

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**25 April 2018****REPORT OF A JOINT INSPECTION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE IN PERTH AND KINROSS APRIL 2018****Joint Report by the Chief Executive and Executive Director (Education and
Children's Services)****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The Care Inspectorate carried out a Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in the Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership area between 11 September and 13 November 2017. This report provides an overview of the inspection findings and evaluations.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the request of Scottish Ministers, the Care Inspectorate led a programme of joint inspections of services for children and young people across Scotland. 'Children and Young People' means an individual under the age of 18 years or up to 21 years and beyond if they have been looked after in the care of the local authority.
- 1.2 The inspection looked at the difference services are making to the lives and outcomes achieved by children, young people and families. It took account of the full range of work within Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership area including services provided by health visitors, teachers, doctors, social workers, police officers and the voluntary sector. At the outset of the inspection, inspectors considered a detailed self-evaluation submitted by the Community Planning Partnership in August 2017. This self-evaluation provided a large body of evidence and supported positive evaluations. This evidence and the robust approach to self-evaluation have been validated by the inspection team giving a high degree of confidence in our self-evaluation processes.
- 1.3 The members of the inspection team came from the Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland.
- 1.4 The Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in Perth and Kinross led by the Care Inspectorate started on 11 September 2017 by carrying out scoping and engagement work. The inspectors returned in the week beginning 25 September to consider in detail a case sample of 90 vulnerable children and young people and again on the week beginning 13 November for the proportionate phase, which included interviews with staff, children, young people and families.

- 1.5 The inspection in Perth and Kinross was the last in a programme of 32 Joint Inspections of Services for Children and Young People against the quality indicators set out within the framework published by the Care Inspectorate in 2012 [How well are we improving the lives of children and young people? A guide to evaluating services for children and young people using quality indicators.](#)
- 1.6 The Care Inspectorate joint inspection report, Services for Children and Young People in Perth and Kinross April 2018 is attached as Appendix 1.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE INSPECTION

- 2.1 Nine of the indicators were evaluated. These cover the experiences of children, young people and families and the difference services are making to their lives. The inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents and analysed inspection findings of care services for children and young people as well as speaking to staff with leadership and management responsibilities. Inspectors carried out a survey of named persons, lead professionals, and talked to large numbers of staff who worked directly with children, young people and families and observed some meetings. Inspectors reviewed practice through reading records held by services for a sample of 90 of the most vulnerable children and young people. Inspectors also met with 151 children and young people, 48 parents and carers to hear from them about their experiences of services.
- 2.2 The Care Inspectorate regulates and routinely inspects registered care services provided or commissioned by Perth and Kinross Council. For the purposes of the inspection, the Inspectors took into account findings from inspections of all relevant services for children and young people undertaken over the last two years. A report of a joint inspection of services to protect children in the Perth and Kinross Council area, published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in 2011, was also referenced and the inspection team considered what progress had been made in the areas for improvement outlined in that report.

3. EVALUATIONS AGAINST QUALITY INDICATORS

Quality indicators (QI) help services and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. The following provides a summary of the evaluations of the nine quality indicators covered by the inspection.

3.1 QI 1.1 - Improvements in the wellbeing of children and young people

Performance in improving outcomes for children and young people is evaluated as very good.

Inspectors noted that there is sophisticated and intelligent use of data to evidence impact and outcomes. Major strengths include:

- High percentage of women attending ante-natal appointments before 12 weeks, successful smoking cessation in pregnancy, and breastfeeding rates;
- High uptake of 27 – 30 month developmental assessments and measures to improve speech and language development in the early years;
- Steady reduction in teenage pregnancy rates;
- Reductions in youth homelessness;
- Support for families experiencing poverty;
- Progress in educational attainment for almost all children and young people and better performance than the national average for care experienced children and young people;
- Strong, steady performance in achieving positive destinations post school;
- High percentage of looked after children and young people accommodated in family and community placements with increasing numbers remaining in their care placements over the age of 16 years; and
- Successful proactive approach to decreasing the rates of domestic abuse.

There has not been an evaluation of excellent for this indicator for any community planning partnership area.

3.2 QI 2.1 - Impact on children and young people

The impact of services on the wellbeing of children and young people is evaluated as very good.

Inspectors found that partnership working to improve the wellbeing and safety of children and young people is working very effectively. Major strengths include:

- Children and young people are acquiring the skills and knowledge they need to keep themselves **safe** at home, school and in the community through a wide range of programmes;
- Children at risk are kept **safe** through quick and very effective actions to protect them;
- Children and young people are learning to adopt **healthy** lifestyles and the health of vulnerable children and young people is supported well through targeted interventions;
- Early literacy programmes; careful planned transitions, and practical learning opportunities are helping vulnerable children and young people to **achieve** throughout their school years and into post-school educational destinations;
- Parenting, coordinated family help and support, and evidenced based nurture approaches are very successfully enhancing **nurturing care** at home , in early years settings and schools;

- Children and young people who are looked after and care leavers are thriving in secure **nurturing** placements;
- A very wide range of services offer valuable opportunities for children and young people to be **active** and to take part in sporting and leisure activities;
- Overall children and young people feel **respected** and **included** and listened to and benefit from supportive and trusting relationships with staff and carers; and
- A wide range of opportunities is encouraging children and young people to develop their sense of **responsibility** and self-efficacy.

More work is needed to respond sooner and more effectively to the health needs of children experiencing neglect and to strengthen responses to children and young people with lower-level emotional health difficulties.

Greater access to advocacy is highlighted as being an area for further development for vulnerable children and young people.

Some groups of young people said that they could be more included.

3.3 **QI 2.2 - Impact on families**

The impact of services on families is very good.

A wide range of high quality, universal, targeted and specialist support is strengthening family wellbeing and the lives of many families are improving as a result. Major strengths include:

- Approaches to strengthening attachments between babies and parents;
- Widespread flexible delivery of evidenced-based approaches enabling parents to develop new skills and to understand their children's developmental needs;
- A whole family approach involving services for adults as well as children to promote recovery and resilience;
- Flexible family support and outreach at evenings and weekends helping to prevent family breakdown;
- The quality of relationships between staff and parent; and
- The highly effective support for families with children who have a disability.

Earlier support for families experiencing difficulties with teenagers and more engagement with fathers are areas for further development.

3.4 **QI 5.1 - Providing help and support at an early stage.**

The extent to which services provided help and support at an early stage was very good.

The principles of GIRFEC are well-understood and embedded into practice providing a strong foundation for child-centred planning and early help. Major strengths include:

- The strong culture of collaborative working and commitment to offering help and support to children, young people and families at the earliest stage;
- Mandatory training for all staff on GIRFEC approaches, clear guidance, shared language and understanding of how the wellbeing indicators can support early intervention;
- Information-sharing and efficient multi-agency screening processes to lead to earlier intervention for children, young people and families;
- An extensive range of early help and support for children, young people and families; and
- Very effective team-around-the-child processes placing the wellbeing of children and young people at the centre.

An area for further development is the need to identify and respond more effectively to children experiencing neglect or missing out because of persistent non-attendance at health appointments.

3.5 **QI 5.2 - Assessing and responding to risks and needs**

Assessment of risk and need was good.

There are important strengths in the initial response to children and young people at risk of abuse and the actions taken to keep them safe.

- Staff are confident and competent in identifying children at risk and respond swiftly, timely and proportionately;
- Legal measures are used well to secure the immediate safety of children and young people;
- Strong professional relationships support joint decision-making when children and young people are at risk;
- The quality of risk assessments was found to be variable but a three-year improvement plan for chronologies and assessments is recognised as providing a sound platform for improvement in this area;
- The GIRFEC National Practice Model and the use of well-being indicators is embedded in practice; and
- Advice from the Child Protection Duty Team and Out of Hours Social Work Team provides valued support to staff to help them with complex judgements.

Further improvement is needed to achieve consistency in the quality of chronologies, recording of Inter-agency Referral Discussions and assessments of risk across services.

3.6 **QI 5.3 - Planning for individual children and young people**

Planning for individual children and young people was very good.

A single child's plan or young person's plan format introduced in April 2016 is supporting high quality planning to meet individual needs.

Major strengths include:

- High quality plans with a focus on outcomes and streamlined planning processes;
- Collaboration and contributions of a wide range of partners and confidence in staff to initiate and prepare plans to improve children's wellbeing;
- The quality and timeliness of the arrangements for the independent review of child's plans;
- Improvements in the performance of child protection case conferences and to involving children, young people and families;
- Involvement of children and young people in the assessment of needs and preparation of their plans;
- Robust permanence planning;
- Stable, nurturing placements for looked after children and young people including Kinship Care and Continuing Care;

The quality of child's plans and young person's plans could be further strengthened by being more specific and time-bound.

3.7 **QI 6.2 - Planning and improving services**

Joint planning to improve services was excellent.

There was a clear relationship between the single outcome agreement and children's services planning supported by a set of strategies including the Child Protection Committee improvement plan and locality plans. Planning was informed by a comprehensive joint strategic needs assessment involving an interrogation of a wealth of data and survey results. Outstanding aspects include:

- The level and quality of support and challenge provided by Chief Officers;
- Tayside collaboration on children's services planning maximising the potential to redesign shared services at scale; a first in Scotland;
- The work of the Child Protection Committee was a model of its type with a well-established and high performing Chief Officers group and Child Protection committee;

- Rigorous scrutiny by Chief Officers and elected members set and monitored the pace of change and improvement;
- Tackling child sexual exploitation (CSE) and abuse was a key priority for Elected Members and Services with a strong strategic leadership and an ethos of 'zero tolerance'; and
- Risk is identified jointly and translated into a comprehensive, focused action plan that was routinely reviewed to gauge progress in mitigating identified risks.

3.8 QI 6.3 - Participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders

The extent of participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders was very good.

Partners are strongly committed to ensuring that policies, planning arrangements and service developments fully reflect the views of children and young people. Major strengths include:

- Clear commitment to meaningful engagement and building community capacity and confidence;
- Third sector partners delivering an extensive range of important services;
- Evidence2Success consultations, along with a wide range of consultations with children, young people, parents, carers and communities help shape integrated children's services planning and inform improvement in services;
- Pupil councils and a culture of participation is well embedded across schools;
- Care experienced young people have an increasingly stronger voice due to partners' purposeful commitment to Corporate Parenting;
- The CSE young people's advisory group designed an innovative survey to help determine young people's understanding of CSE and to inform further work; and
- A commitment to promoting children's rights

The need to strengthen capacity for the provision of independent advocacy for children and young people is an area for further improvement.

3.9 QI 9.4 - How good is the leadership and direction of services for children and young people?

Leadership of improvement and change was excellent.

A compelling vision alongside an embedded culture of highly aspirational partnership working contributes to a relentless determination to deliver quality services and improved outcomes for children, young people, families and communities. Highly ambitious partners and staff share a commitment to integrated, partnership working. Partners relentlessly strive for excellence

through reflection, collaborative learning and partnership working contributed to these strengths. Outstanding aspects include:

- A strong, sustained culture of continuous improvement;
- Dynamic leadership empowering a confident and ambitious workforce;
- Getting it Right for Every Child is central to planning for children and young people and is firmly embedded in practice;
- High degree of autonomy that improves decision-making and reduces delay for people in accessing services;
- Outstanding commitment to using evidence-based data to support and drive improvement by leaders and staff across services;
- Comprehensive consultation mapping and assessment of need across a diverse geographical area enabled partners to collectively identify share priorities;
- Transformation programmes of significant service redesign across partners to meet increasing demand, improve efficiency and deliver agreed outcomes; and
- Effective mechanisms in place to support collaboration between health and social care services; and
- Leaders are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity, supporting inclusion and determined to improve outcomes for children and young people living in the most deprived communities.

3.10 A summary of the evaluations for the nine quality indicators.

Quality Indicator	Evaluation
<i>How well are the lives of children and young people improving?</i>	
1.1 Improvements in the wellbeing of children and young people	Very Good
2.1 Impact on children and young people	Very Good
2.2 Impact on families	Very Good
<i>How well are partners working together to improve the lives of children, young people and families?</i>	
5.1 Providing help and support at an early stage	Very Good
5.2 Assessing and responding to risks and needs	Good
5.3 Planning for individual children and young people	Very Good
6.2 Planning and improving services	Excellent
6.3 Participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders	Very Good
<i>How good is the leadership and direction of services for children and young people?</i>	
9.4 Leadership of improvement and change	Excellent

3.11 Areas of particular strength and areas for improvement

The Care Inspectorate identified a number of **particular strengths** that were making a positive difference for children and young people:

- 1) 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;
- 2) Sophisticated and intelligent use of data to inform and support decision making, service planning and delivery and management of performance;
 - 3) Services that effectively support parents and carers to become increasingly resilient, confident and able to provide nurturing and secure care;
 - 4) An extensive range of services enabling children, young people and families to access the right support, from the right service at the right time;
 - 5) An embedded culture of collaboration working that is supporting the partnership to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people; and
 - 6) Consistent and sustained commitment to self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

The following **areas for improvement** for the Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership were identified:

- 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 them that children and young people have access to support when they need it.

3.12 Good practice examples

As part of the inspection the Care Inspectorate asked Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership to nominate examples of good practice that can be shown to have a positive impact on the lives of children, young people and families. The following good practice examples were endorsed and commended by the inspectors:

1. Woodlea – a sustainable and inclusive approach to supporting children and young people with a disability and their families.

A confident and experienced team of staff are located in a purpose-built centre at Woodlea Cottage redesigned the service to provide a flexible approach and a range of interventions which are individualised for each child and family.

2. The functioning of the Child Protection Committee – a model of its type.

A mature and very effective multi-agency partnership. Members collectively demonstrate a strong commitment to building an active child protection community and securing a culture where the care and protection of children and young people is at the heart of everyone's job.

3. The work of the Kinship Care Team and kinship panel.

Partners recognised the importance of Kinship Carers in providing secure, stable and nurturing homes for children and young people when they are no longer able to live with their birth parents. Kinship Carers are recognised as providing a highly valued service as noted within the Corporate Parenting Plan for 2017-2020. The percentage of children looked after in kinship care more than doubled between 2008 and 2015 as a result of a deliberate commitment to increasing family-based care. The number of approved kinship carers increased by 165% between 2010 and 2017. Partners have embraced their duty to provide help and support to kinship families in their care of children.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 4.1 In its report of the Joint Inspection of Services for Children in Perth and Kinross published on 17 April 2018, the Care Inspectorate is confident that the life chances and wellbeing of children, young people and families in Perth and Kinross are improving. This is noted to be as a result of strong leaders working collaboratively to deliver high quality and effective services. Investment in early intervention and prevention is reported to be having a positive impact, particularly in early years. A well-established and high performing Chief Officers' group and Child Protection Committee are said to be demonstrating continuous, sustained improvement in the fulfilment of their key functions in the protection of children and young people. Specific approaches supported an authorising culture and environment whereby staff are empowered to be innovative and creative, make decisions and take action. Leadership of change and improvement and children's services planning are described as being particularly strong. Care experienced young people viewed Corporate Parents as committed, engaged and enabling.
- 4.2 The principles of Getting it Right for Every Child are found to be well-understood and firmly embedded in practice, impacting positively on all areas of partnership working. Children and young people are noted to be protected through the timely and proportionate action taken by alert and attentive staff. Children and young people who are looked after are thriving as a result of the consistent care provided by well-supported carers. The efforts of innovative and creative staff are noted to be having a positive impact on the wellbeing of children and young people across all eight SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.
- 4.3 An embedded and sustained culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement is described as core attributes and inspectors conclude that they are very confident that partners in Perth and Kinross will make best use of any insights gained in the course of this inspection and make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings.
- 4.4 A joint action plan will be prepared by partners to take account of the areas for further development and the two recommended areas for improvement contained within the report. Progress against this action plan will be monitored by the Children, Young People and Families Partnership.

4.5 It is recommended that Council:

- (i) Notes the Care Inspectorate's assessment that Services for Children and Young People are excellent; and
- (ii) Notes that a joint action plan will be prepared and progress reported to the Children, Young People and Families Partnership.

Author(s)

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Fiona Easton and Jacquie Pepper	Change and Improvement Team Leader Depute Director, Education and Children's Services	fmeaston@pkc.gov.uk JPepper@pkc.gov.uk

Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Bernadette Malone	Chief Executive	17 April 2018
Sheena Devlin	Executive Director, Education and Children's Services	

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	No – n/a
Workforce	No – n/a
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	No – n/a
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	No – n/a
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No – n/a
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	No – n/a
Legal and Governance	No – n/a
Risk	No – n/a
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 This report relates to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 This report relates to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 N/A

Workforce

- 2.2 N/A

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 N/A

3. Assessments

3.1 N/A

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 This cover report is in support of the Care Inspectorate Services for Children and Young People in Perth and Kinross April 2018 joint inspection. All Community Planning Partners have been involved and consulted during the preparation of responses to the inspection report.

External

4.2 N/A

5. Communication

5.1 All Community Planning Partners and Corporate Communications Manager have been communicated and consulted during the inspection process through Care Inspectorate Professional Discussions and in preparation of this report.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Care Inspectorate 'How well are we improving the lives of children, young people and families? A guide to evaluating services for children and young people using quality indicators'
- Care Inspectorate – Service for children and young people in Perth and Kinross, April 2018 – Report of a joint inspection.

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Service for Children and Young People in Perth and Kinross, April 2018 – Report of a joint inspection.