

2 How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

Key Area 2: Impact on children and families in need of protection

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

Themes

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

Overall Evaluation (Brief Summary) Multi-agency partners are making **good** progress to effectively ensure that the short term needs of children affected by neglect and abuse are met and that those children receive the protection they require. Where there is need for longer term services child protection plans are subject to regular review to make sure that plans are being fulfilled and continue to meet and identified need.

Evaluation of current service and practice How good are we now?

MEETING NEEDS

Care Planning

- The movement of children whilst in foster care is kept to a minimum through individual care planning to meet the needs of accommodated children and young and the continued support of East Ayrshire Council foster carers. This approach is also followed when external agency/placements are used and this is backed up by the professional management overview and contract monitoring arrangements in place. The establishment of an enhanced permanency planning approach to children's care planning in the form of regular focused permanency workshops for staff, training on new legislation and increased activity in Adoption and Permanency panel meetings has resulted in a more rapid throughput of future plans for accommodated children and young people
- The establishment of the initial response teams has significantly impacted on the immediate assessment of need for all children and young people who are referred to social work. The eligibility criteria ensures that the most vulnerable children receive the help they need. The initial response team intervene, assess and plan for all children referred to them, there are no children awaiting assessments. The establishment of the initial response teams has significantly impacted on the immediate assessment of need for all children and young people who are referred to social work
- All children that are on the Child Protection Register have an individual child protection plan which details specific actions which need to be taken to meet the needs of individual children, even when there are large sibling groups. The plans clarify who is responsible for carrying out a piece of work and their responsibility in terms of multi-agency working. All children on the CP Register have an allocated Social Worker and they are fully aware of whom this individual is and that they can contact them for any support that they require.
- There is proactive approach to ensure that those children who are placed on the Child Protection Register have their care plans reviewed every three months and Core Groups are held every four weeks to monitor and supervise the implementation of plans for children and young people.
- The level of ongoing multi-agency intervention for children deregistered from the child protection register is agreed at the review conference where the decision to deregister is made. A multi-agency Deregistration Plan is agreed which incorporates a reduction in supports commensurate with the reduction in risk and vulnerability. Where there is a need for continued service this is provided by the most appropriate agency.
 - To support recovery for children and young people who have experienced neglect or abuse, at the point of recruitment, robust questions are asked of staff to identify their expertise in working with such issues. A Social Worker with specific skills in play therapy, family therapy and counselling is employed to assist young people and children to address damage that may have been done to them as a result of their experiences.
 - Intensive support services are provided by the Local Authority funded Community Youth support team to work directly with children and young people. This service is a needs led service and will be provided in the short or long term. Their needs have been identified working in partnership with them and their families and are based on sound assessments provided by front line workers.
 - Social Work services works closely with the CAMHS team to ensure that those children that need a service from them receive it quickly.

- The CAST team provide a specialist service to support those children with Learning Disabilities and work within multi agency child protection framework when there are issues of concern.
- Home Care Service for children and families remit is to provide support directly to families within their homes, including out side of office hours, to work alongside parents to help develop parenting skills and make sure that children are being adequately cared for. Home care staff have been trained in child protection, the Getting Our Priorities Right protocols and in working with challenging families. Children and families benefit from the direct work that home care does to support their parents in providing good enough parenting, and also by the relationships that they build with individual worker.
- Close working relationships between Housing and Social work to ensure that the accommodation needs of children and young people are met.
- **Learning Partnership Core Support Teams** provide invaluable support for the most vulnerable and at risk children and young people. (Refer to Q12 2.2)
- **Health Promoting Status** in schools and early education centres ensures an holistic approach to health and well-being which addresses social, physical, emotional and mental health of all children and young people.
- **Domestic Abuse- Women's aid** annual training plan is accessible to all agencies and has been evaluated positively. There are very close working relationships between women's aid and key services, the use of children's workers attached to Women's Aid has assisted children and young people to understand and recover from their experiences of domestic abuse.
- Where appropriate alarms will be provided for adults who are at risk of domestic abuse. The referral is made by Women's Aid or the Police Domestic Abuse Unit. If the alarm is set off, the call goes directly to the Risk Management Centre with a direct 999 call from there. There is no dialogue between the operator at the RMC and the line remains open for 20 minutes. Any conversations can be heard and recorded for police purposes. When the police arrive at the victim's home, they call into the RMC who will then shut off the call. In 6 weeks from 01.08.09 8 referrals were made for alarms. The Outcome being women who suffer domestic abuse will feel safer in their own homes and Perpetrators will be detained quickly, it will also help in the identification of those perpetrators who break bail conditions by visiting the victims. We don't have any feedback yet from the women who have had the alarms installed, and this will be covered in the 8 week review period.
- **Foster care** the movement of children whilst in foster care is kept to an absolute minimum through individual care planning to meet the needs of accommodated children and young people and the continued support of East Ayrshire Council foster carers. This approach is also followed when external agency/placements are used and this is backed up by the professional management overview and contract monitoring arrangements in place. The establishment of an enhanced permanency planning approach to children's care planning in the form of regular focused permanency workshops for staff, training on new legislation and increased activity in Adoption and Permanency Panel meetings has resulted in a more rapid throughput of future plans for accommodated children and young people.

SCRA monitors the outcomes of activities for children and families, for example the % of hearings scheduled to take place within 20 and 30 days. To meet the needs of the child where appropriate the Reporter will interview of children and families, contact with children pre-children's hearing and pre-court hearing and assess the child's views from reports submitted.

Police

- **Adherence to referral process** – The procedures followed are in accordance with the Force Standard Operating Procedure which details the roles & responsibilities of Operational and Family Protection Unit officers.
- **Child centred investigations** – The welfare of the child is paramount and must be considered at all times.
- **Monitoring of sex offenders** – In accordance with the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and Management of Offenders Act 2005 which provides MAPPA requirements.
- **Priority reporting of cases to PF** – In accordance with a Force Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to report all cases to the PF within 28 days.
- **Reporting of cases to SCRA - KPI:** All relevant reports to be submitted to the Area Reporter's office within 7 days.
- **Bail conditions** – to seek appropriate bail conditions when submitting a report to the PF
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REDUCING THE LONGER TERM EFFECTS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- “extract from 2008 report” require social work progress update A lack of sustainable funding had affected the continuity of some effective early intervention and specialist services.
- “extract from 2008 report” require social work progress update - respite services for children with disabilities and family group conferencing.
- “extract from 2008 report” require social work progress update - Children affected by parental substance misuse had access to supportive advocacy services and play therapy.
- **Children who had suffered trauma, including sexual abuse** are helped to recover from the effects of trauma and abuse by services specific to individual need. Locality services have a social worker who is a qualified and accredited family therapist, she has a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills in working with young people who have been adversely affected by life events. Intensive therapies have been commissioned from partner providers e.g., Foster Care Associates who have psychotherapist and trained counsellors, art therapists have been commissioned where there is a need to work with very young children to aid their recovery from trauma.
- “extract from 2008 report” require health progress update - There were long waiting lists for treatment by CAMHS although referrals were starting to be prioritised. A lack of sustainable funding had affected the continuity of some effective early intervention and specialist services. Further detail required...Ayrshire and Arran NHS provide services to support children and young people in meeting short and long term needs. These include emotional support and health care provision from health visiting and school nursing, specialist support from paediatricians/community paediatric nursing services and CAMHS. There is evidence of appropriate referral to CAMHS, LAAC and ongoing support from school nursing in some cases. CAMHS and LAAC are currently looking at care pathways to better support short and longer term emotional needs of children and young people. **Education comment – is this the case?** *Delays in addressing Mental Health through the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) are an added pressure on the specialist support that is often necessary in some cases.*
- General Practitioner (GP) and access to immunisation programmes have a protocol in place to promote the prevention of children being de-registered from GP lists. In circumstances where there are challenges in providing children with the services of a GP Health visitors ensure or provide the care necessary e.g. prescriptions and immunisations
- **Require update** - In addition parents received help to optimise their ability to care and protect their children from adult mental health services, addiction services and access to parenting programmes.
- **Require update** - Children benefit from the support that is directed to their parents from a number of agencies in terms of increasing parenting capacity and from the focus that is placed on making an ongoing assessment about how well the child’s needs are being met by their care givers. Do we know how many families arising from CP have received parenting supports if so, what type of programmes i.e. Solihull, Mellow Parenting etc.
- **Require housing update** - CLHASP arrangements ???
- **Require housing update** - Community Wardens work closely with Leisure Services to deliver diversionary activities.
- Educational Services staff spend significant time and resources helping to meet the needs of children, young people and their families affected by child protection issues but the same children often reappear on the Child Protection Register. More understanding of the decision making processes within Social Services related to placing children on the Protection Register would be of benefit to Education staff.
- Schools are often proactive in taking children and young people to hospital A & E or surgery when they exhibit stress or suicidal tendencies arising from family tensions or breakdown, exam pressure, relationship upsets etc. The self harm charity, Penumbra, provides very effective support and has been used by a number of secondary schools.
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How do we know? What key outcomes have we achieved? Impact and benefits
Require outcomes from all agencies
Evidence - Please include evidence of policies, procedures, protocols, minutes of meetings, publicity material, reports, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case file audit reports ▪ Specific example of report compiles for social worker trained in family therapy ▪ CLHASP protocols ▪ Community Warden SOPS ▪ Presentation and training materials. ▪ Case conferences and support systems ▪ Support for children, young people and families from Learning Partnership core support teams??? <p>Require more evidence</p>
Examples of Good Practice
<p>Children and Adult Support Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Has supported 3 young people who were leaving residential school and foster care to move back to their local area into individual tenancies within a local housing development. The 3 young people who have a variety of additional support needs now live in shared terraced amenity housing and hope to access local further education, social and lifestyle opportunities. Initially each young person will have intensive supports with the view to reducing this as appropriate and increasing the use of e-care technology to support each young person.</i> ▪ <i>Transition planning took a number of years and involved each young person at the heart of their person centre plan. Negotiations took place with the housing department at the early planning stage in terms of meeting the needs of these future tenants.</i> ▪ <i>The CAST Team routinely involves children, young people and their parents in the recruitment of staff. This has been done using information evenings prior to interviews where the children, young people and their families assess and score each candidate. Parent and carers have also been involved as members of the interview panel and have contributed to questions and scoring criteria in terms of the recruitment process.</i> <p>HOUSING expand?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Installation of Domestic Alarms, monitored by Risk Management Staff where there is a threat of domestic violence. ▪ Admission Vouchers to local Sports Centre issued to children of families presenting as homeless. <p>POLICE expand?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Referral process monitored by supervisors. All investigations place the child first. Police presence within the community 24/7. Continuous monitoring of sex offenders within the community. Utilisation of VISOR ▪ Reports to PF and SCRA are prioritised. Bail conditions sought where appropriate.
How Good Can We Be? Areas for Improvement
Action points identified following self-evaluation:
<p>Social Work reward?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is an identified need to improve and expand services that we are able to provide for those young people between the ages of 16 and 18. ▪ There is a lack of appropriate housing for those young people who leave care at 16 and wish to live in the community.

- Once children have been made secure in response to concerns of significant harm, the level of focus in terms of planning and contact with those children and young people needs to remain as robust as it was at the beginning of our involvement.
- In all areas we need to better use theory and evidence based research to inform our long term planning for the children and young people that continue to be involved in services.

HOUSING reword?

- Currently working towards developing suitable accommodation provision for formerly looked after and accommodated children
- More representation at Children's Panel

SCRA Corporate improvement activity currently planned or underway reword?

- Preventing Offending by Young People Project within Service Delivery Programme.
- Partnership Working Project within Modernisation Programme.
- Review of Hearings Management – working with partners to look at development of an outcome focused set of standards for hearings management.

HEALTH

- Improve waiting times for CAMHS
- Improve services for children recovering from sexual abuse
- Continue approaches to develop resilience in young people experiencing difficult family circumstances.
- Improve communication with CAMHS
- Education personnel would benefit from greater awareness of the value and the use of Life Story Books when supporting children and young people in an early years or school setting.