



NHS Grampian

Meeting:	NHS Grampian Board
Meeting date:	11 June 2026
Item Number:	13
Title:	Together for Children: A Whole-System Child Health Strategy 2026-2032 NHS Grampian Child Health Strategy and supplementary reports
Responsible Executive:	Professor Shantini Paranjothy, DPH
Report Author:	Tracy Davis, Child Health Commissioner Dr Marjorie Johnston, Specialty Doctor in Public Health Chris Littlejohn, Deputy Director of Public Health

1 Purpose and recommendations

This is presented to the Board for:

- Assurance
- Endorsement

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- **Assurance** –review and scrutinise the information provided in this paper and confirm that it provides assurance that supports prevention and population health improvement, addresses inequalities and statutory duties, and provides appropriate governance and delivery arrangements. Take assurance from the Child Poverty, UNCRC and Corporate Parenting reports that delivery is underway across key strategic priorities, and that these provide an ongoing framework for monitoring impact.
- **Endorsement** – endorse ‘Together for Children’ - NHS Grampian’s Whole-System Child Health Strategy 2026-2032.
- **Future reporting** note that a progress report, via the Children’s Health Board, on delivery of priorities, impact on inequalities and measured outcomes be brought back to the Board at a future date to be agreed with the Chair.

This report relates to:

- NHS Grampian Strategy: Plan for the Future – (People, Places, Pathways)
- Board Annual Delivery Plan – Prevention, People, Unscheduled Care, Planned Care
- Government policy/directive (Child Poverty Act, UNCRC Act, GIRFEC, The Promise)

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe
- Effective
- Person Centred

This subject matter of this report is relevant to the mitigation of the following strategic risks (further information provided in the Risk section below)

- Inability to meet population demand for Planned Care
- Significant delays in the delivery of Unscheduled Care
- Insufficient change and innovation to create a system which can meet demand and deliver on our strategic intent
- Worsening health in Grampian particularly in those who experience multiple disadvantages

2 Report summary

2.1 Situation

The NHS Grampian Children's Health Board commissioned a renewed Child Health Strategy in 2025. This responds to the recommendations in the DPH Annual report 2024/25 and has been developed with ongoing engagement with services and agencies across NHS, Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs), and the multiagency children's services planning groups hosted in each community planning partnership (CPPs). During the development phase, a lunch and learn session was held to engage with Population Health Committee members in the development of the strategy. The strategy also sets out NHS Grampian's approach to delivering its statutory duties and responsibilities for corporate parenting, children and young people's rights and child poverty, with supplementary statutory reports on these topics. The Children's Health Strategy and supplementary statutory reports are presented to the Board as a package at this time, for assurance and endorsement.

2.2 Background

The Director of Public Health Annual Report 2024 was published in November 2025 and focussed on the health of children and young people. The Report highlighted the strategic importance of child poverty, health inequities, mental health and

neurodiversity, and the need for early intervention and prevention. 'Together for Children' responds to that report.

The Child Health Strategy is supported by a suite of statutory and thematic reports which provide evidence of need, delivery, and impact across key population health priorities. These include:

- NHS Grampian Child Poverty Report 2025/26
- NHS Grampian Children's Rights (UNCRC) Report 2024–2026
- NHS Grampian Corporate Parenting Report 2025

Collectively, these reports provide assurance in relation to inequalities, rights-based approaches, and outcomes for vulnerable children, and demonstrate how strategic priorities are being translated into practice.

2.3 Assessment

The strategy sets out five strategic priorities:

- 1. Maternal Health and Best Start**
Focus on early years, prevention, and early identification.
- 2. Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing**
Improving access and trauma-informed approaches.
- 3. Reducing Child Health Inequities**
Targeting underserved and deprived populations.
- 4. Supporting Complex and Additional Needs**
Improving pathways and transitions.
- 5. Healthy & Sustainable Environments**
Addressing wider determinants of health.

Taken together, the strategy and supplementary reports provide triangulated evidence that the priorities identified in the strategy are evidence based, there is active delivery across prevention, equity and rights, and that NHS Grampian is meeting its statutory and governance responsibilities. Delivery will be overseen by the Children's Health Board, working across NHS, HSCPs and Children's Services Planning Partnerships

2.3.1 Quality / Patient Care

The strategy aims to improve early intervention, deliver more co-ordinated and person-centred care, and enhance outcomes across the life course.

2.3.2 Workforce

The strategy aims to strengthen workforce capability, enhance trauma-informed practice and support staff wellbeing.

2.3.3 Financial

The strategy is not aligned against a specific budget. Successful implementation requires prioritisation of existing resources towards prevention which is why having a specific strategy matters. The Children's Health Board will provide oversight of resource alignment and prioritisation decisions.

2.3.4 Risk Assessment / Management

(3065) Inability to meet population demand for Planned Care

Lifetime health trajectories are influenced from before birth and through early childhood. Improving health of children and young people will impact their need for healthcare throughout their lives.

(3639) Significant delays in the delivery of Unscheduled Care

The strategy addresses the need for timely access to services and support.

(3131) Worsening health in Grampian particularly in those who experience multiple disadvantages

The strategy is contextualised by concerns for poverty, inequity and deprivation.

2.3.5 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

A completed Impact Assessment supports the Public Sector Equality Duty, Fairer Scotland Duty, Children and Young People's Rights and the Board's Equalities Outcomes. All assessed impacts are positive or neutral. 'Together for Children' supports targeted outreach, equity-focused service design, and data-driven identification of equalities.

2.3.6 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

The strategy has been developed through:

- Engagement of a writing group that reflects the child health system
- Multiagency engagement (NHS, HSCP's, CPP's) through the Children's Health Board and partnership Integrated Children's Services Boards
- Input from children, young people and families (DPH Annual Report 2025 focus groups and surveys, local partnership engagement and participation activity, topic specific feedback)
- Ongoing partnership collaboration (development of Children's Services Plans and delivery of local action plans)

2.3.7 Route to the Meeting

'Together for Children' has been previously considered by:

- The Children's Health Board on the 4th March and 6th May 2026, and
- The Population Health Monitoring and Governance Group on the 31st of March 2026. Both groups have supported the content, and their feedback has informed the development of the version presented in this report.
- The Population Health Committee received the strategy and reports on 20th May 2026. The PHC sought assurance about delivery of the strategy - specifically holding to account and delivery. The strategy is owned by the NHS Grampian Children's Health Board, whose members represent child health services from across NHS Grampian and the three Health and Social Care Partnerships. The board meetings will hold the members to account for delivery of the necessary actions to achieve the strategic aims.

2.3.6 Other impacts

'Together for Children':

- demonstrates strong alignment with climate and sustainability, particularly through healthy environments.
- supports the NHS role as an anchor organisation
- contributes to long-term sustainability via prevention

2.4 Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

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- **Endorsement** – endorse 'Together for Children' - NHS Grampian's Whole-System Child Health Strategy 2026-2032.
- **Future reporting** – note that a progress report, via the Children's Health Board on delivery of priorities, impact on inequalities and measured outcomes be brought back to the Board at a future date to be agreed with the Chair.

3 Appendix/List of appendices

The following appendix/appendices are included with this report:

- Appendix 1 – Together for Children: NHS Grampian's Whole-System Child Health Strategy 2026-2032
- Appendix 2 – Child Poverty report 2025/26

- Appendix 3 – From Duty to Delivery: NHS Grampian’s Corporate Parenting Report 2025
- Appendix 4 – Realising Children and Young People’s Rights Across Grampian – Rights Report 2024-2026