

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

3 October 2018

Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC) Standards and Quality Report 2017 – 2018

Report by Chief Social Work Officer (Report No. 18/320)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC), in compliance with the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014, publishes an annual Standards and Quality Report. This Standards and Quality Report, for the academic year 2017 - 2018 provides an overview of the key activities of the work of the CPC to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation. This report identifies achievements, key strengths and areas for further improvement. It also sets out a programme of improvement for the next two years.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 All Child Protection Committees in Scotland are encouraged to publish an Annual Report in compliance with the requirements described in the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014](#) (Scottish Government: 2014). This Standards and Quality Report covers work of the Child Protection Committee for the academic year from 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018.
- 1.2 The Standards and Quality Report (S&Q report) reflects the Care Inspectorate's Quality Indicator Framework for Services for Children [How well are we improving the lives of children and young people?](#) (Care Inspectorate: 2014) and this year it also includes some of the findings from the recent [Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in Perth and Kinross](#) (Care Inspectorate: 2018). The Care Inspectorate published its report on a joint inspection of services for children and young people in Perth and Kinross on 17 April 2018 and the findings validate the strong work to protect children and young people and to ensure continuous improvement across the partnership. The report highlighted the Child Protection Committee model as sector leading.
- 1.3 The S&Q report presents an overview of performance in services to protect children and young people and is based on sound evidence, obtained through a wide range of quality assurance and self-evaluation activities. It describes achievements; key strengths and areas for further improvement. It also describes the capacity for continuing improvement and the improvement programme for the next two years.
- 1.4 The headlines set out in the Executive Summary of the S&Q report confirm the findings from our previous self-evaluation which was validated in the recent joint inspection led by the Care Inspectorate. These findings demonstrate that we have maintained and in some instances improved

significantly multi-agency practices to protect and support children, young people and vulnerable families and we can be confident of efforts to achieve continuous improvement. The Care Inspectorate noted the following strengths and areas for improvement:

Particular strengths

- established and high-performing chief officers group and child protection committee ably fulfilling their responsibilities and demonstrating dynamic leadership that empowers a confident and ambitious workforce;
- sophisticated and intelligent use of data to inform and support decision making, service planning and delivery and management of performance;
- services that effectively support parents and carers to become increasingly resilient, confident and able to provide nurturing and secure care;
- an extensive range of services enabling children, young people and families to access the right support, from the right service, at the right time;
- an embedded culture of collaborative working that is supporting the partnership to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people; and
- consistent and sustained commitment to self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

Areas for improvement

- improve the quality and use of chronologies and ensure that identified risks to individual children and young people are clearly articulated within written assessments; and
- review capacity for the provision of independent advocacy to assure themselves that children and young people have access to support when they need it.

1.5 This year, the CPC quality assurance and multi-agency child protection case review examined multi-agency practices in respect of early and effective intervention; assessing and responding to risk; planning and seeking and recording views of children, young people and families. The focus was on young people, over the age of 12, who between January 2016 and January 2018, were the subject of a child protection investigation. The findings were consistent with the Care Inspectorate's inspection findings. This provides reassurance that multi-agency recognition and responses to young people who may be in need of protection are robust; partnership working remains strong and that young people continue to get the help they need, when they need it. The key areas for improvement will be taken forward through the CPC Improvement Plan 2018 – 2020.

1.6 Ongoing self-evaluation work has identified priorities for improvement which will be taken forward over the next two years. These are described towards the end of the S&Q report and are now included in the new CPC Improvement Plan 2018 – 2020, much of which is already underway. In summary, these include a need to continue to:

- develop and make further use of qualitative performance measures for key child protection processes;
- develop the provision of and the consistency of advocacy arrangements;
- address neglect and enhance the wellbeing of vulnerable pregnant women and their babies, pre-birth and into the first year of life;
- develop a consistent approach to inter-agency referral discussions by improving day-to-day culture, practice and recording across the key services/agencies;
- improve the quality of chronologies and develop them as an effective tool in the holistic assessment of risks and needs and in joint planning;
- improve the quality of assessments by ensuring that all services/agencies can contribute to the holistic assessment of risks and needs and in joint planning;
- improve the quality of Child's Plan by ensuring that all services/agencies can timeously contribute to a SMARTer Child's Plan to address risks and needs and in joint planning; and
- sustain improvement in child protection case conferences; particularly in terms of timescales and the provision of service/agency reports.

- 1.8 The statistical data in this report shows that the number of child concern reports has risen slightly over the last year after a significant drop in 2016/17. The number of children and young people who are the subject on an inter-agency referral discussion (IRD) continues to grow whilst the number of child protection investigations remains steady. The number of children and young people considered at initial Child Protection Case Conferences also remains steady, with 92% of children and young people considered being placed on the Child Protection Register.
- 1.9 The figures also show that referrals to the Children's Reporter have risen for a second year after a drop in 2015/16. This is against the national trend. The number of children and young people who have become the subject of a Child Protection Order has also increased slightly in 2016/17 and is the highest since 2013/14. The number of children and young people subject to a Compulsory Supervision Order has fallen and reverted back to a similar level recorded in 2013/14. The CPC plans to examine these trends further at its next meeting in October and to use this to determine a self-evaluation programme for the next year.
- 1.10 The number of unborn baby referrals has reduced, after a significant increase last year. Partners are working to develop a support pathway for vulnerable pregnant women and unborn babies with support from the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS).
- 1.11 Through the work of the CPC there is a commitment to remain alert and to continually identify areas of risk and ensure continuous improvement to maintain excellence in the work of the CPC.

2. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Council:

- (i) Notes the wide range of work carried out by Perth and Kinross Council, and partners through the Child Protection Committee, to provide high quality services to protect children and young people, in particular the high level commitment to continuous improvement through self-evaluation; and
- (ii) Endorses the contents of this report and the Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2017 – 2018 (Appendix 1) and the contents of the CPC Improvement Plan 2018 – 2020 (Appendix 2).

Author(s)

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	n/a
Workforce	n/a
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	n/a
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	n/a
Strategic Environmental Assessment	n/a
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	n/a
Legal and Governance	n/a
Risk	n/a
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	n/a

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 This report relates to Strategic Objective No (i) Giving every child the best start in life.

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 This report relates to Strategic Objective No (i) Giving every child the best start in life.

Education & Children's Services Policy Framework

- 1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Policy Framework in respect of the following key policy area – Integrated Working.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no known resource implications at this time

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no known workforce implications at this time.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications at this time.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.3 Not Applicable.

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 There are no legal implications at this time.

Risk

- 3.5 There are no associated risks at this time.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Democratic Services, Head of Finance, Head of Legal Services, Head of Human Resources, the Children, Young People and Families Partnership, Education and Children's Services SMT and the Child Protection Committee and partners have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

- 4.2 The Child Protection Committee and partners has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

5. Communication

- 5.1 There are no Communication issues at this time.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2017 – 2018

Appendix 2: Perth and Kinross CPC Improvement Plan 2018 – 2020