

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Social Care and Wellbeing - DATE: 22 April 2010

CORPORATE DIRECTOR: Fred McBride

TITLE OF REPORT: Progress Report on Fostering & Adoption Service.

REPORT NUMBER: SCW/10/047

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This paper outlines the feedback from Care Commission following their recent annual inspection of the Fostering and Adoption service.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

To inform Committee on the outcome of the recent Care Commission inspection which graded the service as being very good in five of the focus areas and good in the remaining three focus areas.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

N/A

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

6. REPORT

6.1 Background

6.1.1 The Fostering and Adoption Service is subject to an annual inspection from the Care Commission. This measures the performance of the service against the National Care Standards which were introduced in 2006.

6.1.2 The inspection was carried out over a 2 week period in November 2009 and involved meetings with staff and carers from the Fostering and Adoption Service as well as children living within these care settings. It

also involved an examination of case files (children's and carers) and discussions with social workers for the children. This process enabled the inspectors to measure our performance against the self assessment submitted prior to the inspection.

- 6.1.3 In 2008 the inspectors noted that they had seen significant progress in the service over the preceding year. They concluded by assessing the service as Level 4 – Good. (Care services are graded on a scale of 1 – 6, 6 being the highest.)

6.2 2009 Inspection

- 6.2.1 Each year the inspection focuses on 4 areas. These are chosen by the Care Commission and differ each year. This year the four chosen areas were:

1. We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.
2. We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential.
3. We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.
4. We are confident that our staff have been recruited in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff.

- 6.2.2 Over the past year the service, as with all other aspects of Children's Service has had to contend with significant challenges:

- Increased numbers of children requiring to be accommodated
- The need to grow the service to contend with this demand
- Changes in the front line management of the service
- New legislation being introduced which significantly impacts on day to day business

- 6.2.3 In spite of these challenges our self assessment suggested that in every area we had been able to make meaningful progress in developing and improving the quality of the service. In a number of areas we assessed our performance as having moved from Level 4 – Good to Level 5 – Very Good.

- 6.2.4 In their verbal feedback the inspectors acknowledged the significant progress made by the service over the past year. In particular they were very positive about the way service users and carers had been involved in the development of the service and the changes which have stemmed from this engagement.

- 6.2.5 The inspection reports, which have now been received have ratified our own assessment and scored the service as being **Very Good** in five of the inspection areas and **Good** in three. (Appendix 1)

6.2.6 The Care Commission has the authority to make various Requirements or Recommendations to any service it inspects. From this inspection no Requirements or Recommendations have been made in relation to the Fostering Service. In relation to the Adoption Service two recommendations were made and work is already underway to progress these.

6.2.7 This progress and positive inspection is testimony to the hard work of the staff in the Fostering and Adoption Service as well as that of adopters and foster carers. It is not a basis for complacency but rather a clear indication that we need to push ahead with further changes which we have identified to continue to improve and develop the service.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Graeme Simpson - Children's Services Manager

gsimpson@aberdeencity.gov.uk

01224 523496

Adoption Service

1. We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Grade 4 - Good

2. We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential.

Grade 4 - Good

3. We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Grade 4 - Good

4. We are confident that our staff have been recruited in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff.

Grade 5 – Very Good

Fostering Service

1. We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Grade 5 – Very Good

2. We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential.

Grade 5 – Very Good

3. We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Grade 5 – Very Good

4. We are confident that our staff have been recruited in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff.

Grade 5 – Very Good