

Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee



How well do we protect children and meet their needs?

RCPC multi-agency self evaluation 2010



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* Agencies are: Renfrewshire Council services of social work, education & leisure, housing; NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde health board; Strathclyde police; SCRA; Barnardos Scotland , Children 1st

1.1 Improvements in performance

Themes

- Performance data and trends over time
- Overall quality of services to protect children
- Performance against the relevant aims, objectives and outcomes set for children in improvement plans

Level – Very good

Good practice highlight: views of staff and stakeholders

*2 online questionnaires were carried out by RCPC with significant numbers of staff and stakeholders in 2008 and 2010. Questions were asked relative to selected HMIE quality indicators and across **each** of the QIs there has been **significant percentage improvement** in the protection of children and young people in the views of those who responded. The results of this questionnaire are attached as an appendix to this report.*

Agencies and services associated with RCPC are able to demonstrate that there is very high quality service provision to protect children in Renfrewshire, which is consistent and improving.

The previous HMIE inspection report published in October 2008 showed that Renfrewshire children are amongst the best protected in Scotland. Key areas for improvement focussed on-ensuring health staff are involved at an early stage when there are child protection concerns; improving the monitoring arrangements for medical examinations to ensure children's needs are being fully met; and ensuring the emotional needs of children with less immediate concerns are fully met.

There is evidence that improvements have been made in these 3 key areas. Management information provided to RCPC indicates that health practitioners are present at 85% of initial child protection case conferences and at 84% of review child protection case conferences. During most investigations there is evidence that contact is established between social work staff and local health practitioners in relation to individual children. A system has been put in place whereby CPU provide detail to social work on uptake of the service case by case that allows this to be checked against investigation data. This also allows for percentage uptake to be monitored. An evaluation of the Early Sharing and Collation of Information system across NHAGGGC was conducted by the University of Caledonia and indicated that social workers reported favourably on the process and its outcomes.

The number of calls through CHP data to CPU for early sharing of information has increased over the year, reflecting increased awareness of the need for this.

In relation to the second area of improvement RCPC has developed a protocol for ensuring that medicals carried out during child protection investigations take account of the holistic needs of children. This protocol has been under continuous scrutiny from the CPC since it was developed and ongoing joint meetings have been held involving health, social work and the police to ensure that the protocol is able to operate in practice. The CPC now scrutinises management information about early information sharing and medicals as part of its regular monitoring.

With regard to medicals improvements in service delivery are as follows:

Suspected Non accidental injury cases

Children who are/may have been physically abused (NAI) are seen at the RAH by Acute Receiving Consultant Paediatricians. All these Paediatricians record on standardised proformas and provide specialist opinion to investigating agencies and the Courts. This service is over and above the 24/7 consultant child protection advice line which also provides the service for suspected child sexual abuse service.

Comprehensive Medical Assessments

A Medical Assessment Clinic is available every Friday at RAH in Paisley.

CMAs are provided during daytime hours. They are conducted in a child friendly environment (PANDA centre). Examinations are carried out by highly trained paediatricians with access to consultant support. Children on the child protection register, siblings of children with NAI and children who are vulnerable for reasons of potential neglect are offered CMAs. The need for CMAs is written in to the Child Protection Plan at Case Conference where a child is registered. Early sharing and collation of health information is provided by CPU to the paediatrician prior to seeing the patient to inform the assessment.

Suspected Historical child sexual abuse in adolescents aged 13-15 years

Discussions are on-going between Strathclyde Police, Archway and Child Protection Unit to commence a Pilot Service for historical cases of child sexual abuse of adolescents, aged 13 – 15 years. This would involve specialist Consultant Archway staff and specialist Consultant Paediatricians on the 24/7 rota.

Improvements in medical monitoring arrangements are as follows:

- Quarterly statistical report
- Monthly statistical report introduced
- Detailed report to Police recently introduced on children medically examined via Health (Doctor, location etc) to allow police to compare with their data and identify any possible discrepancies.
- Medical monitoring report on service development provide to Child Protection Forum quarterly

Medical examinations are a standing item on the agenda of the three monthly meeting between Strathclyde Police and the Child Protection Unit.

Data on waiting lists for specialist services such as CAMHS shows these are reducing, allowing children to get the help they need sooner. Other services which have benefitted from service redesign include Paediatric Occupational Therapy where waiting times for Developmental Coordination Disorder assessments have improved. The Child Development Centre has established a Multidisciplinary Clinic for children with the most complex needs. This clinic has reduced the number of visits to the centre for children and families, which has been received very well. This clinic is using the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators as its core assessment. Increased use of the integrated assessment framework and the SHANARRI well-being indicators mean that across all services there is a common language for identifying and assessing need. The agreed child's plan format provides

clarity about the help a child needs and how these needs are going to be met within agreed timescales. Data shows that schools and pre-five centres have all been 'good' or 'very good' in all HMIE inspections over the last year. Care Commission inspections over the last 2 years have reviewed 62 centres which 50% were good; 48% very good and 2% excellent in the quality of care and support provided. This quality of service demonstrates that consistent and robust services have a very positive impact on children.

Our services are making an impact on those most in need. As a result of increased staff training and public awareness, there are more child protection referrals resulting in prompt responses to ensure action is taken. In addition, our early screening processes in place as part of the wider GIRFEC agenda (domestic violence; youth crime; neglect) demonstrate improvements in early identification of need and putting the appropriate services in place at an early stage.

RCPC has a commitment to continuous improvement of child protection services and makes effective use of data to review performance and develop practice. Agencies themselves are encouraged to use data to review practice and improve provision. Trends and current data indicate improvements in early referrals, types of actions take, and response pattern.

The numbers and categories of referrals to social work have changed showing increased awareness, better referral processes, and improved classification of referral and gathering of data. Standby contracts have increased by 52% since 2007/08 with a new category of 'standby / police' introduced to avoid duplicate recording of referrals. Housing contacts have decreased; suggesting earlier referral is being processed and recorded by other agencies. In a survey in March 2010, 92% of over 400 people surveyed in a local shopping mall now knew who to contact with CP concerns. Contacts from health have increased by 54% as have those through social work teams. Improved profiling, early intervention and liaison has resulted in a reduction in domestic violence reports by 21%. The referral screening process has reduced referrals to SCRA on CP grounds whilst those referred on non-offence grounds is considerably higher than the national figure. The number of cases with 'no further action' has decreased, suggesting more rigorous reviews, expectations and increased levels of intervention. The domestic violence group and the early intervention group means that children's needs are identified at an earlier stage and that services are provided without the need for referral to SCRA.

"I think that the school do all they can to make pupils feel safe"

Secondary school pupil, All about Me Viewpoint Survey 2009

Although physical neglect remains the highest reason for CP referral, emotional abuse referrals continue to rise proportionately possibly due to better understanding of the criteria and impact this has on children. The number of calls, through CHP data to CPU for early sharing of information has increased over the year, reflecting increased awareness of the need for this. Robust auditing gathers qualitative information most effectively and the case file audits process reviews performance in practice, recommending areas for improvement.

RCPC is developing a framework to help extend the data within a performance management framework better linked to the SOA, the HMIE QI framework and the local RCPC improvement plan. RCPC and chief officers group are clear about outcomes for children in need of protection. By focussing on improvements in parenting and early intervention, Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership and the CPC have agreed that the innovative Achieving Step Change Project will focus on implementing a parenting strategy and on reducing the number of children who require to be accommodated, therefore releasing resources to be reinvested in early intervention and prevention. There is also an engagement in the Triple P (parenting) project with clear outcomes likely to impact on better protection of children.

Child protection planning operates within the wider integrated children's services planning framework and the safety and well being of children is at the heart of local joint working. Children

and young people themselves have been involved in agreeing on outcomes and shaping services through the use of the Viewpoint software across a range of settings. An example of this is the “All about me” schools survey which translated into actions in the Integrated Children’s Services plan.

Social work services received a positive SWIA inspection in 2009 which highlighted that the impact on the community of these services is very good.

There is evidence that RCPC oversees continuing improvement in service provision which impacts on the level and quality of support given to Renfrewshire children.

Strengths

- HMle report 2008 – baseline performance
- SWIA report 2009 – demonstrating high quality social work provision
- Children’s services planning framework
- Achieving Step Change project
- Use of Viewpoint software, surveys through health and education to engage young people and record views to evaluate improvement
- Review of the Early and Effective Action Screening Groups – SCRA publication
- Integrated Children’s Services planning

Areas for Improvement

- Embed new performance improvement framework/logic model

2.1 Children and young people are listened to, understood and respected

Themes

- Communication
- Trust

Level: Very good

Good practice highlight : RCPC study into the views of children involved in child protection

Renfrewshire CPC commissioned a study of the views of young people who had been involved in the child protection system. This study was carried out by the Renfrewshire education psychology service and has been published in a peer referenced journal as well as being presented at national conferences. The findings of the study are continuing to influence child protection planning locally.

Children and families in Renfrewshire benefit from very good communication systems across the interagency partnership. The 2010 case file audit evidenced very good practice and trusting relationships with staff.

All agencies are committed to listening and respecting children's views, which includes interpreting very young children's behaviour. Teachers, home link workers, health visitors and social workers are imaginative in their attempts to engage with younger children and children with communication difficulties. Staff are alert, aware and responsive to the needs of all children including very young children, particularly those with social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Staff know their children well and have regular contact with them. Every family with a pre-5 child has a named health visitor and all school-aged children in educational establishments have a named school nurse with whom they can discuss issues of concern. The use of the key worker system has continued to be developed across services. When asked, children report that they

have a named person to talk to when they have concerns and a very high percentage are confident they know who this is. This can be a class teacher, a home link worker, the school nurse, a youth worker or a social worker, and children report that they know who this is, allowing them to develop a trusting relationship with a named adult.

*In 2010 **94%** of young people surveyed said that they felt they were listened to, understood and respected*

*In 2008 the result was **85%***

"I feel safer in school because of all the teachers I get along with"

Secondary school pupil, All about Me Viewpoint Survey 2009

When children are referred to the reporter, this referral is dealt with by a named reporter. This reporter will in almost all circumstances remain consistent throughout the child's contact with SCRA and the children's hearing system. This was found to be very good practice in the case file audit.

Social Workers record children's views in their case records and also record their observations of children where the child is either too young to give a view or does not wish to express their view. Children and their parents are invited to formal meetings and are supported to express their views.

Case conference attendance of parents and grandparents is high due to supportive kinship care arrangements.

There is a very well-established extended support team framework (EST) in all Renfrewshire schools. This is particularly effective and successful in bringing together professionals from all agencies involved in supporting children and young people. Children and parents take part in EST meetings.

Proformas for Child Protection Case conferences, Looked After Child Reviews and Children's Hearings all have a child/ young person's view section. Prior to these meetings, children and young people are provided with a "Having your say" form to complete which will inform the decision making of the meeting. Children are always given the opportunity to express their views at Children's Hearings and Looked After Reviews. In this way, children know their views are valued and considered.

Independent advocacy services for accommodated children and for children involved in CP and the children's hearing process have been commissioned by the RCPC. These services are provided by Who Cares? Scotland and Barnardo's Hear 4 U. The Hear 4 U advocacy project was redesigned following a pilot during which young people's views were sought and acted upon. Some services also involve young people in staff selection as appropriate. A Youth Participation Strategy has been successfully developed in partnership with young people, to further engage young people more effectively. In addition, a range of effective anti-bullying, buddying and mentoring schemes ensure that children and young people are well supported within a variety of settings. The Women and Children First project run by social work also engages the services of Children 1st to provide a much valued children's counsellor who supports children who have suffered abuse. The family group conferencing service supported by Children 1st has been established in Renfrewshire over the last few years and for those children and young people involved it provides a valuable platform to be listened to and have their views considered when life changing decisions are being made about them.

*In 2010 **91%** of staff and members of the public surveyed thought that children and young people were listened to, understood and respected*

*In 2008 the result was **83 %***

Children 1st has a comprehensive pack which provides detailed guidance on involving children and families in staff selection. Children 1st also has a set of Participation Standards for involving service users.

There are effective systems in place to ensure that children and families are advised of how to complain or appeal decisions made in respect of them. When children or families do appeal any decision made, this is taken seriously.

Where children require to be interviewed during a child protection investigation, such interviews are conducted by officers specially trained in this area and are properly planned and well structured. The process and interview takes account of the child's needs and communications skills. Children who are reported as missing persons are interviewed by police officers on their return, using guidance and a question set developed by police and social work. This information is used to inform subsequent referral discussions. This can have a significant positive impact on re-engaging and supporting the child.

Interpreters are appropriately used by all agencies for children and families for whom English is the second language or for whom there are other communication difficulties. Specialist support is also provided by the police service, social work, education and health to assist children and young people with communication needs and the families of such children are also given support. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde has an agreement with Interpretation Services to enable health professionals,

children and carers to communicate and understand the choices available to them. Young people with English as a Second Language (ESL) attending Renfrewshire schools, benefit from sensitive support from specialist ESL teachers which allows them to access the curriculum, pastoral support or any other issue. All these support processes have ensured that language barriers do not impede proper support.

There is very effective support from health services who, through health visitors and school nurses, support children's needs most robustly. If a family is deregistered from a GP practice, the practice health visitor will continue to support the family until the family is registered with another practice. Named Looked After Children (LAC) nurses and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provision provide health support for children, and the education day care service provides a most effective support to children and families during difficult times. NHSGGC have a Rights of the Child group that focuses on progressing children's rights issues and Youth Voices has been used to consult on health related matters. This is an established group of young people based in Yorkhill Hospital that meet regularly and are supported by the specialist young person's nurse. This promotes real engagement of children in the process. CPU have conducted an extensive consultation with children and young people on its Board-wide plan and strategic training plan. This involved a questionnaire via Young Scot and classroom discussion with primary school children in two schools. The results have influenced planning. Sandyford Sexual Health Services consult regularly with young people on their services. A Teens Room in the RAH has access to computers and a website providing information for young people. This was developed following a survey completed by young people. "Treating Children Fairly" posters and leaflets are displayed throughout NHSGGC premises

Police communicate regularly with the youth council to obtain the views of young people. Trained police and social work personnel create a basis of trust and communicate with children and young people using joint investigative interviewing techniques to ensure the child's safety and facilitate judicial report. The use of campus officers in selected secondary schools has strengthened communication and trust between the police and young people, and has very usefully promoted personal and community safety within schools. Young people speak highly of this police presence.

"Having a campus cop makes me feel safer"

*Secondary school pupil, All about Me
Viewpoint Survey 2009*

Staff surveys show that nearly all social workers routinely consult children and young people. Consultation with clients indicates that most children and young people feel listened to and respected by social work staff. There are a variety of effective processes for the identification and collection of the views of young people in Renfrewshire.

A consultation package called Viewpoint was purchased to improve consultation with children across a range of settings to ensure more consistent gathering of views. This was used in Renfrewshire schools. The questionnaire was called "All about me" and 650 young people in secondary schools completed this. The results were then translated into key actions within the integrated children's services plan. In some of our services, young people have influenced service development, as in this case.

Time is always taken by health, social work and education to get to know families and support them. Education home link service and health visitors developed close links with families which have led to improved links with the home. The innovative programmes for Achieving Step Change and the Triple P (parenting) initiatives have been planned to provide real support for families and in turn, their children. In schools, joint planning approaches are well established to develop individual education plans or co-ordinated support plans which allow effective focussing of resources to meet the needs of individual youngsters. Social workers maintain close links with children and their families to plan interventions and provide direct support. Family support staff from social work are important in

maintaining close links between children and their families with services delivered at a practical level.

Approaches have been embedded as set out in ***Getting it right for every child*** to ensure that where possible there is one multi-agency plan and one planning process for a child. The children's services plan 2009-11 has been informed by the views of young people with whom we have consulted through the development of an integrated children's services youth focus group. This ensures that the provision made to protect children and ensure their well-being reflects needs as expressed by young people in Renfrewshire.

As a result of the above, we are confident that services are continuing to ensure that children and young people are listened to, understood and respected.

2.1

Strengths

- EST framework
- Range and effectiveness of services including those designed to promote the views of young people
- CPU Consultation with primary school children and young people on its planning.
- Use of Viewpoint
- Young people involved in service design
- Participation/consultation framework
- Implementation of GIRFEC
- Youth participation strategy
- Hear 4 U advocacy service
- Family Group conferencing
- Women and Children 1st project
- Young people involved in integrated children's services planning
- Social work staff actively seek and record children's views and use a range of approaches

Areas for Improvement

- Strengthen and embed GIRFEC approaches
- Recording of young peoples views consistently across agencies
- Recording of views in formal meetings

2.2 Children and young people benefit from strategies to minimise harm

Themes

- Support for vulnerable children and families
- Children's awareness of keeping themselves safe

Level: Very good

Good practice highlight: Paisley post natal depression support group

An effective support group is run in Paisley Abbey by a health visitor and disclosed volunteers for women suffering from post natal depression. A crèche is offered so that mothers can be close to their babies. A community psychiatric nurse provides input and support. Participation in this group has led to mothers becoming involved in other services such as baby massage and the "walking with prams" group. Mothers benefit from increased confidence and well being which impacts on their parenting capacity thus benefiting their babies and any other children

There are very good and effective support mechanisms in place for vulnerable children and their families in Renfrewshire. These were evidenced in the RCPC 2010 case file audit. Overall there are robust protocols in place and interventions to protect them from harm and to help them achieve positive outcomes. These have been well developed in response to national policies such as *Getting it right for every child*.

A range of statutory and voluntary agencies provide appropriate services at key points in the lives of vulnerable children and young people. These services are designed to provide the right help at the right time to reduce risks. The RCPC fully engages all partners, both agency and voluntary, to ensure that the expectations of support are shared and implemented by all.

Health visitors support pre-five children and each pre-five establishment most effectively. Families with young children can access support on a referred basis from the well evaluated Family Matters project whose staffing complement includes social workers, homemakers, pre-5 workers, a midwife and a community psychiatric nurse. This project provides individual support, group work and a range of innovative services such as baby massage. The project is a hub of support from where parents are encouraged to access other relevant services. SNIPS (Special Needs in pregnancy Service) provides support to vulnerable women in the ante-natal period and following delivery. A liaison midwife for teenage pregnancy supports pregnant girls under 16.

Children and young people know who they can talk to at school or in a community setting and feel listened to if they need help or advice. Youth services workers are based in secondary schools during the day and work with children in the community in the evenings. They are trained in child protection and in listening to children and act quickly if they have concerns about the welfare of a child. Vulnerable children have an effective system in place where a documented named person is known to them and supports them when a need has been identified. Effective inter-agency procedures and relationships exist to support such children. Extensive pastoral and welfare support

*In 2010 **91%** of young people surveyed said that they can recognise risks and dangers.*

*In 2008 the result was **87%***

structures are in all schools, providing high quality care or intervention for children at all times in school. The home link service extends this valuable support outwith, but linked to, the school.

The parent could identify a lot of support from the social worker and drugs worker when the family was in crisis over housing. The parent felt that agencies helped the family to move. The parent and children are happy in the new tenancy. The parent stated that the children all feel safer and more secure.

Case audit trail, case file audit 2010

In child protection cases in Renfrewshire there is consistent evidence of social work providing prompt and effective intervention with regular reviews of the progress of children and young people, and there is good evidence of social workers maintaining regular contact with clients, making timely referrals to other agencies and providing flexible and intensive interventions. There is also evidence of prompt and robust assessment and decision making.

There are systems in place to ensure that children receive help where parents and/or family

members are unable or unwilling to accept help.

All partner agencies are aware of the need to have in place mechanisms to listen and record views of children and young people. This is most effective and impacts positively on the outcome of the support which is given.

*In 2010 **78%** of staff and public surveyed said that they thought that children and young people benefited from strategies to minimise harm*

*In 2008 the result was **65%***

There are very effective systems in place for children missing from education and also to monitor unexplained absences in schools, which ensures prompt notification, intervention and subsequent follow-through.

A 'traffic lights' system is in place to rate the level of concern and to ensure that the safety of any child who has not turned up for school or pre-five centre is monitored. This is always followed through, with close working with social work, health or housing if appropriate.

NHSGGC has a missing family alert (MFA) system that tracks missing vulnerable adults and children. NHSGGC non-attendees policy ensures that there is follow-up when DNA occurs

Children have very good awareness of personal safety, understanding their right to be safe and have positive relationships. There are various programmes in place which aim to increase their safety and well-being. All Renfrewshire schools have in place successful and effective curricular and pastoral systems to support children's awareness of their own safety and clear guidance is provided in policies and standard circulars. Very good procedures are in place in P1-P4 with the Stranger Danger programme and at the P6 stage with Safe Kids. Within the schools a range of strategies, which are both personal social development and ethos related, support young people in Renfrewshire most effectively. All youngsters throughout Renfrewshire are supported by well-developed and closely monitored anti-bullying policies in all educational establishments, as well as extensive personal and social development programmes, now linked to the Curriculum for Excellence area of health and well-being. This supports the growing recognition of LGBT issues within personnel and social development programmes.

The Police in Renfrewshire are successfully proactive in tackling the risks to personal safety associated within the area of ICT, for example, cyber-bullying, mobile phones and social networking. The addition of campus officers to four Renfrewshire secondary schools has greatly assisted in providing direct access for children to information about these issues and about wider issues such as drug and alcohol awareness.

Multi-agency public protection arrangements bring together Renfrewshire Council , Strathclyde Police and NHSGGC (in relation to restricted patients), as 'Responsible Authorities' responsible for the management of sexual offenders, or violent offenders in relation to Restricted Patients, within Renfrewshire. All agencies work hard to manage and intervene with offenders at all levels of the MAPPA process, with a clear focus on child and community protection both in relation to the management of offenders, and the environmental scanning process for multi-agency decisions regarding the housing of such offenders.

There is very effective CEOPS training for staff in schools as part of support for Internet safety. Children's engagement in social networking is also addressed within this. In conjunction with the University of the West of Scotland, Renfrewshire schools produced an innovative computer game for schools 'Thinking, Drinking Alcohol Awareness'. This impacts on the levels of awareness of children on the benefits and dangers of emerging technologies.

RCPC led on the development of an advertising campaign was designed to raise awareness amongst young people about the dangers of revealing their personal information online. It brought together four local authorities (North Lanarkshire Council, Renfrewshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council and West Dunbartonshire Council) to share the costs of the campaign and achieve best value by effectively promoting a common message. The campaign was run in partnership with the Child Exploitation & Online Protection Centre (CEOP) which is the Police's Internet safety agency. Adverts were broadcast from 1 June till 19 June 2010. Figures supplied by CEOPS about visits to the Thinkuknow website showed a 19% increase in traffic UK wide during the period the advertising campaign was running. In comparison the figures for the west of Scotland, where the adverts were transmitted, showed an average increase of **852%** in traffic to the Thinkuknow website

RCPC promotes personal safety in recognition that high levels of awareness amongst children and young people is likely to lead to informed choice and lower likelihood of protection issues developing. RCPC is working to improve the range and quality of support to vulnerable children. Through our continued work, we are ensuring that children are made more aware of how to keep themselves safe and to be responsive to the range of support and information available to them.

2.2

Strengths

- Hear 4 U, independent Advocacy-Barnardos.
- Early Intervention Screening Group – multi-agency form which shares info in relation to children & young people with profiles of risk taking & offending behaviour.
- School PSD Programmes which promote personal safety and reduce risk from harm
- Regular forum to discussion education continuity for young people who are accommodated meets weekly with young people's involvement in ongoing planning to address need
- Standard circular 8- outline procures and measures to ensure continuity of learning during periods of disruption
- Health visitors are alerted to all SNIPs referrals and send a response to the SNIPs team. Team leaders attend SNIPS meetings with midwives to identify vulnerable clients.
- Paisley Threads Service is identified in the Early Years Framework; positive start, positive outcomes in relation to their support to young parents and pregnant young women. Pre-natal & new baby groups.
- IAF- this is now being rolled out and will be complete by the end of 2010
- GOPR Training has been rolled out into the Training for Trainers programme which has built capacity across agencies to deliver the training on an ongoing basis.
- Housing- mediation officer-recognises and supports need
- MAPPA – process allow children & young people to benefit from strategies to minimise harm
- Women and children 1st Project

Areas for improvement

- Development of easily accessible information available to children and young people on how to contact services, especially if they feel unsafe.
- Embed IAF and GIRFEC approaches and ensure that GIRFEC principles apply to all children's services business processes

2.3 Children and young people are helped by the actions taken in immediate response to concerns

Themes

- The initial response of staff to children and families who need help
- Impact of immediate actions by staff to keep children safe

Level: Very good

Good practice highlight: ELS “code red” response to unexplained absence of a vulnerable child at an educational establishment

The revised standard circular 5 on school attendance and absence has a “traffic lights” system in relation to unexplained absence at school or nursery. This system is now embedded in practice with all education establishments and other agencies reacting quickly to respond to the absence of a vulnerable child if the “code red” is applied.

All agencies display an immediate and appropriate response to child protection concerns and are very clear about their role and remit within the process. This was evidenced in the RCPC 2010 case file audit. The RCPC has emphasised this approach to responding within protocols and practice development. This is facilitated by access to a range of procedures and information to assist in the early stages of an investigation.

CPU has an advice line that can access a Paediatrician 24/7 for advice, paediatric opinion and forensic medical. Archway provides a service for only sexual assault on a 24/7 basis. A 24 hour pharmacy service is in place that provides medication in

Staff have access to a 24/7 advice line which helps significantly in the quality of the support and the immediate response to the concerns. Accident and emergency services provide immediate response to crisis and emergency situations. There is an effective ‘Illustration Section’ that provides a sensitive approach to the photography of injuries. NHS 24 provides an emergency service that actions child protection concerns. CPU provides an early sharing and collation of information service that provides rapid information from medical records to social work at the point of investigation. There is a strong effective partnership between police and social work in responding early to issues of concern.

Professionals within Renfrewshire receive high quality training and there is very good sharing of information across agencies when initial responses are being considered. This training assists significantly with initial risk assessments and on deciding the kind of support and resources young people require. In recognising the impact of long term neglect on children, RCPC initiated extensive staff training which was delivered on this issue. Early screening and information sharing processes for families for whom concerns are emerging in relation to neglect, is being further developed. The use of electronic integrated chronologies across agencies has been further improved to ensure that early emerging concerns are noted and shared with other agencies where appropriate. While all agencies maintain single agency chronologies, these together map the issues and have helped direct support and review impact and this is being reinforced through the roll-out of the GIRFEC approach to integrated assessment.

*In 2010 **91%** of young people said that they are helped by the actions taken in immediate response to concerns.*

*In 2008 the result was **80%***

Across agencies, staff show good communication and collaborative responses to all issues of child protection. Children and families are included in the processes and where appropriate young people are supported to attend case conferences. Where this is not appropriate their views are always included and considered in the discussion. Children, young people and families are kept fully informed about the reasons, processes and planning which takes place throughout the child protection process and there is evidence of staff in all agencies communicating about the action being taken at each stage. This positively impacts on the engagement of all in action taken and subsequent plans.

The case file audits show effective multi-agency responses that demonstrate children are being kept safe throughout the investigative process. A wide range of community based family support interventions are used to ensure that the child feels safe and supported throughout, ensuring that they are properly communicated with in an age appropriate way, to ensure that they understand the actions taken around them.

Effective inter-agency work between social work, police and SCRA ensures that risk is identified as early as possible and where required legal action to protect a child is taken promptly. There is very good evidence to promote the option that where possible, children remain within their extended family unit. Where this is not possible then appropriate action is taken to remove a child to safe supportive accommodation. Family group conferencing is offered, where appropriate, to support children remaining within the community. Services such as intensive family support; homelink; school pastoral team and young person's support workers are also used to wraparound this process.

*In 2010 **90%** of staff and public surveyed said that they thought children and young people were helped by the actions taken in immediate response to concerns.*

*In 2008 the result was **81%***

There are very good processes already in place to support young people referred by the police to SCRA due to domestic violence. This screening ensures that prompt and appropriate action is taken to meet the needs of young people living within households where domestic violence is an issue. All relevant agencies are involved in providing this support following improved systems of sharing information with other agencies. The Early Intervention multi-agency screening group ensure that young people who come to the notice of the police due to early offences are offered appropriate support to divert them from crime and meet their needs.

Children and young people report that they feel safe as a result of the actions taken by agencies to protect them. There is evidence that children and families are kept fully informed of the action being taken and the inter-agency response that will follow. There has been a heightened expectation for support for children looked after in any circumstances and this relates to short term or longer term placements. Serious efforts are always made to support the child in every area of their life to reduce the trauma of certain significant events.

Social work and police both took immediate action to protect the children at the time of risk. Police welfare checks were carried out on all the immediate family members ensuring safe care. The family was kept fully informed about the action taken and the children were informed about the plans.

Statement recorded by auditor in case file reading, case file audit 2010

As a result of the audits that we have carried out, RCPC is confident that children and young people are helped by the immediate actions that are taken in response to concerns.

2.3

Strengths

- Prompt staff responses to concerns
- Excellent recording by social work evidences good information between agencies – this is reflected within the records of partner agencies
- Social work electronic records allow immediate access to information
- Use of chronologies by all agencies
- Involvement of the extended family in children’s care plans where they cannot safely remain at home
- Support for young people to present their views within the child protection process- eg, Family group conferencing; Hear 4 U advocacy
- Development and use of assessment tools to assess risks and needs
- Review of protocols and ongoing screening of referrals by police, SCRA and social work to ensure fast, effective and proportionate response to concern
- Ongoing and updated training on both single and multi-agency basis
- Review of protocols and ongoing screening of referrals, police and social work to ensure fast, effective and proportionate response to concern
- Ongoing direct support to young people throughout the child protection process by agencies directly involved with them eg home link, intensive family support, young person’s support workers etc.
- Good access to health information from CPU at Yorkhill as well as locally based health services
- Pre-birth and post birth discussions ensure the needs of babies are addressed immediately to minimise the risks of “ at risk” pregnancies, with case planning to ensure the safety of the child

Areas for Improvement

- Build on agencies use of chronologies
- Initial assessment to be further followed up through implementation of the integrated assessment framework

2.4 Children's and young people's needs are met

Themes

- Meeting needs
- Reducing the longer term effects of abuse or neglect

Level: Good

Good practice highlight : Seasons for Growth therapeutic programme for children

Schools nurses and school staff work in partnership to provide group work programmes for children experiencing emotional difficulties and affected by change. Children have found these to be very helpful in terms of enabling them to come to terms with issues affecting their lives.

Through very good joint planning and flexibility of support provision, the range and impact of support to children and young people is most effective. Almost all children and young people believed that if they have a problem they would receive support for as long as they need it and that the actions that adults taken were the right ones that would help them.

Social work acts as lead agency in most child protection cases. Core Groups involving the family and all appropriate agencies are used well to plan intervention with children and their families to ensure child protection plans are progressed. Where there are long term issues of neglect, the analysis of children's needs arising from the long term effects of neglect is impacting positively on support provided. Additional posts in social work have been created as a result of the recognition of the link between substance misuse and physical neglect. A high profile has been given to neglect, by increasing training for staff and intervening at an early stage to make decisions about permanency for children and to improve permanency planning. Neglect is being successfully addressed where possible at a preventative level and quick action is taken when abuse has been identified.

*In 2010 **90%** of young people felt that their needs were met by the support and help they received.*

*In 2008 the result was **84%***

Through better joint working between health and social work, support has improved for less complex child protection cases particularly those affected by neglect. Health and social work services work very effectively together to achieve early intervention. This has been supported by work shadowing and has been enhanced in the Renfrew area by co-location of health and social work staff in a new purpose built social work and health centre. Assessment and care planning for children known to social work has improved and the revised CP1 form is used very effectively to assess needs and risks. The welfare and safety of children has been improved as a result of all social work case records now being electronic, enabling management access and scrutiny of experienced child protection staff to be more effective. Police can also access these records where appropriate to aid the child protection investigative and assessment process.

School nurses prioritise young people most in need and have set up groups in primary schools for children who have suffered separation and bereavement. They have been trained in the Seasons for

Growth programme and run these groups in conjunction with education staff. School nurse assistants undertake a variety of health screening inputs to allow school nurses to prioritise. Levels of school nurse attendance at EST meetings has improved and they have carried out an audit of need in specialist children's units. They have identified particular types of input for children, for example, sexual health education input to young people in the Extended New Directions programme.

NHSGGC provides a range of therapeutic services that assist reducing the longer term effect of abuse or neglect. Sandyford provides counselling for victims of sexual abuse to assist with recovery. The Thrive Project provides counselling for male victims of sexual abuse. Psychological support is provided for refugees and asylum seekers who have been victims of sexual assault. A self-harming service is provided by NHSGGC. Therapeutic interventions include Home Based Intervention Model including interventions based on CBT and Solution Focussed Therapy.

Renfrewshire has built on the identified strengths in support for children with needs requiring specialist input from health, CAMHS and other agencies. Renfrewshire CHP has increased the resources available within CAMHS, employing four additional Clinical Nurse Therapists and increased the clinical psychology service by an additional senior clinical psychologist. In addition two primary mental health psychologists have been employed, initially based in the CAMHS service. This means that children and young people are able to have their mental health and emotional wellbeing needs met at a much earlier stage. Renfrewshire CHP has also now moved to being able to provide CAMHS on an 'Out of Hours' basis to support to access assessment and treatment when required.

*In 2010 **80%** of staff and public surveyed said that they though young people's needs were met by the support and help they received.*

*In 2008 the result was **66%***

Other developments in CAMHS include training four nurse therapists in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). The additional resources within the CAMHS service have meant that waiting lists have reduced and an improved screening process allows better access for the most vulnerable children.

Women and Children First is a very effective project which supports women and children experiencing trauma due to abuse. The project works in partnership with a range of agencies to provide therapeutic intervention and support for as long as service users require it, but with a view to supporting them to become re-integrated with support on a community basis. The project has had success in supporting women to move on to achieve positive outcomes for themselves and their families. The Children 1st worker co located within Women and Children First provides a range of needs led therapeutic interventions for children/young people suffering abuse and trauma (this includes domestic abuse).

The longer term needs of children who are looked after and accommodated are appropriately addressed through a holistic health assessment and ongoing access to services. There have been improvements to the way in which Comprehensive Health Assessments are provided. These assessments, carried out by Community paediatricians, now take place on a weekly basis from a single location, and as all the records are stored centrally, very effective links are now maintained with the Child Protection Unit and social work staff. An audit of Comprehensive Health Assessments was carried out in 2009 which demonstrated the value of these assessments in identifying any health needs or gaps for LAC children. This audit was repeated in May 2010 and the issues identified will be responded to.

Children with longer term emotional needs have had their needs met through effective work by foster carers being trained in life story work and from increased access to children's advocacy services and youth counselling services. School pupils report that problems are dealt with effectively quickly, and sensitively by agencies whom they can access through school. This includes the addition of campus officers. When children of school age are deregistered, their needs are met through ongoing support from the EST framework in schools. If children are of pre-school age, the health visitor will support them through use of the family health record. Housing services also have well trained staff who refer concerns to appropriate agencies and engage in joint meetings where needed.

The parent reported that the life of the family had improved significantly since social work became involved. The parent was now much more motivated and encouraged the children to be the same. The parent reported that the children had made progress

Case audit trail, case file audit 2010

Pre-school assessment teams provide further support to very young children who have specific needs and with the stepped intervention process within education services, supports very robust assessment for early intervention needs. The Family Matters integrated social work and health project for families with young children provide a wide range of support effectively meeting the needs of the most vulnerable.

School and pre-five centres have been particularly sensitive in providing emotional support for any of their children involved in abuse or neglect, through pastoral teams, direct contact with parents; involving specialist ELS staff, such as psychologists, counsellors and the home link service. This has a clear impact on the progress of children.

Children's welfare and safety is improved as result of increased engagement in GOPR processes particularly in relation to adult drugs services where there are dependent children.

The immediate and longer term safety of children and young people is well supported by the strategic priority afforded to child protection by the police service, which is visibly embedded in its corporate strategy and operational doctrine, diversionary activities, and various successful educational inputs to the school curriculum. The success of the campus officers clearly demonstrates this. The police contribute very well to strong social and criminal justice partnerships which support the management and monitoring of sex offenders and the risk reduction in relation to other threats to the health and well-being of children and young people.

Significant measures within criminal system to protect vulnerable child witnesses, e.g. VIPER and identification parades have been introduced, and where feasible, the submission of witness testimony by video link. The court 'Befriender' scheme and the support offered by the Victim Liaison Unit (VIA) at the Procurators Fiscal Service provide fuller help to young people.

Multi-agency planning has improved through development of GIRFEC principles across all agencies. Renfrewshire has adopted a GIRFEC policy which enables the universal services of education and health to take the lead in the instigation of an integrated assessment. Building on their own robust single agency approaches which are also streamlined to the GIRFEC principles, our GIRFEC policy promotes early intervention and will ensure in due course that children who would previously have been referred to social work or SCRA by the universal services are now receiving help sooner due to an earlier and more integrated way of working. Although the GIRFEC approach still being rolled out, there are examples of children and families having been involved in IAF who report that they have gained quicker access to services. Children with disabilities have been assessed using GIRFEC through the PANDA team being engaged in GIRFEC approaches.

The combined impact of linked and planned response and intervention by all agencies is that those children identified as being at risk of or actually suffering from abuse or neglect are in the very great majority of cases, getting the help and support they need in time.

2.4

Strengths

- Effective joint working and multi-agency screening resulting in children getting help sooner
- Reduced waiting lists for specialist services
- Increased provision ie advocacy, counselling;
- Response to neglect
- Corporate health visiting approach
- GIRFEC implementation
- Implementation of GOPR

Areas for improvement

- Improve and monitor impact of action planning for children and young people who need longer term care and support

4.1 Being aware of protecting children

Themes

- Confidence of the public in services to protect children
- Responses to concerns raised by members of the public about a child's or young person's safety or welfare

Level - Very good

Good practice highlight : internet advert

RCPC led a consortium of local authorities in producing an Internet safety, TV advertising campaign in co-operation with CEOP. The campaign highlighted the dangers of young people posting their personal details on social networking sites. The joint approach allowed the combined purchasing power of the councils to create a public awareness campaign with a reach and power beyond what was available using local press advertising. The campaign reached 1.46million people and increased the number of visits to the CEOP Thinkuknow website, in the West of Scotland, by over 850%.

Public awareness of child protection is promoted by Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee (RCPC) and by agencies collectively and individually. High quality information to promote child safety messages has been produced by the RCPC and disseminated through a variety of innovative approaches such as advertising on local Arriva buses, adverts on carrier bags used by public libraries, and the display of leaflets and posters in a wide range of public places. Whenever possible, the local and national press are used to further spread the child protection message

Research has shown that 95% of people interviewed in a survey knew who to call if they were concerned about a child's safety. The large sample size gives high confidence that these results actually reflect the position in the wider Renfrewshire population.

The message that 'it is everyone's job to protect children', has been widely disseminated to all staff across the RCPC area through inclusions in pay slips, distribution of cards with key contact numbers, lanyards and by computer screen savers. This helps to promote the message to the significant proportion of Renfrewshire staff who are also Renfrewshire residents.

A communications sub-group manages the media strategy produced by them for RCPC which gives details of plans to build on the very good practice to continue to raise further public awareness. This will ensure effective communication about child safety and protection. The RCPC has produced a range of features over the last 3 years in the Renfrewshire magazine which goes out to every household in Renfrewshire and articles to raise public awareness of child protection published in the local and national press. A leaflet drop was made to every household in Renfrewshire containing a push out card with contact numbers for the public if they have a concern about a child. The RCPC also has a very good website which is continuing to develop and provides access to a range of

*In 2010 **76%** of members of the public surveyed said that they had confidence in services to protect children and knew who to contact if they had a concern.*

*In 2008 the result was **58%***

information to staff and the public. Locally there is a high profile around community responsibility to support children.

An “infomercial” was commissioned by RCPC in 2007 and displayed in Braehead and Paisley shopping centres to raise public awareness of child protection issues. Data capturing forms which were filled in by the public during the showing of the infomercial showed a high level of awareness of public awareness of what to do if they are concerned about a child or young person. This was repeated locally in February 2010 and showed that more adults than before are aware of what to do if they have concerns. The majority of the public who were surveyed also stated that they had seen and noted the public information available in Renfrewshire. RCPC is fully supportive of the Scottish Government campaign to raise public awareness of child protection through promotion of the national child protection phonenumber.

Multi agency community safety information promotes the safety and protection of children and young people in schools, youth groups and community groups through the effective use of such programmes as Citizenship and the Law and Safe Kids. Each agency has effective procedures to sustain awareness of child protection as a community and service concern.

Work with families includes educating them on the needs of children and young people and the responsibility of adults to keep them safe.

The education service and schools have very effective anti-bullying policies in place, as well as high profile child protection education for pupils and events for parents.

The RCPC led a consortium of local authorities in the production of a joint Internet safety TV Advertising campaign. The combined approach allowed the creation of a public awareness campaign with a reach and power beyond what was available using local press advertising, but with a comparative cost. The powerful TV campaign warned children and young people about the dangers of posting personal information and private images on the Internet. Some 60% of 13 to 17 year olds have personal profiles on social networking sites and the Child Protection and Online Exploitation Centre has identified self-posted content as an area of urgent concern. The campaign was seen by 1.46million people and increased the number of visits to the CEOP Thinkuknow website, in the West of Scotland, by an average of over 850%. The Thinkuknow website contains age appropriate information for parents, children and young people on protecting themselves from identity theft, cyber bullying and online sexual predators.

The TV campaign will be followed up by further Internet safety vehicles. Work is underway on a practical guide for parents which will contain clear instruction on how to switch on the safety features built into search engines and Internet browsers.

Members of the public report concerns to the Police and Social Work and these services have the capacity to respond to immediate concerns 24/7 and/or, as appropriate, refer to other agencies. Data shows that feedback to public concerns is improving. Through an on-going engagement with communities, services and the third sector, Renfrewshire children remain a strong focus for care and support.

All libraries in Renfrewshire have a permanent display of books aimed at parents to read with children to promote safety and relationship building.

The ELS drama outreach worker is working with a group of young people to develop a DVD on safety for primary and secondary aged children.

RCPC is confident through feedback from the public and increased activity around public information, that we are actively communicating the message that “ It’s everyone’s job to protect children to increased effect.

4.1

Strengths

- Excellent working relationship with the local media who are willing to regularly publicise Child Protection issues and contact numbers.
- RCPC media strategy
- RCPC communications strategy
- Internet safety advert and hits on CEOPS site
- Informercial and public survey results
- Ongoing awareness raising through leaflets/posters in public places
- Committed and effective Communications Group which includes press and media relations professionals and representatives from all of the key partners involved in the Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee.
- Presence of a senior communications professional as a member of the RCPC. This provides the Committee with direct access to specialist knowledge about a wide range of communications techniques. It also means that the Communications Group has the information it needs to plan its activities and tailor them to suit the appropriate message and audience.
- Safer Renfrewshire DV campaign through Facebook

Areas for improvement

- Develop a Social Networking Strategy, in conjunction with young people, to target communications through sites such as Bebo, Facebook, My Space, You Tube and Twitter.
- Audit the Child Protection content on GLOW, the schools’ internet site, and update as necessary
- Build on use of community portal

5.1 Involving children, young people and their families in key processes

Themes

- Keeping children, young people and their families informed and involved
- Addressing dissatisfaction and complaints

Level: Very good

Good practice highlight : Use of Viewpoint software

The RCPC has supported the continued purchase of the Viewpoint software license which enables workers to engage with young people about their views of the services and processes they are involved in. To date these have been used in child protection cases and also by intensive family support workers involved with vulnerable children.

Children, young people and their families in Renfrewshire are actively encouraged to participate in key processes, to engage them in expressing their views and responding to actions taken.

Social workers involve children, young people and their families in case planning and decision making, and they are encouraged to attend child protection and case planning meetings. Where views of children and families are expressed, these are recorded in files and minutes. Children are invited to LAC reviews which are chaired by independent reviewing officers. In addition, the engagement of Who Cares (Scotland) to advocate on behalf of young people ensures that they are kept informed and involved and their views are reflected. In residential units, young people are able to express their views at meetings and to be involved in the recruitment of staff. RCPC has established a LAC forum for accommodated children with the help of Who Cares. This enables accommodated children to feel empowered and involved.

A Family Group Conferencing service supported by Children 1st has been established for children involved in life changing processes. Barnardo's hear 4 U advocacy service ensures that children and young people are listened to and participate in decision making processes. They consistently involve children and young people in staff recruiting processes and are young people are actively encouraged to express views about the services they receive. RCPC has produced leaflets for children and families explaining child protection processes which help young people understand the processes they are involved in. These are displayed in social work offices and are used by social workers to help to engage children and families in the investigative process. The Renfrewshire Psychological Service undertook a study of children involved in child protection processes and as a result the RCPC is developing and improving processes such as case conferences to make them more family friendly and ensure that children understand what is happening to them.

The Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership (RCSP) have purchased Viewpoint software and this is used to record the views of children across a range of settings, including those in foster care

*In 2010 **93%** of young people surveyed said that they and their family are involved in any decisions which affect them and that, if they complain about the help they are given, someone will do something about it.*

*In 2008 the result was **75%***

and those involved in child protection processes. This structured gathering of children's views has helped refine and improve contexts where the views of children and young people are important and impact on subsequent actions.

SCRA have clear procedures for informing children and young people about the hearing system and encourage young people to engage with the Hear 4 U service. 'Having your say' forms are completed prior to a hearing. The case file audit highlighted that the use of SCRA communications to keep families up to date with key processes was helpful and positive. Forms have since been

"I couldn't have done it without social work who supported, helped and explained processes that were unfamiliar."

Quote from parent. Case audit trail, case file audit 2010

developed to be sent out at the initial stages of investigation to seek child's views. SCRA letters to children and young people were revised in July 2010 to include an e-mail address for the SCRA office as well as details of relevant websites and advice lines.

In the RAH young people are followed up on discharge from hospital to seek their views as patients. These comments are used to improve future services. A leaflet is given to young people undergoing medical examinations, which gives full information. This was designed incorporating the views of young people. NHSGGC has a well established public

engagement group of young people that is regularly consulted on future plans, e.g. new hospital

In all education establishments, the EST framework ensures that children, young people and families are listened to and participate in decision making processes as an expectation of engagement is built into the procedures. The home link service also supports this involvement by ensuring effective lines of communication between family and school, and can act as an advocate if necessary for the family. There is increased evidence of the child's voice being recorded and noted in school files and work continues to standardise this further. Schools are attempting to ensure greater consistency of pupil input at EST meetings, by structuring the recording of meetings to formally include the child's views.

Housing services have dedicated officers to work with young people which ensures that concerns are raised early and can therefore be highlighted. Customer surveys ensure feedback is listened to and can help in future cases.

The police ensure restorative justice processes engage children, young people and their families in the handling of minor allegations and offences. All those involved are made aware of police investigative processes. Police and social work staff receive high quality specialist training to enable investigations to be carried out effectively and sensitively. There is evidence available in police files to show that children and families are listened to and their views recorded.

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue have personnel trained to deal with young firesetters. The active involvement of young persons and their families is a fundamental principal of this work.

A child who is a victim is made the centre of any investigation. Where a child is involved as a witness special measures are applied so as the ordeal of giving evidence is reduced.

The highly-valued Barnardo's Paisley Threads project consistently involves children and young people in the recruitment of staff and in expressing their views about the service they receive.

A number of projects and services across Renfrewshire have achieved charter mark awards which demonstrate a high level of commitment to consulting with stakeholders

All services have clear complaints procedures and pupil councils and the pupil forum also allow school children the opportunity to address complaints with the director of education and leisure

services and other senior council officers. Health services have produced public information posters on complaints procedures in all health care premises. Health questionnaires are sent out to all schools at P1 and P7 stage and this ensures that school nurses are aware of any health issues and acts upon these. Further work is planned to ensure that complaints and concerns are recorded consistently and that “child friendly” complaints literature is developed in the context of current good practice.

Renfrewshire Council has a robust customer complaints process firmly embedded in its customer services procedures. Complaints are reviewed and used to make service improvement where possible.

RCPC are confident that we are continuing to improve our practice of involving children and families in key processes, and as a result there is greater partnership with children and families.

5.1

Strengths

- Hear 4 U advocacy
- Use of Viewpoint software
- Dedicated officers within housing to work with young people
- SCRA active engagement with children and families
- Medical examination leaflet for young people
- Family involvement in EST framework
- All agencies raising awareness of complaints procedures
- Attendance by parents and carers at child protection meetings
- Clear complaints processes

Areas for improvement

- Increase the range of child friendly child protection materials
- Develop further use of Viewpoint
- Formal methods of recording child’s views across all agencies

5.2 Information sharing and recording

Themes

- Appropriate sharing of information
- Joint understanding of information
- Management and recording of information

Level : Good

Good practice highlight : Early intervention screening group

An independent evaluation of the pilot project evidenced that interventions are being delivered more rapidly for a significant proportion of young people who are being engaged on offending grounds. Not only are front-line staff engaging more rapidly with young people but they are availing of better information; SCRA are able to free up additional time to consider more complex and difficult cases ; Social Work Departments are able to align administrative functions more effectively with operational requirements.

The awareness and practices around sharing information between and across agencies, continues to improve, informed by review and also by on-going case file audit and recommendation.

There is commitment across and between agencies to share information about families and their children. Recent audits and significant case reviews have highlighted to the agencies the importance of sharing and understanding the information that is shared and this issue continues to be profiles with all staff, especially practice changes reflecting improvement. We have clear and effective systems in place to ensure that relevant information is shared between staff. Examples of this are the Domestic Violence and Early Intervention screening groups where officers across many agencies meet regularly.

Policies and guidance across all agencies emphasise the importance of information sharing and services have good systems in place to record and manage information which may be shared. In most cases information is shared quickly.. Agencies use a range of effective strategies for information sharing, including scheduled meetings such as extended support teams in schools, case progression meetings within youth justice, early intervention screening group meetings organised by the police, and domestic violence screening meetings between the police, social work and SCRA. The child protection unit (CPU) at Yorkhill hospital has staff dedicated to the early sharing and collation of information that can be accessed by social work, police and health. The CPU is a central point of contact for staff where difficulties in sharing information emerge. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde have widely distributed a leaflet explaining sharing of information. The development of IT systems to support child protection information sharing is a priority in the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde IT strategy. An information sharing protocol has just been launched by NHSGGC in partnership with local authority areas it covers

*In 2010 **89%** of staff surveyed said they knew what information to share and when.*

*In 2008 the result was **67%***

Social work case file audits show that, overall, case recordings are regular and up-to-date. Within housing services the need to gather and share information is recognised and very well practised in, for example, the role of identified staff in having access to the social work SWIFT system. In the context of the extended support team review, children are informed of what is known about issues; who knows this and how this will help to direct the appropriate support and help for them.

Excellent practices in place by education with clear lines of communication between school, other agencies, the family and the children. Clear precise and well documented chronology in place by the school. The school are providing a safe environment for the children where they are clearly respected. The children have developed trust for staff in the school.

Statement recorded by auditor in case file reading case file audit 2010

The use of electronic, structured chronologies has been consolidated and improved across agencies and is now becoming embedded as standard practice. There is an agreed chronology template in use across all agencies which can be used to create an integrated chronology when required. There is a common referral form in place which is being used by health, education and leisure, housing staff and the voluntary sector which is positively impacting on the consistency and quality of information provided to social work.

There is a system in place to ensure that when a referral is made to social work, feedback is given on the outcome of the referral. This is useful in ensuring that all involved remain fully informed.

When sharing information, attempts are made to ensure that parents are aware of the information that is being shared and to obtain consent, and further work is

underway in this area. The roll out of the Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF) for children's services, supports this approach and is improving, the more the process is used. Including families and children is a key element of local approaches and can be demonstrated, for example, when parents are notified in writing of decisions made at child protection meetings.

Child Protection data is stored appropriately and securely by all agencies. Strathclyde Police, Renfrewshire & Inverclyde division has dedicated an intelligence officer to manage intelligence relating to child protection issues. This post was retained after being identified as best practice within the child protection strategy of Operation Triplicate, which highlighted the need for a specialist officer to co-ordinate and research all child protection intelligence and information issues relating to police-led operations.

Strathclyde Police has also secured access to the IMPACT Nominal Index within all its Public Protection Units which facilitates pan UK intelligence checks the results of which can be shared with partner agencies giving a more complete picture of information and intelligence.

Procedures are in place across health and education for handing over a child's record between pre-5 and school. There is an alert system in place within health to ensure that when children attend Accident and Emergency departments previous visits are noted. There are also effective information sharing protocols in place through the multi agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and between adult criminal justice services and children's services, supported by a dedicated officer to oversee procedures.

Within education and leisure services, there are systems in place which ensure that a variety of information sets are gathered, managed and used, and work continues to refine these. New proformas to support the child protection circular have been developed and implemented, whilst

very much improved systems to record children missing education or their unexplained absence are helping to better monitor emerging issues.

There is a clear statement of inter-agency information sharing in place and further work is underway to promote consistency in sharing information, all of which impacts on the information base used to support assessment and action planning.

5.2

Strengths

- Family Protection Intelligence Officer has direct access to Social Work's SWIFT system.
- Availability and use of Scottish Intelligence Database enhances intel capture and dissemination.
- Child Protection is a police priority and issues are managed through tasking and co-ordinating meetings.
- Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Screening Group meets regularly to review incidents of domestic violence.
- Multi-Agency Early Intervention Screening Group
- Advocacy project 'Hear 4 U' ensures service users voices are heard.
- Child Protection indicator created on Housing database.
- Specific Housing staff have access to SWIFT system.
- Dedicated officer to oversee procedures including all registered social landlords regarding MAPPA.
- More involvement from Health to improve input and decision making.
- Reports from SWD are received electronically.
- Communications and discussions with other agencies or family members are recorded in secure SCRA database.
- Early sharing and collation of information service provided by CPU.
- All health staff refer to social work using shared referral form. Proforma reports for attending case conferences. All Emergency Department (ED) attendances are sent to health visitors for under 16s.
- New policy for intoxicated young people has proforma referral to social work department.

Areas for improvement

- SWIFT chronology needs to be in keeping with SW and SWIA guidance on chronologies.
- Consistency of approach to SWIFT recordings to avoid duplication.
- Build on use of consent leaflets for information sharing.
- Increase information sharing between housing and other agencies.
- Continue to improve early information sharing with health

5.3 Recognising and assessing needs and risks

Themes

- Recognising a child or young person needs help
- Initial information gathering and investigation
- Assessment of needs and risks

Level: Good

Good practice highlight : Social work family contact and assessment pilot

The Family Assessment and Contact Team has been run as a pilot to progress decision making for children aged under 3 who have a dual plan in place (rehab or permanency) . A full parenting assessment is carried out over a 14 week period includes observing contact and individual sessions with one or both parents. A written assessment is provided at the end of 14 weeks with a recommendation as regards permanency and contact. To date, feedback has been that permanency plans have been progressed quickly particularly for very young babies and there has been a higher success rate in children's hearings agreeing reduced contact thus enabling best outcomes to be achieved for children.

The work undertaken to recognise and assess risks is good. Staff across agencies have been trained in all the areas of child protection, and are confident in recognising the signs of needs and risks. They are clear about their responsibility to take action and take immediate and consistent action where children are at risk of harm or abuse. In each service procedures are very well established in directing staff to immediate referral and robust risk assessment.

Joint Child Protection Investigations are carried out by trained and experienced staff within social work and the police. All relevant information is gathered from police, social work, education and health. Where a child has an allocated social worker, this person is almost always involved in the investigation. Where a child protection investigation has begun, the need for a medical examination and/or a referral to SCRA is always considered. A process is in place to ensure that the holistic medical needs of a child are considered during the investigation and that the medical is carried out in an appropriate environment.

All staff from Strathclyde Fire and Rescue are trained and empowered to recognise needs and risks and to make child protection referrals.

High quality child protection training programmes, accessed by very significant numbers of all staff from all agencies, have resulted in staff having the confidence and skills to gather information and consider the implications for the child's well being. Specialist training in risk assessment tools such as Bridge Alert has been delivered on an interagency basis.

A risk management framework developed by social work has been approved by the RCPC for use across all agencies. This incorporates key principles of risk assessment including non engagement/compliance, and will be implemented by all and supported by an impact review.

*In 2010 **81%** of respondees indicated that there is a consistent response to concerns of child protection and that all involved in risk assessment take a common approach*

*In 2008 the result was **69%***

Following learning from self evaluation, improvements have been made in the assessment and intervention of risk in relation to longer term neglect cases. Single and multi-agency training has been rolled out and a risk screening framework is being developed by RCPC.

All frontline police officers are trained to take immediate effective action when dealing with issues of child protection. Where appropriate, they take steps to ensure the child's immediate safety with minimal disruption by removal of the child to a relative who is best suited to provide support at that moment.

Children receive a thorough comprehensive assessment when required, using the My World Triangle which incorporates parenting capacity. These assessments are supported by the inter agency GOPR and Domestic Violence protocol. The integrated assessment framework (IAF) is about to begin the third phase of its implementation. This is underpinned by the GIRFEC policy.

The social work CP1 report has been improved to include the initial risks and needs assessment (following a pilot), and the wellbeing indicators.

The Special Needs in Pregnancy Service (SNIPS) assesses and manages risk to vulnerable unborn children and the New Expectations project ensures that support packages are in place for pregnant drug users.

The Getting Our Priorities Right (GOPR) protocol supported by STRADA has provided clear guidance and high quality multi agency training to staff about how to identify risk and support need within substance misusing families. STRADA have carried out an impact analysis of its work in Renfrewshire between 2007 and 2010. The full report from this exercise is due in November 2010 but an interim report has highlighted that there is evidence to support significant cultural change – a shift in both thinking and action in the roles and responsibilities of agencies involved with families with addiction issues. There is evidence of greater awareness of, and response to the impact of parental substance misuse on child wellbeing. Multi-agency working and information sharing, increased early intervention, and more child and family focused work and an increased involvement in child protection have emerged strongly in this study. Changes to systems within organisations and the strength in sharing common pathways, and perhaps most significantly, that the protocol has facilitated an increase in hearing and listening to children's voices have emerged as strong themes. The assessment process has provided opportunities to explore and examine the experience of the child(ren).

The GOPR process collated information from other agencies and joint decisions were made at the initial meeting in respect of the child and his family.

Statement recorded by auditor in case file reading, case file audit 2010

Risk to children living with domestic abuse is managed through implementation of an effective inter-agency protocol between social work, the police and SCRA. A new protocol has been introduced within the housing service to better direct responses.

In criminal cases all information is gathered and shared by way of discussion at Early Intervention Screening Group and/or formal reports to Scottish Childrens Reporters Administration (SCRA) or the Procurator Fiscal. In non criminal cases where concerns are noted, these are recorded and passed on for dissemination to Social Work local area teams. All child protection referrals raised are forwarded to the Family Protection Unit and thereafter social work local area teams are contacted and relevant information shared, allowing for informed joint decision making. The Early Intervention Screening Group plays a key role in this process.

A social work pilot project is in place in relation to assessing contact between parents and children to determine the future planning of the child. This involves carrying out a thorough parenting

assessment. This project is being evaluated and if found to be successful this approach will be developed and expanded.

A range of effective assessment tools are in use by social work and health, including GOPR, youth level service care management inventory, single agency assessment, family health assessments, A&E documentation incorporating child assessment questionnaire. GIRFEC is being rolled out in Renfrewshire and staff in education, social work and health services are trained in the use of the IAF and the assessment tool contained within it. Staff are becoming more confident in the assessment of needs and risks as part of this development. Work is being undertaken to demonstrate that within longer term case monitoring and reviews there is consideration of the impact and outcomes for the child of any interventions. Assessment continues to be undertaken throughout the child protection process to ensure the impact of intervention and support, is at the level expected.

RCPC is confident that through our improved practice in relation to the assessment of needs and risks and implementation of GIRFEC, that more young people are receiving the help they need when they need it.

5.3

Strengths

- Staff from all agencies are confident in their use of child protection procedures and legislation in the protection of children.
- Staff have embedded inter-agency protocols within their work.
- Wellbeing indicators are used as headings in social background reports (SBRs) and CP1s, and IAF assessments and action plans.
- Staff from all agencies receive CP training on current issues.
- Data from comprehensive health assessments are collated centrally.
- All IAF training is done on an inter-agency basis.
- Electronic improvements are underway to enable inter-agency chronologies to be compiled.

Areas for improvement

- Build on neglect screening/training
- Continue to implement IAF
- Continue to improve effectiveness of implementation of medical protocol

5.4 Effectiveness of planning to meet needs

Themes

- Decision making, identifying responsibilities and meeting needs
- Taking account of changing circumstances

Level : Very good

Good practice highlight : child protection core groups

In Renfrewshire, every child who is on the child protection register has an allocated social work and regular core group meetings take place to monitor implementation of the child protection plan. All relevant agencies involved with the child are represented at core group meetings.

There is very good evidence across agencies that initial planning meetings are very effective, taking good decisions and agreeing responsibilities for action. Child protection case conferences are chaired by senior managers in social work and are organised timeously and efficiently, producing effective care plans. Case discussions are also held when appropriate. Core group meetings chaired by senior social workers involve a range of agencies and are held regularly to review the support for children on the child protection register. This allows for changes to input and support, should this be required.

Effective arrangements such as the early intervention screening group, and the domestic violence screening group ensure that children get the help they need when they need it. Positive joint working has enabled child protection principles to be placed at the heart of information sharing between police and appropriate agencies. When the police plan operations they consider child protection issues at the early planning stages and informed by police access to the social work SWIFT system, supported by the Family Protection intelligence officer using this direct access facility. This leads to very good liaison and actions.

There is a high quality of pre-referral screening in place within Renfrewshire. SCRA support good decision making by use of the national framework which assists in reaching appropriate and consistent decisions. Almost all reporters have received training in applying the framework and state that they are confident and effective in decision making.

Relevant housing staff are now in attendance and constructively participate in case conferences. RCPC child protection procedures inform the planning of housing needs, and they have developed and embedded their own child protection procedures in line with RCPC procedures.

Renfrewshire has an advocacy service run by Barnardos, Hear 4U, which ensures the involvement of children and young people in planning to meet their needs. The Service reviews the plan with the child at least every 6 weeks to ensure stated outcomes are being achieved and to consider any changed circumstances. The Family Group Conference project supported by Children 1st ensures that effective planning takes place involving extended family when children are supported by this service.

Police / SCRA / social work meet weekly to screen all domestic violence incidents in order to plan appropriate early response and intervention. Decisions made at this group are passed onto health and education services, where appropriate, who use the information to better support the child.

The well-established review system for looked after and accommodated children ensures that high quality planning takes place for these children. LAAC meetings are chaired by Independent Reviewing Officers to ensure that children and young people's best interests are progressed in a timeous manner. LAAC health services monitors the health needs of accommodated young people. The LAC and Discontinuity project involves a multi-agency approach to plan for these children. Weekly meetings monitor, support and very successfully develop plans as the children respond. This is being extended to involve arts, community and library services from which support is provided.

The work of the early intervention screening group is also now embedded in practice. This multi-agency group is led by the police and screens all police offence based referrals to SCRA. An interagency plan is agreed and cases are reviewed every 3 months to consider progress and any change of circumstances.

Interagency case conferences identify and plan around the needs of children on an ongoing basis. A common language using SHANARRI indicators has supported interagency planning successfully.

There are good planning frameworks in place within Education to meet children's needs. This is focussed around the EST framework and this works for most children. Staff from all agencies work together to develop a variety of plans including co-ordinated support plans.

Within NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde audits have been carried out to gauge the effectiveness of planned service provision. Health have a range of assessment tools to inform decision making with every family having a named health visitor who is responsible for assessing and planning the health needs of children. Health Visitors and School Nurses plan together how the needs of families can best be met – especially when a child goes to school. Staff have knowledge of what services are available locally support parents and they participate in all interagency meetings and conferences designed to plan the needs of children. Plans for children are now more informed by the increased involvement of school nurses. Health Visitors and SNIPS midwives now jointly plan the needs of vulnerable mothers and their unborn child which is facilitated by information sharing, joint visits and action planning.

It was clear from the interview that staff worked well with the family and agreed decisions in a planned and supportive way. Plans in place met the child's needs.

Comment made by auditors following interview with parent, case file audit 2010

The identification and planning to meet the needs of children affected by alcohol and substance misuse is through the GOPR process. This involves assessment and action planning and review in the ante and post natal period, with a significant impact on improving the quality of support provided.

Effective family group conferencing is in place for a small number of young people and families.. Kinship care is considered in all cases where appropriate, and kinship carers assessed and financially supported by the social work services.

A multi-agency case review sub group has been set up by the RCPC to ensure that issues arising from case file audits and significant case review is systematically analysed regarding effects on practice. Any practice changes required are subsequently agreed and fed back to agencies through the practice improvement group of the RCPC. The involvement of the Procurator Fiscal's office in this group has ensured that no unnecessary delays have occurred in reviewing lessons to be learned as a result of impending legal proceedings.

Focused training is being rolled out in GIRFEC action planning which is multi-agency and will ensure that all staff who are involved in writing multi-agency plans for children are clear about the principles of outcome focused planning.

The needs of children suffering from longer term lower level neglect will be further supported by plans to create a multi-agency planning forum to share information at an earlier stage to assist in more effective and earlier intervention.

5.4

Strengths

- Early intervention screening group
- Domestic violence screening group
- Neglect screening
- Case file audit information
- The use of SHANARRI indicators for planning
- A range of effective planning frameworks across agencies

Areas for improvement

- The needs of children educated at home should be explored further
- Embed GIRFEC action plan training
- Streamline planning frameworks re GIRFEC

5.5 Improvement through self evaluation

Themes

- Commitment through self evaluation
- Management of self evaluation
- Service improvements

Level: Very good

Good practice highlight : RCPC multi-agency case file audits

RCPC has undertaken 2 multi-agency case file audits in the style of HMIE. These have been with consent of children and families to read files and have involved the full range of partners across RCPC. Recommendations from the case file audits have informed practice and improvements in performance against the QIS has been evidenced from one audit to the next. The model has been disseminated across CPCs nationally and RCPC has been asked to provide support to other CPCs in developing similar models.

RCPC has developed a very robust process for single and multi-agency self-evaluation which involves staff using the HMIE quality indicators to review practice on a single and multi-agency basis. Through the evaluation group and other sub-groups, a process of robust review has been established. A self-evaluation reference group (SERG) has been set up and meet regularly to ensure all agencies are progressing with self-evaluation as per the RCPC plan. This has been effective as there is ownership in all agencies and this process helps to develop better understanding and joint working as well as staff development across agencies. Experience has shown that engaging staff at all levels in self-evaluation is a very good staff development exercise as well as embedding the evaluation model into agency practice.

In agencies such as the police and the fire service, housing and the voluntary sector, there is regular review of practice and under the direction of the RCPC there is engagement of staff in significant case reviews and case file audits which, in practice, elicits good practice and identifies issues which require attention. Agencies have taken the concerns on board and have taken action to address the issues for improvement. In ELS the team of education officers follow through on inspections and reviews which raised issues around child protection. The ELS support team and all establishments have self evaluation built into day to day practice and use QA systems to review practice. Within all agency and interagency training the GIRFEC indicators are used to provide the reference for evaluation. IAF training and practice use the indicators to assess and also to undertake ongoing review. The pilot nature at this stage of the introduction of the IAF means that review is integral to the process of implementation. Social work and health contribute significantly in inter-agency events and their on-going service reviews, which has led to service improvements.

Housing staff are encouraged to feedback on child protection practice and the service responds to this effectively. Across services, surveys, interviews, formal evaluation and case file reviews provide a range of evidence on which action is taken. Feedback from case reviews etc allow for evaluation of changes that services have made and for ELS this meant a re-write of the guidance to the service on procedures and practice. Housing use their Child Protection Issues Group, which has been recently set up, to review practice and recommend service improvements. Significant case reviews has informed agencies of issues which have been responded to. Recently this has involved establishing a 'Neglect' multi-agency workshop directly in response to Scottish Children's Reporter a significant

case review. In ELS, issues arising from a review of practice in using chronologies has led to agencies adopting a common electronic format, which will be consistent across all services. Use of this will be reviewed in due course. Training of discrete services staff and interagency staff, is very effective in developing service review. Evaluations show staff find training very helpful in developing practice and improving current practice.

As a result of structured and focused evaluation, services improved their impact as they developed practice.

RCPC practice improvement group responds effectively to reviews from all agencies as well as formal case file audits and review of performance data. Health and social work have reviewed and developed practice whilst ELS have rewritten staff guidance as a result of reviews and now have a refocused set of instructions and expectations for all of the service. Housing have also made changes to practice as a result of review. Strathclyde Police Headquarter's Public Protection Unit) is able to identify good practice across the force and nationally and disseminate this to all divisions. Their supervisors' forum has a key role in developing best practice in this agency. Overall the RCPC continues to monitor, through meetings and reviews, what practice is effective and where there are issues of concern. Interagency training reflects identification of required improvements and agencies are encouraged to implement changes in practice required and review the impact of this.

Because of the approach taken to service evaluation children are better supported by improved procedures and more robust practice. Systems are in place to promote self evaluation and practice improvement and systems are in place to ensure better protection of children. As a result practice is continually under scrutiny and there is a very high expectation that there is very good practice in place. The HMIE model is well embedded in RCPC agency approaches to self-evaluation, providing a very useful set of exemplar practice that supports improvement and better impacts through the properly focussed support provided.

5.5

Strengths

- Clear commitment in policy and practice to ongoing review and improvement.
- All agencies engage in interagency reviews.
- All agencies undertake review within their own service.
- The results of case file audit, inspection, SCR are seriously addressed.
- Changes in practice evidence response to evaluation
- Changes in support documentation and new documentation demonstrate response to evaluation.
- Practice improvement evidences development from self evaluation.

5.5

Areas for improvement

- Continued systematic identification of learning and implementation of practice improvements arising from case audits and reviews

6.1 Policies and procedures

Themes

- Range and framework of policies and link to vision, value and aims
- Managing, disseminating, evaluating and updating policies

Level : Very good

Good practice highlight : Range of multi-agency policies and procedures

RCPC has developed a wide range of policies and procedures which have been recently reviewed in the light of GIRFEC approaches. These include: runaways; domestic violence; children affected by parental substance misuse; child trafficking; medicals; mental health; young people who demonstrate threatening behaviour.

RCPC has developed a wide range of policies and procedures to protect children and keep them safe, whilst each agency has its own set of policies and procedures to protect children, informed by the vision and strategy of RCPC. These range from specific helpful guidelines for staff if there are concerns about a child, to, for example, universal guidance on internet safety.

A policies and procedures subgroup was established within RCPC with each agency having a key person who has an overview of all policies for their agency, engaged in this group. Significant work by this group has ensured that RCPC has an appropriate set of policies and protocols in place.

A case review group has been developed to ensure that any learning from significant case reviews and case file audits is disseminated and appropriate procedures developed to ensure practice change and improvement. The group monitors the implementation of learning arising from case file audits and serious case reviews.

There have been new policies and guidance introduced as a result of identifying gaps which were made evident by self evaluation, eg health (Did Not Attend) DNA policies; procedure for tracking children attending health A&E and medicals procedure. These were also reflective of issues emerging from the case file audits and significant case reviews.

An RCPC trafficking policy has been developed in response to national guidance, as well as a corporate parenting policy which has been developed to ensure that all community planning partners prioritise the needs of vulnerable groups.

New West of Scotland procedures have been developed and the intention is to adopt these supporting awareness raising through a launch for staff.

Housing policies have been developed and work has been carried out to ensure that these comply with new adult protection legislation as well as child protection. The RCPC is working to ensure better links with housing associations and their varying policies to protect all children in public housing provision.

Agencies working with high risk offenders make sure that links with vulnerable children are being addressed. Good links with housing have been developed through housing liaison officer (MAPPA). MAPPA arrangements have good inter-agency buy in and these are effective.

Effective systems are in place across agencies to monitor the application of policies in practice and/or review these when required. RCPC has heavily resourced the implementation of its GOPR protocol and has reviewed this as well as its other published protocols to ensure effectiveness.

Across agencies a range of additional child protection policies have been developed. These include policies across health, the police and education to deal with children and families who go missing from services, such as education, and who miss health appointments. These allow for robust follow-up and intervention when required.

The Child Protection Unit of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde health board also has a range of effective policies and procedures relating to the protection and well being of children and young people eg. Domestic abuse and child protection, and A&E guidelines on child protection, which support positive intervention. A mental health protocol has been produced to ensure that there is better communication between adult and children's services and requires to be implemented.

There are clear procedures for multi-agency public protection (MAPP) and new procedures are being developed for inter-agency child protection by the West of Scotland child protection chairs consortium, led by the chair of Renfrewshire CPC. The development of the voluntary sector forum has improved strategic links with voluntary sector providers and promotes their reflection of RCPC standards and expectations.

RCPC will continue to respond to national guidance and ensure that all policies and procedures fit with national advice. Our policies and procedures support our improving practice to meet the needs of children and young people.

6.1

Strengths

- Range of policies and responsiveness to need
- Commitment of agencies
- Getting It Right For Every Child support documentation
- Case review reports
- Inter-agency group to address learning from case audits and reviews

Areas for improvement

- Continued systematic review and updating of child protection strategy, policies and procedures – and their inter-relationship and links to other areas
- Further develop RCPC web based policy framework with key links

7.3 Development of staff

Themes

- Professional competence and confidence
- Training and development

Level : Very good

Good practice highlight : RCPC multi-agency work shadowing programme

RCPC has developed and implemented a programme of work shadowing which builds on partnership commitment and relationships. Staff from across agencies have spent agreed periods shadowing staff from another agency, facilitating better understanding of roles and inter-agency culture and practice. Staff who have participated have reported that the experience has positively impacted on their working practice. As of 31 August 2010, 61 staff have been offered work shadowing placements and the initiative is being evaluated on an ongoing basis.

All agencies make a substantial commitment to training and developing their staff. Agencies' training plans link to strategic and operational plans. Processes are in place to identify training needs and agreed priorities are met through the allocation of appropriate resources.

RCPC has very effective training sub group which has developed an inter-agency training strategy and competency framework which has been implemented during 2008-09.

This group has organised innovative, highly evaluated inter-agency courses and seminars and the RCPC annual conference, now a much anticipated event in the annual child protection training calendar and attracting high quality speakers. The RCPC child protection co-ordinator chairs the West of Scotland training development subgroup. Through the voluntary sector forum an increased number of voluntary organisations have been able to access inter-agency training programmes.

RCPC also supports a programme of training by STRADA to implement the Getting out Priorities Right protocol. This programme of awareness raising events and two day training courses has been consistently very highly evaluated by staff across all disciplines. A training for trainers programme is also in operation to help cascade best practice and support local implementation. STRADA has carried out an impact analysis which has demonstrated the difference which the training has made in Renfrewshire. Between 1st August 2006 -31st March 2010 2,467 participants attended training events within the area and the interim report from STRADA on its current impact analysis exercise has concluded that " To date, there is strong evidence to suggest that the GOPR protocol has made significant difference both to practice and to children and families affected by substance misuse in Renfrewshire. "

*In 2010 **91%** of staff surveyed thought that training is effective in single and multi-agency focussed groups*

*In 2008 the result was **85%***

In early 2010, Renfrewshire CPC Training Group launched a new initiative designed to facilitate shadowing opportunities for staff. The objective is to enable practitioners and managers to better understand

"I would recommend this opportunity to anyone involved in inter-agency working - especially relating to child protection" Deputy Head Teacher who shadowed a Health Visitor

the role and responsibilities of colleagues from another agency and share experiences. The agencies who are participating in this initiative are: Renfrewshire Council's Social Work, Education & Leisure and Housing and Property Services; Strathclyde Police; Scottish Children's Reporter; Renfrewshire Community Health Partnership; Procurator Fiscal's Office. This initiative is proving very popular with staff on the waiting list and other agencies keen to become involved

"Well worthwhile. Good insight into multi-agency working" Health Visitor who visited Strathclyde Police Public Protection Unit.

There is a wide range of GIRFEC training being developed through inter-agency staff development which will engage sufficient numbers of staff. To date, 215 staff have been trained with an extensive multi-agency training programme planned for autumn 2010.

RCPC directly encourages training and development to improve competency. Through a needs analysis opportunities for work shadowing have been developed and a competency framework has been circulated. The neglect issue was identified as needing clear direction and in response two major neglect events were organised by the RCPC. These were attended by over 250 delegates. In addition, social work have trained almost all of their childcare staff on *Neglect – the impact on the Brain*. The actions of RCPC give a clear practical commitment to supporting the development of a confident and competent workforce.

The CPU training team have produced a draft training strategy based on the 4 tier triangle model from the Scottish Government. Advice and support on child protection is also provided by this team.

The Police have very effective arrangements in place for staff appraisal and training needs are individually and collectively audited. This includes those who do not work directly with children but need to know how to respond when they deal with a child who may need help. A high quality child protection training programme is in place, and specialist training on joint investigation and interviewing has been provided to all specialist PPU officers.

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue have ensured that all personnel working within Renfrewshire have engaged with child protection awareness training provided by Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee. Additionally specialist staff within their Community Safety Education department have received role specific training relating to young fire setters as well as Level 2 training via Renfrewshire Council trainers.

Housing and property services have an established training programme in place. A child protection training data-base have been established with regular awareness sessions on child protection procedures along with one to one and team meetings used to promote understanding of child protection policies and procedures.

All agencies demonstrate a significant commitment to ensuring effective arrangements for developing and supporting children in need of protection. Very effective processes are in place to identify and sustain competence and build confidence in staff within and across agencies.

Education and Leisure has maintained its commitment to training all staff in child protection who come in contact with children and young people. The relevant standard circular has been updated

and incorporated into the current training programme. Training is available through GLOW and on the wider internet. New training programmes have been put in place to develop children's understanding of risk. IT training and PSD programmes have been evolved to ensure safe internet use for every child engaging parents in internet safety. CEOP's training has been successfully delivered across establishments. Trainers have been involved in case file audits and excellent opportunities exist for staff development and training in single and multi-agency setting.

ELS have developed an innovative training for trainers programme across school clusters and involving teams of trainers from across the service who form a support cluster to raise the profile of child protection, provide advice to colleagues, contribute to self-evaluation, update child protection materials and procedures and ensure consistency.

SCRA continues to provide training programmes for the Reporter's department which includes assessment training and court skills. Training is regularly provided on practice and legislative changes and development, supported by E-learning training which has been developed and is monitored and evaluated.

The social work service has a dedicated training team producing high quality and innovative courses for staff at all levels. Specialist child protection staff complete advanced – and often accredited - training to enable them to carry out their roles, in e.g.:

- Joint Investigative Interviewing
- Age appropriate communication with children and young people
- Safe working practices with children and young people
- Residential child care
- Social work degree
- Sponsorship for staff in pursuing further education/ training.

The social work service has clear development strategies in relation to staff in training opportunities and in relation to workforce planning, shaping the workforce of the future. All staff have access to an online CPD system and complete an Individual development plan as part of this process. An E-Learning module for all staff on child protection issues has now been developed. Opportunities are circulated to staff each month via a Training Flyer and regular newsletter. In addition almost all front line staff have undertaken development opportunities in recording and risk assessment.

Voluntary organisations such as Barnardos and Children 1st have mandatory child protection training programmes for staff, and also support staff through the production of activities and materials such as the 'Safeguarding leaflet' and 'blue credit card' and the e-learning pack.

In NHS Greater Glasgow and health there is a clear commitment to further develop their comprehensive training programme to encompass general child protection training and specific training relating to clinical supervision. Extensive and varied opportunities exist for all staff to undertake training and development in all areas of child protection. Training needs analysis and reviews contribute to the staff development that is provided.

Child protection training and staff development continues to be high priority for staff across all services and this is reflected in the commitment of staff to develop and extend the training resource to ensure that we have a sustainable approach. Our training impacts on the skills of staff which improves service delivery and outcomes for children and young people.

7.3

Strengths

- Agency Training Plans
- RCPC training plans
- Work shadowing programme
- RCPC Training Strategy and competency framework
- Inter-agency training evaluations
- RCPC conference programmes and evaluations
- Agency induction records from all agencies
- Managing team and individual performance development (MTIPD)
- Agency induction records
- Feedback from staff

Areas for improvement

- Continue to build on range of appropriate development opportunities including short term secondment/shadowing to increase agencies' mutual understanding of their roles
- Establish a more effective and systematic approach to evaluating staff competence and the impact of training on practice and outcomes for children and young people

9.4 Leadership of improvement and change

Themes

- Support and challenge
- Creativity, innovation and step change
- Continuous improvement

Level : Very good

Good practice highlight : RCSP Achieving Step Change project

Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership has embarked on an ambitious programme of change over 3 years which will result in an outcomes focussed redesign of children's services. This approach will support earlier intervention, improved parenting and more effective engagement with a range of stakeholders and will result in improved outcomes for all children in

RCPC drives change and improvement through a range of very effective planning and self evaluation and communication strategies. Chief officers are strongly committed to taking these forward and they direct a number of very effective approaches to ensuring high levels of awareness; expectations and innovation. The RCPC regularly monitors progress against the annual RCPC improvement plan adjusting actions where needed. Integral to the structured process of self-evaluation is the undertaking of multi-agency case file audits and where necessary significant case reviews and learning from these. The case file audit process successfully involves staff from all agencies trained in audit, the HMIE model and all are aware of the expectations of standards. This robust process challenges and engages staff as well as up-skilling them, and produces intelligence that leads to development and improvement. Through conferences, training and publications the RCPC effectively promotes best practice across all services and agencies. Neglect as an issue emerged from a significant case review and this led to inter-agency workshops to establish areas for improvement in screening, sharing information and identifying good practice. From this, a neglect screening exercise was directed by the chair of the RCPC to collate and respond to agency concerns about children in this context. Working groups of the RCPC have supported the committee in developing and leading innovative approaches to protecting children.

*In 2010 **93%** of staff surveyed thought that there was a strong commitment to child protection and managers and leaders give child protection a high profile*

*In 2008 the result was **79%***

Conferences, workshops and exchanges have been successfully promoted in the media as well as engaging staff in the review of practice and sharing ideas. These has been enthusiastically evaluated and effectively used to profile the position and expectations of the RCPC. Senior managers in all agencies have to review and develop, through significant engagement of their teams especially practitioners. Such is the high quality of leadership that agencies now have all given child protection a very high profile and commitment, resulting in closer monitoring and support for children.

The large scale self-evaluation exercises that support the inspection process have involved very many staff, usefully and purposefully, improving their ability to assess both risk and practice to support protection.

Leadership of change is a high priority for chief officers and senior managers. In conjunction with this, the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership (RCSP) is working with the internationally renowned Social Research Unit to deliver on our "Achieving Step Change for Children's Services" project. Outcomes for this project will include prioritisation of the most vulnerable young people and a transformation of how we deliver outcomes for those most in need, by leading and developing children's services to achieve the best outcomes for our children and families. This project also has a focus on community engagement, parenting, early intervention and prevention. RCPC is delivering on all of the key national cross cutting policy agendas for children such as *Getting it Right for Every Child; the Early Years Framework and Equally Well*.

In Renfrewshire there is a thorough understanding of what constitutes best practice in child protection services and this informs multi-agency and single agency training programmes. Individual agencies monitor their own child protection services, including the requirements from RCPC Plans and reviews, and the impact of these through training and performance management systems.

The robust case file audit process and extensive self-evaluation exercise have identified training issues, promoted an awareness of the HMIE quality assurance model, and focused review on impact and outcome. As a result, specific recommendations are made, shared and acted upon. Together with the action points from the last inspection and the national agenda of 7 key areas for focus, the CPC has a clear agenda for review and action. This can be evidenced in the agenda of the committee across the year. Through Viewpoint, survey monkey and health/education questionnaires; there is a flow of information from young people. The innovative research on getting the views of children involved in the child protection process, has attracted national interest and demonstrates an attitude that embraces creative development. Staff at all levels are aware of the expectations of their agency and the RCPC through very good communications and are encouraged to be part of the development agenda. The view from staff is that this improves their practice in child protection and generates a more informed support input.

An effective risk management framework has been developed which is applied across services to ensure change and innovation is managed within a context of risk assessment at all times, and that appropriate support is matched to identified need. Through the robust self evaluation programmes there is a clear understanding of key strategic priorities and these are well communicated to staff through the integrated children's services plan and child protection business plan.

There is an explicit and shared set of high expectations of services to protect children. Staff are valued at all levels, ensuring that they are integral to all processes in relation to quality assurance and their views valued. There has been a shift away from 'process' as the starting point, to one where the impact on children is the key. In agencies the on-going review of practice and of data analysis impacts upon provision of services which respond to issues of concern and also increasingly on prevention. Significant work is undertaken by practitioners in improving their own service as well as high quality inter-agency work. The role of the independent chair has been crucial in effecting this agenda of change, setting expectations and through regular informal meetings with staff. Elected members contributed significantly by endorsing child protection through structures such as community planning, in which CP is integral; through policy development such as corporate parenting and support for LAC, and in embedding the promotion of child welfare in the council plan. Through quality communications, the shared vision has been effectively transmitted to all involved including partners and the wider community, to the benefit of children in Renfrewshire.

9.4

Strengths

- Achieving Step Change project
- Approaches to self evaluation
- Inter-agency training programme including GOPR training for trainers programme
- Multi-agency case file audit
- Self evaluation reference group (SERG)
- Commitment of RCPC chief officer's group
- Approaches to self evaluation
- Risk management framework

Areas for improvement

- Sustain progress in an increasingly challenging environment

Child Protection Inspection 2010 Survey Monkey Results Summary

Young Persons Responses			
2008 Indicator	2010 Indicator	2008 % Av Responses	2010 % Av Responses
1.1	2.1	85%	94%
1.2	2.2	87%	91%
1.3	2.3	80%	91%
1.4	2.4	84%	90%
3.1	5.1	75%	90%

Public / Staff Questionnaire			
2008 Indicator	2010 Indicator	2008 % Av Responses	2010 % Av Responses
1.1	2.1	83%	91%
1.2	2.2	65%	78%
1.3	2.3	81%	90%
1.4	2.4	66%	80%
2.1	4.1	58%	76%
3.1	5.1	83%	93%
3.2	5.2	67%	89%
3.3	5.3	69%	81%
4.2	6.2	78%	92%
4.3	6.3	43%	78%
4.5	7.3	85%	91%
5.1	9.1	79%	93%
5.2	9.2	80%	90%



How well do we protect children and meet their needs?

RCPC multi-agency self evaluation 2010

Thanks to the many staff and stakeholders who contributed to this self evaluation

For further information contact:

RCPC lead officer

0141 842 5571