainment over time, as well as knowledge of their learners, to set stretch aims. They were asked to reflect on their longer-term stretch aims for 2027 and adjust the stretch aims for 2024, 2025 and 2026 to map out a path towards the 2027 targets.

The close scrutiny of PEF plans and spend continues and has ensured schools are working towards the desired impact for the most disadvantaged learners. All schools use PEF monies to consider a wide range of Interventions for equity and almost all schools use monies to support families with Cost of the School Day.

Associated Schools Groups (ASGs) are encouraged to share their approaches to reducing the poverty-related attainment gap. A few ASGs pool some of their PEF budget to employ additional Numeracy, Literacy and Health and Wellbeing teachers. This supports consistency across an ASG and is beginning to improve learning transitions from P7 to S1.

PEF plans are embedded within school Standards, Quality and Improvement Plans (SQIP). The planning format is consistent across all schools and supports schools to consider their gaps and set measurable outcomes to address these.

The Excellence & Equity workbook has been simplified to make it more accessible and schools have been asked to review progress as they go through the year. The tracking periods align with data uplifts. All the information works together to ensure schools use this as they progress towards gathering the impact of PEF and closing the attainment gap.

Education Scotland have identified areas of good practice at several inspections over last session at Woodburn PS, Lasswade PS and Newbattle High School – *‘At Newbattle High School the headteacher, supported by all staff, is committed to ensuring equity for all learners. Staff have very effective tracking systems in place to monitor young people with barriers to their learning. As a result, senior leaders are clearly able to demonstrate improvements in the attainment of young people. Staff are closing attainment gaps for young people who receive free school meals, with an ASN, or who live in SIMD one to three.*

There is a clear plan in place for Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Senior leaders consult all parents on the use of PEF. Positively, staff have also asked parents if they have seen the impact of PEF on their children’s experiences and outcomes. This is supporting planning of future spending. PEF has been mainly spent on staffing, such as nurture, mental health and outreach workers. These staff work very well together to target interventions for young people. They, with other staff, have raised attainment through approaches to nurture, transitions and a focus on ensuring learners achieve at least five awards at SCQF level 3 or better. Most learners accessing interventions achieved their targeted level in the BGE or gained five or more awards at SCQF level 3 or better in the senior phase.

The attainment advisor is emphasising the need to ensure sustainability as we move into the last 2 years of PEF. This is especially for staff posts/contracts which are paid for from PEF and schools are building on their experiences and analysis of impacts to plan the way forward.”

Scottish Welfare Fund

The Scottish Welfare Fund is one of the key benefits administered by Midlothian Council. Crisis Grants may help residents who are in crisis because of a disaster, such as a fire or flood, or an emergency such as losing all their money or having to visit a sick child in hospital. Community Care Grants may help residents who are about to leave care to live on their own in the community, or to help those who are struggling to provide a safe and secure home for their family. There are limits to the number of applications that can be made for both funds. Allocations for 2021/22 to 2023/24 are detailed below.

Crisis Grants:

	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
Paid	3,953	56.6%	4,083	52.4%	3,377	50.0%
Declined	118	1.7%	165	2.2%	64	0.95%
Refused	2,908	41.7%	3,542	45.4%	3,311	49.0%
TOTAL	6,979		7,790		6,752	
Value	£452,499		£450,850		£378,671	

Community Care Grants:

	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
Paid	483	33.7%	490	33.6%	419	32.8%
Declined	121	8.4%	21	1.4%	6	0.47%
Refused	830	57.9%	946	64.0%	851	66.7%
TOTAL	1,434		1,457		1,276	
Value	£353,094		£449,088		£525,372	

In line with national trends, crisis grant applications have more than doubled since 2013/14, with a rapid increase in 2021/22 which continued in to 2022/23 but has reduced in 2023/24.

A significant proportion of applications for crisis grants in Midlothian are repeat applications and the Scottish Welfare Fund does not remove all financial pressure from applicants. As part of a planned review of equitable access to welfare and debt advice for Midlothian residents, we aim to ensure ongoing provision and support is available to assist residents to reach a less financially pressured level.

Homelessness

The number of households who applied to Midlothian Council for homeless assistance during 2023/24 increased by 28% compared to the previous year and reflects an increase of 68% when compared to 2021/22 when homeless applications were at the lowest rate since the start of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP). The table shows the proportion of applications from households with dependent children has continued to rise in each of the last two years.

It is thought this increase in presentations is partially linked to the limited availability of other affordable housing options in the area. Midlothian has the fifth highest average house selling price in Scotland. The average price for properties sold in Midlothian has increased by 67% in the last 10 years, with the number of completed sales falling slightly in each of the last two years (Source: [Registers of Scotland – House Price Statistics](#))

Number of homeless applications:

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total homeless applications	496	441	579	742
% of households with dependent children	40%	36%	47%	48%
% of households with no children	60%	64%	53%	52%

Midlothian's 2022/23 RRTP highlighted a sizable increase in the number of homeless applications from males who are single parents, a 143% increase compared to 2021/22. During 2023/24 the number of applications from this demographic increased again by 34%.

Meeting the temporary accommodation requirements of this group continues to be challenging, with 44 households being placed in unsuitable temporary accommodation in the last six months of 2023/24

It is important to recognise that women and children are more likely to require assistance as a result of domestic violence. The number of people seeking homeless assistance as a result of domestic violence or other violence in the household increased from 64 in 2022/23 to 79 in 2023/24. 39 of those applications were from female households, 24 of which had children.

Progress 2023-24

During 2023-24, we have continued to work in partnership to address the drivers of child poverty and key actions that have been taken are presented below.

Part A: Providing the opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain and progress in work

- **Strengthened employment offer to parents**
- **Connectivity and childcare**
- **Transforming our economy**

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
<p>Increased uptake of eligible 2-year-old childcare places.</p>	<p>Create a working group, including education and health, to develop the information that is required to increase uptake and ensure we can plan strategically to meet children’s needs.</p> <p>Midlothian now have access to birth information by cluster from Health, still to get access to information on young children’s needs etc to be able to identify entitled two-year-olds.</p>	<p>Health and ASN colleagues meet to discuss needs of younger children. Child milestone data provided at area level but not sufficient information to assist with future planning and preparing for the level of need. NHS Lothian aware of ongoing challenges and this may possibly be addressed by a child and maternity data strategy group.</p> <p>There are two strands of data sharing being developed relating to data on two-year-olds:</p> <p>Eligibility of two-year-olds for funded early learning and childcare (ELC), where the Improvement Service (IS) is</p>

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
		<p>being an intermediary between the DWP and HMRC and councils. IS receives data from DWP and HMRC on households who meet the statutory, income-related criteria for eligibility for funded ELC for two-year-olds. IS will then pass the name and address of the parents/carers to councils so they can send a letter asking if they wish to apply.</p> <p>Progress update: This data transfer can only occur once the council has signed an overall data sharing and partnership agreement with IS, and then a subsidiary agreement for the data relating to families who may qualify for funded ELC. A working group from across the council will be convened to progress the overall agreement and thereafter the subsidiary agreement.</p> <p>The other strand relates to requesting data sharing from NHS Lothian on developmental checks on children carried out by Health Visitors.</p> <p>Progress update: Work on this had been progressing however a key member of staff at the council recently left. The project has paused until a replacement is appointed.</p>

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
<p>The review of local childcare report will inform childcare provision and plans to increase provision.</p>	<p>Collate information on all out-of-school childcare providers across Midlothian, recording their operating hours, location, contracts and let charges.</p> <p>Review and report on the local authority's QA arrangements (where we have funded places).</p> <p>Review our approach to collating and analysing data on out-of-school childcare provision.</p> <p>Liaise with our Parent and Learner Liaison Officer to carry out a Council-wide consultation on out-of-school childcare provision.</p>	<p>The collation of information on out-of-school childcare providers across Midlothian has been carried out in partnership with providers. Information collated includes opening hours, costs to families, facilities and availability. Midlothian Council is currently carrying out a public consultation on out of school childcare to identify gaps in provision and opportunities to expand this service for families. The consultation went live 30th October and remains open until 22 November.</p>
<p>Increase the uptake of tax-free childcare.</p>	<p>Work with health to promote tax-free childcare.</p> <p>Promote uptake of tax-free childcare to working parents.</p> <p>Audit and review registered childcare providers on the scheme.</p> <p>Proactively promote take up campaigns signposting registered tax-free childcare providers.</p>	<p>This is complete.</p>
<p>Provide person-centred help to address barriers to work for parents through our Parental Employability Service, including</p>	<p>Key work support for parents</p> <p>Delivery of community based learning opportunities</p>	<p>1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300 parents have been supported. • 80 parents entered employment, self-employment, MA or progressed in employment

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
<p>health, money advice and motivational support.</p>	<p>Delivery of qualifications</p> <p>Support for work placements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 121 parents achieved 275 qualifications • 9 parents started FE/HE <p>1st April 2024 – 30th September 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 166 PES parents carried over are still receiving support • 115 new PES parents are receiving support • 51 parents entered employment, self-employment, MA or progressed in employment • 42 parents have achieved 97 qualifications <p>7 parents started FE/HE</p>

Part B: Maximising the support available for families to lead dignified lives and meet their basic needs

- Transformational approach to people and place
- Social Security
- Income Maximisation
- Warm affordable homes

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
<p>Equitable income maximisation and debt advice is available across Midlothian.</p>	<p>A review of access to income maximisation, welfare and debt advice will be commissioned, with a primary focus on child poverty priority families. Recommendations for improvement will be shared with community planning partners and an implementation plan developed to shape future provision.</p>	<p>A key priority for the Midlothian Child Poverty Working Group in 2023-24 was to support the provision of equitable income maximisation, welfare and debt advice across Midlothian. An independent review of access to welfare and debt advice provision was commissioned through health improvement funding in October 2023. This research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mapped welfare advice and debt services in Midlothian, identifying where they deliver services, referral/access criteria and referral routes, how they are funded, how they work with clients/other organisations. • demonstrated user journeys through services, identifying touchpoints for optimal intervention/support. • reviewed existing provision and user journeys to identify gaps in provision, areas of oversupply or ineffective duplication.

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recommended areas for improvement. <p>The review was completed in March 2024 with plans to share the report with community planning partners and develop an implementation plan to shape future provision carried into 2024/25. The report identified 69 services offering income maximisation, welfare and debt advice, 53 of which were locally provided. Just over 50% of these locally provided services were operated by Citizens Advice Bureau (Dalkeith or Penicuik). The review also highlighted that the highest proportion of services (36%) are provided in Community centres or hubs including foodbanks and that eight provided dedicated supported families with children.</p>
<p>Current signposting information to income maximisation services and Cost of Living supports is included in communications with Midlothian residents.</p>	<p>Review the correspondence issued from Midlothian Council's Revenue's Team. Work to provide information about income maximisation services and Cost of Living supports in communications regarding Scottish Welfare Fund applications, rent arrears, council tax arrears and school meal debt.</p>	<p>Automated correspondence for unsuccessful recipients of the Scottish Welfare Fund was reviewed and updated in September 2024 to provide information and contact details for local supports including access to funds and support via Children's Services.</p> <p>The Council continues to promote the online cost of living supports information.</p>

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
<p>Staff working across NHS and HSCP services have the knowledge and awareness of child poverty and support to support income maximisation.</p>	<p>Roll out of training, awareness-raising, and information to support referrals to advice services.</p> <p>A programme of training and awareness-raising will be designed and delivered to priority staff groups (working directly with people and families).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting confirmed referral routes for clinical staff (i.e HV and FNP). • This will be more of an 'awareness raising' and arming staff with knowledge to refer on to services. • Reviewed current offers i.e TURAS, LearnPro and PHS for appropriateness to use, it seems we will have to build own material. • Next step is to progress safe email referrals to income max for HV and FNP staff.
<p>Increased awareness of child poverty and routes to support amongst Midlothian Council staff and Trusted Partners.</p>	<p>A programme of training and awareness-raising will be designed and delivered to ensure that all Midlothian-based workers are trained by 31/3/25 and outcomes of training are evaluated.</p>	<p>CLLE, in partnership with the Welfare Rights Team and Dalkeith CAB, have been delivering training on promoting use of the “Worrying About Money” leaflet to ensure consistency in signposting across the council and to highlight other community based cost of living supports. Frontline council departments have been prioritised – CLLE, Housing, Libraries, Contact Centre, Revenues and Arrears and Registrars.</p> <p>Trusted Partners have also been trained and SLAs have been updated to include the commitment to distribute the leaflet with payments.</p>

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
<p>Our Family Wellbeing Service will provide holistic support to help deliver improved outcomes for children, young people and families and ensure best use of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.</p>	<p>Create dataset to measure the impact of the Whole family Wellbeing Fund on the 6 priority families.</p>	<p>The FWS was established in January 2023. From April 23- March 24 there was significant financial supports and interventions provided but this data about priority groups was not systematically captured. This work began in January 24 and was in place for monitoring the 24/25 financial year. Information about the holistic support and interventions provided is captured in the FWS annual report. This included the provision of 477 food packs and income maximisation support to 48 families with over £130,000 financial gain.</p>
<p>All school staff will be trained in Cost of the School Day.</p>	<p>By the end of the 24/25 school year all school staff will have completed the COSD module.</p>	<p>On-going, HTs and schools accessing the COSD Toolkit and engaging Parent Councils to work in partnership. Lots of innovative work, focus for next year to look at opportunities for sharing good practice.</p>
<p>Schools are supported to undertake a Cost of the School Day audit.</p>	<p>Midlothian schools, working with pupils and parent councils, will identify all the costs associated with their pupils attending and taking part in education.</p>	<p>On-going, HTs and schools are accessing the COSD Toolkit and engaging Parent Councils to work in partnership. To be the focus of Primary HT meetings next session.</p>
<p>Indicators of child poverty in Midlothian are further</p>	<p>Data will be complemented with local needs assessments and targeted actions towards the</p>	<p>Building on previous work by Midlothian and partners, we identified a range of indicators covering</p>

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
<p>developed, leading to the production of a more robust data set to inform future targeted interventions.</p>	<p>greatest need. The data set will support local partners to identify priorities to address the 3 drivers of child poverty and monitor progress towards prioritised actions.</p>	<p>the context of child poverty; income from employment, income from social security and cost of living. We then identified the indicators which were likely to be available, whether they could be used for context, setting priorities or monitoring progress. For indicators with clear data source, we noted whether they were timely and sustainable. We identified that more work could be done on developing indicators on childcare, private housing costs, transport and the reserved social security system. We also identified some indicators which could be used for monitoring health and wellbeing outcomes for children in low-income households.</p> <p>The next stage is to review the refined indicator lists against our Child Poverty and Single Midlothian Plan poverty action and check if there is anything missing and decide whether the chosen indicators will allow us to monitor progress towards our objectives. Further input from Public Health Scotland has been requested to support a Lothian wide approach.</p>
<p>Improve effectiveness, consistency and impact of PEF funding in closing the poverty related attainment gap.</p>	<p>Schools work collegiately to share effective strategies to closing the poverty related attainment gap. <i>(what has actually made the difference to closing the gap?)</i></p>	<p>New arrangements in place to review impact of PEF in improving outcomes for children and young people; Education Scotland Attainment Adviser provides a quarterly report on PEF spend and impact on performance measures; The strategic evaluation of all Attainment Scotland Funding is monitored via the</p>

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
		<p>Excellence and Equity Board chaired by the Education Chief Operating Officer. This Board appears to be operating well, has appropriate representation and is receiving appropriate monitoring information on all aspects of Attainment Scotland Funding; Internal audit has carried out a review of the use of PEF funding in line with funding criteria “An appropriate framework has been provided to allow Midlothian’s schools to evaluate the effectiveness of their PEF interventions. Support is provided by the Quality Improvement Managers and the Scottish Government’s Attainment Advisor. CECYP and Strategic Equity Funding have been appropriately allocated to be utilised by the Council in line with the aims of the funding.”</p>
<p>Increase the uptake of free school meal registration and school clothing grants for eligible pupils.</p>	<p>P1-5 families will be targeted to ensure registration for FSM, clothing grants, milk and holiday food entitlements.</p>	<p>On-going - again schools doing this in different ways. Signposting and supporting parents/carers on a practical level to complete. Schools where PEF funding has been used for Child Family Practitioner or similar using this role to reach families.</p>
<p>Increase the uptake of Education Maintenance Allowance.</p>	<p>Awareness-raising with High School pupils and families of EMA entitlement.</p>	<p>Currently 77 young people across the secondary schools are applying for EMA. The numbers of students applying for EMA had reduced so it was publicised during S5 PSE to encourage students to</p>

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
	<i>Look at EMA through attendance group and % of who have applied for EMA and are eligible but don't receive it due to non attendance. What are the barriers? Speak to recipients. Review of EMA process.</i>	apply, this led to a significant increase in sign up. Further work to be done on including EMA application information in course choice booklets.
Increase the uptake of the Young Scot National Entitlement Card for under 22s.	Midlothian Council CLLE, Library Services and partners will work together to promote the uptake of the NEC Cards.	As at March 2024 72% of secondary pupils (61% in 2023) and 42% of primary pupils (35% in 2023) had been issued with NEC entitlement cards.
Increase the uptake of Best Start Grants, Best Start Foods and Scottish Child Payment.	NHS Lothian, Midlothian HSCP & Social Security Scotland will work together to promote Best Grant Grants, Best Start Foods & Scottish Child Payment to eligible parents.	Being actioned and reported through Strategic Poverty Group.
Lived Experience Panel actively inform the priorities and associated actions within the LCPAR.	Establish a lived experience panel to gather views of local residents and directly influence the LCPAR.	13 community members have now been trained in ethnographic research approaches. Over 40 interviews have been held and work has begun on picking out key themes – see case study.

Part C: Supporting the next generation to thrive

- **Best Start to Life**
- **Supporting Children to Learn and Grow**
- **Post School Transitions**

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
Midlothian School Uniform Guidance published.	Establish a short-term working group that involves school learners to develop poverty-proof school uniform guidance.	Guidance has been developed. Work is progressing well to expand this into a MLC School Uniform Policy taking into account the Scottish Government’s recently published School Uniform Guidance. Publication date anticipated to be March 2025.
Data is used to understand the number of families where parent’s income is just slightly above the Scottish Government threshold for free school meal entitlements for pupils.	<p>Analysis of school meal debt and report to be produced – target 16/2/24.</p> <p>Findings presented to and discussed by the cost of living taskforce, interventions decided upon and allocated to appropriate officers/services and organisations to undertake – target 31/3/24</p> <p>Interventions actioned from when the schools return in April 24 until the end of term at the end of June 24. Outcomes reported back to the taskforce.</p>	An analysis of school meal debt has been undertaken using data from ParentPay. In March 2023, Midlothian Council adjusted school meal debt, however, there are several families who had previous debt written off that are beginning to accumulate school meal debt in 2024. The profile of the debt does not reflect the schools in the areas of deprivation. Agreed pilot for 24/25 to offer Income max to families with school meal debt over £X.
Strengthened financial wellbeing pathways across Health Visiting, Midwifery and Family Nurse	NHS Lothian, HSCP and advice providers will work together to ensure quick and easy referral routes from perinatal services to income maximisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automatic referrals from Midwifery TRAK to Penicuik CAB are up and running. This was a

Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	2023/24 Update
<p>Partnership (FNP) teams to maximise income and address infant food insecurity.</p>	<p>support. Emergency pathways to alleviate infant food insecurity will be developed.</p>	<p>long process sorting information governance, IT security and setting up automatic reports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next step is to progress safe email referrals to income max for HV and FNP staff
<p>Reducing child poverty is embedded in Children’s Rights planning and delivery across Midlothian.</p>	<p>All schools & settings demonstrate a commitment towards taking a child’s rights-based approach by having an action plan for their school around how they are going to take forward poverty-related action.</p>	<p>The Community Planning Partnership Single Midlothian Plan 2023-27 sets out the Partnership’s commitment to realising the children’s rights approach to all of our work and making sure that we embed the principles of the UNCRC. The Act now requires us to separately consider the impact on children and young people, including in situations where decisions are being made which affect the whole population.</p> <p>Focus for 24/25 to carry out more information raising sessions, particularly with a focus on poverty.</p>

Case studies

Case study 1 - Involvement of people with direct experience of poverty

Midlothian Surestart, in partnership with Midlothian Council, were successful in an application to the Child Poverty Accelerator Fund. The project is funded from January 2024 to March 2025 with a focus on training and supporting community members to become researchers. The researchers will use ethnographic research tools to interview priority families and understand how current processes and cost of living interventions support or hinder efforts to move out of poverty.

The project targeted training 10-15 priority families as community researchers and to engage up to 100 priority families. Training on topics including introducing community research, ethnographic research methods and skills, ethics and consent, and collecting, analysing and presenting data.

The project successfully targeted priority families and trained 13 parents as community or peer researchers. Midlothian's community researchers had a strong willingness and commitment to the process with everyone attending almost every session.

The community researchers reported that the sessions were empowering as they felt comfortable sharing their stories and even disagreeing on topics. The researchers also learned new practical skills including presenting to large audiences such as the community planning conference, and organising a large-scale event as part of Challenge Poverty week.

The project team hope that working from an ethnographic approach, community researchers will be able to elicit the current lived experience of child poverty in Midlothian and work with the team to find ways to highlight and address the systemic barriers that impact on priority families living in child poverty. While the project is in the stages of collecting data from priority families, this approach highlights how training parents with lived experience provides direct benefits for both the project and the community researchers. Community researchers have already reported that they have new skills and confidence before engaging in data collection.

The community researchers have begun going out into the community to engage other priority families. Midlothian's community research approach will provide important insights into how to overcome barriers to engagement and issues experienced by low-income families. The project team aims to provide insights into how to engage and influence decision makers and ultimately affect positive change.

Case study 2 - Family Wellbeing Service

In January 2023 the Family Wellbeing Service (FWS) was created to provide holistic family support to families in Midlothian. Ideas about this service were based on local data and in development before the announcement of WFWF. The aim of the service is improved wellbeing of family members including engagement in the community and/or education.

The FWS provide a range of interventions including support for school attendance, finance and budgeting, housing, family relationships and referral to specialist supports.

Partnerships between FWS, education, health and third sector have been strengthened with the development of the WFWF working group.

Processes have been redesigned to improve access via self-referrals and professional referrals. The process of multi-agency/partnership discussion (Team around the child - TATC) about a family's needs and appropriate support have been made consistent across early years, primary school and high school. This is in line with the vision of a single point of access for all supports from CYPF.

In 2023/24 the FWS have continued to build skills and knowledge to provide flexible and creative support to families. The staff have been trained on a range of thematic issues and approaches to working with families.

Over 23/24 the FWS engaged with:

309 children referred to TATC

164 children progressed to allocation in FWS

161 children allocated to FWS at year end.

477 food packs provided to families

Good news stories

*84% of children referred based on school attendance had improved attendance during and at the end of the intervention.

* An 11 year old was supported to return to school after 5 months of absence

* A young person increased their attendance from 6% to 44%

* A mother who struggled with her mental health was supported to get a diagnosis of ADHD and reports this has improved her self-esteem, self-image and ability to seek support.

* A Dad who struggled to meet people was supported to engage with therapeutic support and talk about his feelings.

Case study 3 - Cost of the school day - Newbattle High School's Magic Breakfast Club

Newbattle High School's Magic Breakfast Club has now been running since August 2024 and has been a huge success with the young people. They provide a free breakfast of buttered bagels, toast and crumpets for every pupil in the school before classes begin at 8.40am. This is a volunteer run breakfast club by Newbattle High School staff and led by the Home School Practitioner.

Magic Breakfast Club at Newbattle High School has proven to be invaluable in the community, providing free breakfast to students who may otherwise go without. It is essential for promoting the health and well-being of our young people, enabling them to start their day on a positive note. Free breakfast significantly contributes to students' concentration levels, which in turn positively affects their educational outcomes. For many students, particularly those facing food poverty, breakfast is not always a certainty at home. By offering this service to all pupils, we ensure that there is no discrimination and that inclusivity remains at the forefront of our educational environment. Additionally, breakfast foods rich in essential nutrients contribute positively to children's long-term health, reducing the risk of obesity and other related health issues. We are aware that a number of our pupils do not eat breakfast and having the option for a free balanced meal first thing in the morning is not only beneficial to their health but a great incentive for them to come into school early/on time. Which then positively impacts their attendance.

“There's no doubt that the Magic Breakfast has had a positive impact on pupils. The service is extremely popular (and essential for some). There clearly is a demand for the service and it has also proved to be great for forging good relationships with pupils who enjoy the fact that it is teachers/LAs who are serving them. For the staff involved it has also been beneficial as you get to meet fellow colleagues with whom you may not get the chance to work with”.

Case study 4 - Cost of the school day - Parental Employability Support (PES)

ID, a 46-year-old parent originally from Afghanistan and residing in Midlothian, faced significant challenges in finding employment due to limited qualifications, language barriers, and low confidence.

Referred by the local Job Centre the PES keyworker began working with him to address these obstacles. During their initial assessment, they discussed his employment goals and identified short courses that would help him gain basic qualifications and start his career in Scotland. The keyworker referred him to an Emergency Paediatric First Aid course, funded through PES, enabling him to obtain the necessary certification.

To help ID integrate into society and improve his language skills, he actively participated in various projects. These included a community cooking program funded by the NOLB Employability Grants, designed to help individuals from minority backgrounds integrate with Scottish culture, while enhancing their language abilities and he attended the weekly PES ESOL keyworker facilitated "Conversation Café", where he practiced speaking, met new people, and shared his story of moving to Scotland and adapting to a new culture.

The PES programme also supported ID with travel costs by providing day saver bus tickets, ensuring he could attend these programs without financial difficulties. These tickets were also invaluable for his first week of commuting to work in Edinburgh. Once he obtained his qualifications his keyworker helped refine his CV and applied for jobs on his behalf. This led to his successful employment as a kitchen porter and dishwasher at an Edinburgh restaurant, where he earns £12.00 per hour plus tips on a temporary contract. To ensure he was prepared for his role the keyworker assisted him by translating texts so that he could confidently complete essential courses and guiding him through materials, such as Health and Safety Level 2, Food Safety Level 2, and Allergy Awareness.

He will continue to be informed about future funding opportunities for additional training and courses to further enhance his skills, improve his job prospects, and increase his earning potential, provided he remains committed to his field. ID expressed his gratitude for the support he received, saying: "I am very happy with all the services and support you provided, especially with writing my CV, meeting new people through the Conversation Café, and improving my conversation skills. I have now gained the necessary qualifications with the support of the PES team and have found a good job. Now, I can earn my own money and live happily with my family".

Appendix 1 – Action plan signed off March 2024

Plans for 2023-27

We are moving towards longer-term planning with the development of a four-year Child Poverty Action Plan. At the time of writing this report, the plan and measurable outcomes are still in development, however a number of areas are identified that will be taken forward during 2023-2025.

Child Poverty Delivery Plan Actions	Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	Owner
<p>Part A: Providing the opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain and progress in work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strengthened employment offer to parents ➤ Connectivity and childcare ➤ Transforming our economy 	<p>Increased uptake of eligible 2-year-old childcare places.</p>	<p>Following Scottish Government’s review of eligibility criteria for 2-year-old places in 2023, Midlothian Council will work with DWP to identify families in Midlothian with children who are newly eligible and proactively contact these families and work with them to take up their places.</p>	<p>Midlothian Council Education Service</p>
	<p>The review of local childcare report will inform childcare provision and plans to increase provision.</p>	<p>Collate information on all out-of-school childcare providers across Midlothian, recording their operating hours, location, contracts and let charges.</p> <p>Review and report on the local authority’s QA arrangements (where we have funded places).</p>	<p>Midlothian Council Education Service</p>

Child Poverty Delivery Plan Actions	Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	Owner
		<p>Review our approach to collating and analysing data on out-of-school childcare provision.</p> <p>Liaise with our Parent and Learner Liaison Officer to carry out a Council-wide consultation on out-of-school childcare provision.</p>	
	<p>Increase the uptake of tax-free childcare.</p>	<p>Work with health to promote tax-free childcare.</p> <p>Promote uptake of tax-free childcare to working parents.</p> <p>Audit and review registered childcare providers on the scheme.</p> <p>Proactively promote take up campaigns signposting registered tax-free childcare providers.</p>	<p>Midlothian Council Education Services</p>
	<p>Provide person-centred help to address barriers to work for parents through our Parental Employability Service, including health, money advice and motivational support.</p>	<p>During 23-24 PESF will support 180 parents.</p> <p>35% entering employment, self-employment, MA or progress into employment.</p> <p>7% progression to HE/FE Training</p>	<p>Midlothian Council CLLE (PESF)</p>

Child Poverty Delivery Plan Actions	Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	Owner
		<p>30% will achieve an accredited or work-related qualification.</p> <p>10-15 paid Long term work placements</p> <p>10-15 Employer Recruitment incentives</p>	
<p>Part B: Maximising the support available for families to lead dignified lives and meet their basic needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transformational approach to people and place ➤ Social Security ➤ Income Maximisation ➤ Warm affordable homes 	<p>Equitable income maximisation and debt advice is available across Midlothian.</p>	<p>A review of access to income maximisation, welfare and debt advice will be commissioned, with a primary focus on child poverty priority families. Recommendations for improvement will be shared with community planning partners and an implementation plan developed to shape future provision.</p>	<p>NHS Lothian Public Health</p>
	<p>Current signposting information to income maximisation services and Cost of Living supports is included in communications with Midlothian residents.</p>	<p>Review the correspondence issued from Midlothian Council's Revenue's Team. Work to provide information about income maximisation services and Cost of Living supports in communications regarding Scottish Welfare Fund applications, rent arrears, council tax arrears and school meal debt.</p>	<p>Midlothian Council Corporate Solutions</p>
	<p>Staff working across NHS and HSCP services have the knowledge and skills</p>	<p>Roll out of training, awareness-raising and information to support benefits take-up and referrals to advice</p>	<p>NHS Lothian Public Health</p>

Child Poverty Delivery Plan Actions	Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	Owner
	to support increased take-up of benefits.	services. Joint working between Public Health, Midlothian Council, Social Security Scotland and advice services.	
	Our Family Wellbeing Service will provide holistic support to help deliver improved outcomes for children, young people and families and ensure best use of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.	Families will be supported in a way that demonstrably improves outcomes for mothers and babies.	GIRFEC Whole Family Wellbeing sub-group
	Increased awareness of child poverty and routes to support amongst Midlothian based workers.	A programme of training and awareness-raising will be designed and delivered to ensure that all Midlothian-based workers are trained by 31/3/25 and outcomes of training are evaluated.	Midlothian Council CLLE/NHS Lothian Public Health
	All school staff will be trained in Cost of the School Day.	By the end of the 24/25 school year all school staff will have completed the COSD module.	Midlothian Council Education Service
	Schools are supported to undertake a Cost of the School Day audit.	Midlothian schools, working with pupils and parent councils, will identify all the costs associated with their pupils attending and taking part in education.	Midlothian Council Education Service

Child Poverty Delivery Plan Actions	Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	Owner
	Indicators of child poverty in Midlothian are further developed, leading to the production of a more robust data set to inform future targeted interventions.	Data will be complemented with local needs assessments and targeted actions towards the greatest need. The data set will support local partners to identify priorities to address the 3 drivers of child poverty and monitor progress towards prioritised actions.	Midlothian Council Education Service/ NHS Lothian Public Health
	Improve effectiveness, consistency and impact of PEF funding in closing the poverty related attainment gap.	Schools work collegiately to share effective strategies to closing the poverty related attainment gap.	Midlothian Council Education Service
	Increase the uptake of free school meal and clothing grant registration for eligible pupils.	P1-5 families will be targeted to ensure registration for FSM, clothing grants, milk and holiday food entitlements.	Midlothian Council Education Service
	Increase the uptake of Education Maintenance Allowance.	Awareness-raising with High School pupils and families of EMA entitlement.	Midlothian Council Education Service
	Increase the uptake of the Young Scot National Entitlement Card for under 22s.	Midlothian Council CLLE, Library Services and partners will work together to promote the uptake of the NEC Cards.	Midlothian Council CLLE/ Education and Library Services

Child Poverty Delivery Plan Actions	Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	Owner
	Increase the uptake of Best Start Grants, Best Start Foods and Scottish Child Payment.	NHS Lothian, Midlothian HSCP & Social Security Scotland will work together to promote Best Grant Grants, Best Start Foods & Scottish Child Payment to eligible parents.	NHS Lothian Public Health
	Lived Experience Panel actively inform the priorities and associated actions within the LCPAR.	Establish a lived experience panel to gather views of local residents and directly influence the LCPAR.	Midlothian Council CPP
Part C: Supporting the next generation to thrive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Best Start to Life ➤ Supporting Children to Learn and Grow ➤ Post School Transitions 	Midlothian School Uniform Guidance published.	Establish a short-term working group that involves school learners to develop poverty-proof school uniform guidance.	Midlothian Council Education Service
	Data is used to understand the number of families where parent's income is just slightly above the Scottish Government threshold for free school meal entitlements for pupils.	Findings will be presented to the Cost of Living Taskforce to consider the provision of discretionary free school meals.	Midlothian Council Education Service
	Strengthened financial wellbeing pathways across Health Visiting, Midwifery and Family Nurse Partnership teams to maximise income and address infant food insecurity.	NHS Lothian, HSCP and advice providers will work together to ensure quick and easy referral routes from perinatal services to income maximisation support. Emergency	NHS Lothian Public Health

Child Poverty Delivery Plan Actions	Midlothian Outcomes	Midlothian Actions	Owner
		pathways to alleviate infant food insecurity will be developed.	
	Reducing child poverty is embedded in Children's Rights planning and delivery across Midlothian.	All schools & settings demonstrate a commitment towards taking a child's rights-based approach by having an action plan for their school around how they are going to take forward poverty-related actions.	Midlothian Council Education Service

