



Internal Audit Report
Education and Children's Services
Named Person Service Assignment No. 15-15
February 2016

Final Report

Finance Division
Corporate and Democratic Services
Perth & Kinross Council
Blackfriars Development Centre
North Port
Perth PH1 5LU

Internal Audit

“Internal Audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation’s operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes”. Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (PSIAS)

On 27th March 2013, the Council’s Audit Committee approved the PSIAS as the relevant standard for its Internal Audit activity.

Background and Introduction

This audit was carried out as part of the audit plan for 2015/16, which was approved by the Audit Committee on 1 April 2015.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 received Royal Assent on 27 March 2014. The Act places duties on local authorities to provide a Named Person service which ensures that from school entry children and young people (under the age of 18) have access to a Named Person; the Named Person being a specific point of contact responsible for supporting the wellbeing of the child or young person within the sphere of their professional expertise. In particular, the role of the local authority is to ensure that the Named Person is sufficiently supported to fulfil the role. The Named Person service for school age is to be established from the beginning of the 2016/17 school session. The Named Person service will be made available by local authorities at three levels; Primary School, Secondary School and post-school up to 18 years. Responsibilities for Named Person services also lie with Health Authorities from birth until school entry; by independent and grant-aided schools and the Scottish Prison Service, as appropriate.

This legislation supports the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) child-centred approach to improving outcomes in the lives of children and young people and is underpinned by the rights of children documented in United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In view of the change in priority to the universal provision of a Named Person service for school-aged children and young people, to be in place from August 2016, the audit title and scope have been amended from those identified in the approved Annual Audit Plan (i.e., from “Integrated Assessment” to “Named Person Service” and, “To ensure that the processes are in place and are effective for the assessment of individual need” to “To ensure that the processes are in place for the successful implementation of the Named Person service” whose arrangements will form part of the integrated assessment process).

Scope and Limitations

The audit included the review of documents relating to plans for the implementation of Named Person service including multi-agency meetings and training materials. Officers responsible for leading the process of implementation of the service were interviewed during February 2016. The Audit did not consider the arrangements being made regarding the Child’s Plan, which is part of the same legislation at this time as this will be a highlighted as a separate subject within the audit universe for consideration for future audit plans.

Control Objectives and Opinions

This section describes the purpose of the audit and summarises the results. A 'control objective' is a management objective that requires the maintenance of adequate and effective internal controls to ensure that it is achieved. Each control objective has been given a rating describing, on the basis of the audit work done, the actual strength of the internal controls found to be in place. Areas of good or poor practice are described where appropriate.

Control Objective: To ensure that adequate arrangements are in place for the implementation of the Named Person service in accordance with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Auditor's Comments: The implementation of the Named Person service by the Council, is on course to meet the requirements of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; providing all school-age children and young people under 18 with a Named Person service. It is noted that the latest guidance was issued by the Scottish Government in December 2015, the timing of which has impacted on the information available to relevant authorities as to the specific requirements and interpretation of the legislation.

Work by Education and Children's Services is ongoing, under the GIRFEC banner, involving other authorities and agencies, to ensure that systems and processes are in place to support Named Persons in their function. This will ensure that children, young people and their families have the necessary support, as appropriate. A multi-agency Action Plan is in place to deliver a number of outcomes across Tayside and will ensure that a consistent approach is taken, where possible, in providing the service.

A series of training events is being undertaken for relevant officers who will be undertaking the role of Named Persons, and this will be completed by May 2016. Information is also regularly provided to Head Teachers in GIRFEC Updates relating to the implementation of the Named Person service. Standard wording will also be included in each school handbook about the service for the 2016/17 session onwards.

Guidance regarding the provisions for children of school age but not in school e.g. home schooled, is yet to be finalised. This will ensure that those children and their families have the relevant information regarding the service. Similarly, the arrangements and protocols for young people who will have left school but are still under 18 are still to be rolled out to practitioners.

Not all of the expected detailed procedures and protocols, required by Scottish Government Guidance to support implementation, were available for inspection. However, an integrated approach between the Council and other agencies was evidenced to have been operating for some time, making better use of resources and best practice.

As such, arrangements are either in place or are in the process of being developed to support the implementation of the Named Person service in accordance with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. In order to provide assurance over its implementation, Internal Audit will revisit the Named Person service in

Internal Audit Report

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| 2016/17 as part of the planned work programme. | |
| Strength of Internal Controls: | Moderately Strong |

Management Action and Follow-Up

Responsibility for the maintenance of adequate and effective internal controls rests with management.

Management should ensure that the relevant risk profiles are reviewed and updated where necessary to take account of the contents of Internal Audit reports. The completeness of risk profiles will be examined as part of Internal Audit's normal planned work.

Acknowledgements

Internal Audit acknowledges with thanks the co-operation of staff and management in Education and Children's Services during this audit.

Feedback

Internal Audit welcomes feedback from management, in connection with this audit or with the Internal Audit service in general.

Distribution

This report has been distributed to:

B Malone, Chief Executive

J Fyffe, Senior Depute Chief Executive

J Walker, Depute Chief Executive

S Devlin, Director of Education & Children's Services

J Pepper, Head of Children and Families Services

P McAvoy, Head of Education (Secondary and Inclusion)

J Clow, Acting Head of Education (Early Years and Primary)

J Symon, Head of Finance

G Taylor, Head of Democratic Services

A Dalziel, Quality Improvement Officer

C Laing, GIRFEC Development Officer

J Cockburn, Finance and Governance Manager

K McNamara, Head of Strategic Commissioning & Organisational Development

P Dickson, Complaints & Governance Officer

External Audit

Authorisation

The auditor for this assignment was A Gallacher. The supervising auditor was M Morrison.

This report is authorised for issue:

Jacqueline Clark
Chief Internal Auditor
Date: 29 February 2016

