
CARE INSPECTORATE REPORT – JOINT INSPECTION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

Report by Depute Chief Executive, People

SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

8 September 2016

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the key findings of the Care Inspectorate report on the joint inspection of services for children and young people in the Scottish Borders, identifying key strengths along with areas for improvement and how these improvements will be delivered.**
- 1.2 The joint inspection of Services for Children and Young People in the Scottish Borders took place between December 2015 and February 2016, covering a wide range of partners and services across the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership (CPP) which has a role in providing services for children, young people and families. This is the first such inspection that has taken place in the Scottish Borders, covering all service areas involved in children and young people from voluntary agencies delivering play and youth facilities through to domestic violence, education, health and child protection.
- 1.3 Measured against a range of quality indicators, a number of strengths were identified as well as areas for improvement which are detailed in the report. The Children & Young People's Leadership Group has examined the findings and has developed an improvement action plan which is being actively progressed. The plan is found at appendix 1.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 I recommend that the Strategic Board notes:-**
- a) the key strengths and the improvement work that is being progressed to address the key findings of the Care Inspectorate Report on the Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in the Scottish Borders; and**
 - b) that an update on the progress of the inspection improvement plan will be given to the Strategic Board meeting within 12 months.**

3 JOINT INSPECTION ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 The joint inspection of services for children and young people in the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership (CPP) was undertaken by the Care Inspectorate between December 2015 and February 2016. During the process, the Inspection Team reviewed a wide range of documents, carried out focus group meetings with staff groups and partner agencies, met with staff who worked directly on specific cases and interviewed senior officers from the Council and Partners. Practice was reviewed through the reading of 90 case files and there were some meetings with young people and families. A survey of named persons and key groups of staff across the partnership, including social workers also informed the process.

4 JOINT INSPECTION FINDINGS

- 4.1 The inspection report highlighted that the Partnership is committed to improving the wellbeing of all children and young people. It was found there were improving trends for children and young people in terms of health, educational attainment and achievement and positive destination. Outcomes for most children and young people are steadily improving across the area and overall universal services are working well together to provide early intervention and support for children, young people and their families.
- 4.2 The inspection report also highlighted that partners were working well together to improve the lives of children and young people; that help and support was provided at an early stage and there was an immediate response to child protection concerns. Families welcomed the support they received to overcome adversity. The inspection found that there was strong partnership working across services and significant collaboration with third sector services. There was a culture of meaningful engagement across services with children, families and other stakeholders.
- 4.3 Leaders were proactively striving to drive the pace of change making significant improvement in key areas. Leaders were committed to Corporate Parenting and the implementation of GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child).
- 4.4 Evidence was gathered and assessed against a range the 9 key indicators of performance against the 6 point scale set out below:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Excellent | outstanding, sector leading |
| Very good | major strengths |
| Good | important strengths with some areas for improvement |
| Adequate | strengths outweigh weaknesses |
| Weak | important weaknesses |
| Unsatisfactory | major weaknesses |

- 4.5 Set out below are the evaluations for all nine of the quality indicators:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Improving the well-being of children and young people | Good |
| Impact on children and young people | Good |
| Impact on families | Good |
| Providing help and support at an early stage | Good |
| Assessing and responding to risks and needs | Adequate |

- | | | |
|--|--|------------------|
| | Planning for individual children | Adequate |
| | Planning and improving services | Adequate |
| | Participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders | Very Good |
| | Leadership of improvement and change | Adequate |
- 4.6 The report was clear that there were no immediate concerns that children or young people were at risk. However, inspectors identified a number of areas for improvement which are outlined below:
- (a) Development of a partnership quality assurance framework.
 - (b) Improve processes and recording including the use of chronologies and risk assessments.
 - (c) Develop a sexual exploitation strategy.
 - (d) Review the linkages between the Child Protection Committee and Critical Services Oversight Group.
 - (e) Further progress Self-Directed Support.
 - (f) Development of a parenting strategy.
- 4.7 An inspection improvement plan has been developed and is being actively progressed by the Children & Young People’s Leadership Group comprising of senior managers across the partnership, and there will be updates to the CPP. The improvement plan details the actions and timescales for completion and is found at Appendix 1. It should be noted that actions relating to improved processes and recording have been prioritised and completed. The development of strategies does take a longer timescale to ensure full consultation and engagement.
- 4.8 The Inspection Report has been circulated to staff across the partner agencies and there have been briefings with some staff groups. Staff have been thanked for their positive involvement in the inspection process and the contribution they make to improving outcomes for children and young people.
- 4.9 There has been a communication with Elected Members regarding the outcome of inspection and a press release was issued on the date of publication (28th June 2016), highlighting the positive outcomes and the focus on delivering improvements based on the findings.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

All financial implications associated with the implementation of improvements will be delivered within existing resources.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

Risks related to the Care Inspectorate findings have been considered by the Children and Young People’s Leadership Group and potential risks will be mitigated through the progression of the inspection improvement plan. The report makes clear that there are no immediate risks to children and young people in the Scottish Borders.

5.3 Equalities

Improvements will ensure that services are delivered more effectively for children, young people and their families across the Scottish Borders

5.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no economic, social or environmental impacts related to the findings outlined in the report.

5.5 Carbon Management

There are no known impacts related to carbon emissions related to this report.

5.6 Rural Proofing

There are no changes to a policy or strategy related to this report.

5.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to the scheme of administration or scheme of delegation.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR, and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

**Jeanette McDiarmid
Depute Chief Executive, People**

Signature

Author(s)

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|-------------|---|
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Background Papers: Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in the Scottish Borders – Improvement Plan

Previous Minute Reference: Scottish Borders Council – 25 August 2016

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Susan Yates can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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