

Action Plan
following
Report of a joint inspection of services for children and young people in need of care and protection in
Aberdeen City
October 2019

Methodology and Gradings

The direct inspection activity of the Care Inspectorate took place between January and May 2019 with the report being published on 3 September 2019. The Inspection Report demonstrates ongoing improvement across the range of services in Aberdeen city since the previous joint inspection in 2014-15. The Care Inspectorate sought to determine the effectiveness of the partnership against five questions:

1. How good is the partnership at recognising and responding when children and young people need protection?
2. How good is the partnership at helping children and young people who have experienced abuse and neglect stay safe, healthy and well and recover from their experiences?
3. How good is the partnership at maximising the wellbeing of children and young people who are looked after?
4. How good is the partnership at enabling care experienced young people to succeed in their transition to adulthood?
5. How good is collaborative leadership?

The Care Inspectorate evaluated the partnership against four established quality indicators and found the partnership to be “**good**” in every category:

- QI 1.1 Improvements in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people.
- QI 2.1 Impact on children and young people
- QI 2.2 Impact on families
- QI 9.1 – 9.4 Leadership and direction

Key Strengths

The Report recognises that, throughout the inspection, the partnership demonstrated a clear and thorough evaluation of itself. In particular, the following key strengths were identified within the Report:

1. The quality and stability of the care provided by staff working with children and young people with an emphasis on building on strengths in families.
2. The robustness of multi-agency pre-birth assessment and planning processes and the early stage help these provide to vulnerable women and their unborn babies.
3. Staff recognition of signs of risk, effective information-sharing processes and responses to threats of significant harm.
4. The wide range of universal and targeted support services helping children, young people and their families to recover from cases of abuse and neglect.
5. The effectiveness of joint working and the collaborative approach, vision, values and aims promoted by leaders.

Priority Areas for Improvement

The Report notes the following priority areas for improvement:

1. Strategic oversight of corporate parenting was not as robust as that for child protection.
2. There were limitations in outcomes data with which the partners were able to demonstrate improving trends for looked after children and young people, particularly those looked after at home and care leavers.
3. Children and young people in need of care and protection were not benefitting from timeous assessments of their health needs while there were also gaps in some services in terms of addressing emotional health and well-being.

This action plan seeks to respond to these identified areas for improvement. All improvement priorities are a multi-agency responsibility and sit collectively with the agencies and members of the partnership. However, each area of priority will be led by one agency as indicated below. Where the identified areas for improvement are already included in strategic plans, signposts and links to those plans are provided.

Monitoring of this Action Plan

The project team and the chief officer group will receive quarterly progress updates from those with lead responsibility as identified in the action plan below.

PROSPEROUS PEOPLE: CHILDREN

Joint Inspection of services for children and young people in need of care and protection in Aberdeen City

Action Plan

October 2019 – October 2020

Stretch Outcome Aim	Key Drivers	Improvement project aim	Key Improvement Measures	Lead Responsibility	Progress update
At all times to recognise and respond when Children and Young People need protection from significant harm or abuse	There were no direct areas for improvement identified in the Joint Inspection report here. It recognised that continuous improvement is delivered through the Child Protection Improvement Programme.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
At all times to help children and young people stay safe, healthy and, for those who have experienced abuse and neglect, to recover from their experiences	The mental health and emotional wellbeing concerns of children and young people will be better addressed.	LOIP – Outcome 4	See LOIP – Outcome 4 https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Final-Draft-LOIP-2016-26-web-version.pdf	Integrated Children's Services Board Chair and Child Protection Committee Chair	
	Approaches to seeking and recording the views of children and young people who had been involved in child protection processes will be extended.	Child Protection Improvement Programme	See Child Protection Improvement Programme (p24-30 in document below) https://www.aberdeengettingitright.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/child-protection-annual-report-2019.pdf	CPC Chair	

Stretch Outcome Aim	Key Drivers	Improvement project aim	Key Improvement Measures	Lead Responsibility	Progress update
			*Please note that this is an iterative document which is being refreshed following the CPC Development Session on 1 October 2019.		
At all times to maximise the wellbeing of children and young people who are looked after	The impact of strategies to shift the balance of care and reduce the high number of out-of-area placements will be closely monitored to demonstrate improvement.	LOIP – Outcome 5	See LOIP – Outcome 5 https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Final-Draft-LOIP-2016-26-web-version.pdf	ICS Board Chair	
	Services will ‘close the gap’ between the outcomes for children and young people looked after at home compared to other care settings	LOIP – Outcome 5	See LOIP 5.1 https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Final-Draft-LOIP-2016-26-web-version.pdf	ICS Board Chair & Corp Parenting Improvement Group Chair	
	The health needs of looked after children and young people will be fully met and comprehensive assessments will be undertaken timeously.	By 30 September 2020 50% of LAC will have an initial health assessment undertaken within 4 weeks of their accommodation. By 30 September 2021 75% of LAC will have an initial health assessment undertaken within 4 weeks of their accommodation. By 30 September 2022 90% of LAC will have an initial health assessment	By 30 Nov 2019 a multi-agency workshop to address the lack of timeously completed health assessments will be held. An improvement charter will be developed on the output of the workshop and presented to the Corporate Parenting Improvement Group in December 2019.	ICS Board Chair & Corp Parenting Improvement Group Chair	

Stretch Outcome Aim	Key Drivers	Improvement project aim	Key Improvement Measures	Lead Responsibility	Progress update
		undertaken within 4 weeks of their accommodation.			
	Regular short breaks received by children with disabilities will meet the children's needs	By 30 September 2020, plans for 100% of children in receipt of regular short breaks will be reviewed	Data will evidence the necessary assessment, planning and review arrangements of regular short breaks received by children with disabilities	ICS Board Chair & Corp Parenting Improvement Group Chair	
At all times to enable care experienced young people to succeed in their transition to adulthood	The partnership will do more to maintain contact with young people after they leave care to improve their outcomes.	The partnership will further develop flexible and responsive support to care leavers that takes account of their individual needs.	Data will evidence improved outcomes and increased levels of engagement in services by care leavers. Feedback from care leavers will evidence the relevancy of service provision to meet their needs.	ICS Board Chair & Corp Parenting Improvement Group Chair	
	Young people with a disability will experience consistently positive transitions between children's and adults' services.	Integrated services will consistently evaluate the transitions between adult and children's services for young people with a disability	Data and feedback from children and families will evidence a positive transition between children and adult services	IJB Chief Officer and Chief Social Work Officer	
At all times to provide strong and effective collaborative leadership	Effective challenge by leaders to the variance in outcomes for particular groups of looked after children and young people, including those looked after at home will be demonstrated.	The partnership will on multi-agency basis consistently evaluate the outcomes for looked after children and young people	By 31 October 2019 a Quality Assurance Framework will be implemented	ICS Board Chair; CPC Chair & Chief Officer Group	
			Learning from QA activity will inform our continuous self-evaluation and L&D programme.		
			An annual report will be provided to COG on the partnerships self-evaluation of services for children and young people in need of care and protection.		

Stretch Outcome Aim	Key Drivers	Improvement project aim	Key Improvement Measures	Lead Responsibility	Progress update
		The Business Intelligence Unit will provide leaders with regular data reports on the outcomes for all groups of Looked After Children.	The Business Intelligence Unit will develop the Data Summary report to provide consistent updates on the outcomes for children and young people.	Chief Officer – Business Intelligence Unit	
		Leaders will ensure they are visible; communicate regularly and engage with and hear from staff across the partnership.	A Communication Strategy will be agreed by leaders by 31-10-19 Leaders will provide staff across the partnership with regular multi-agency staff briefings. Leaders will attend multi-agency engagement events with staff across the partnership.	ICS Board Chair; CPC Chair & COG	
	Strategic and routine data analysis was more sophisticated for children in need of protection than looked after children and young people.	The BIU will provide leaders with regular data reports on the outcomes for all groups of children including those who are LAC.	Updates to the Data Summary Report will be provided on a quarterly basis. The BIU will support the collection, analysis and reporting of data that demonstrates outcomes for children and young people.	Chief Officer – BIU	