



## **EAST AYRSHIRE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE: 19 MAY 2009**

### **PRACTITIONERS SUB GROUP REPORT**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the work of the Practitioners Sub Group and forum.

#### **2. PROGRESS OF PRACTITIONERS SUB GROUP**

- 2.1 The Practitioners Sub Group has met on two occasions since the last Child Protection Committee.
- 2.2 It was agreed to revisit the aims, functions and membership of this sub group.

##### **Aims**

To inform the development of policy and good practice and effective two way communication between practitioners and the Child Protection Committee.

##### **Functions**

- Arrange and support the practitioner's forum;
  - Disseminate inter-agency policies and procedures to operational staff from all relevant areas;
  - Comment on child protection policies and procedures as requested by the Child Protection Committee;
  - Identify practice and policy issues in relation to child protection and inform the Child Protection Committee of these;
  - Provide updates to the Child Protection Committee on a quarterly basis.
- 2.3 The group has provided comments on the draft Parent/Carer and Child Evaluation Forms developed by the Performance and Audit Sub Group and are currently considering the Vulnerable Young Person Protocol.
- 2.4 The group have been considering how to increase practitioners awareness of the Child Protection Committee and associated developments. In addition to the work of the practitioners forum, the sub group have proposed to develop a Child Protection Committee newsletter. The newsletter will be issued initially twice a year and will be made available to practitioners in all agencies primarily by email, with some printed copies available for placing on notice boards and in offices. The first issue of the newsletter will introduce the Child Protection Committee and the current work of the sub groups, highlighting the

CPC WebPages and training calendar. Future issues will contain key child protection issues and developments.

### 3. PRACTITIONERS FORUM

#### 3.1 East Ayrshire Early Information and Pre Referral Group

The practitioner's forum met on 4 March 2009. A presentation was provided by Superintendent Dougie Robertson, Strathclyde Police on the East Ayrshire Early Information and Pre Referral Group. Key issues raised by practitioners in relation to this topic were:-

Key theme	Outcome
Lack of information provided to those requested for information (issue within schools in particular).	Issue raised with School representative who advised that they have revised processes to improve information sharing in a secure way.
Lack of information in relation to the outcome (issue within schools in particular).	Issue raised with School representative who advised that they have revised processes to improve information sharing in a secure way.
Lack of clear agreed guidance in relation to the operation of the group	Consideration of the development of CPC guidance note in relation to the operation of the Pre referral group.
Tight timescale for provision of information to the group and large administrative commitment.	Practitioners acknowledged that the group involves high volume of work in a tight timescale. The Pre Referral Group has the benefit of providing a clearer picture of the child and their circumstances. Practitioners stated that they would feel vulnerable if the group stopped.

#### 3.2 Social Work Eligibility Criteria

The Practitioners had a presentation by Gill Williams, Team Manager Children and Families, Social Services on Social Work Eligibility Criteria. The Practitioners found this very helpful in understanding the response to referrals. The group discussed the priority criteria and the necessity of continued use of professional judgement. The group requested feedback in relation to the Vulnerable Young Persons Guidance and this will be discussed at the next forum meeting.

#### 3.3 Future Practitioners Forums

Future Practitioners forums will:-

- Provide comment on policies and practice;
- Ensure two-way communication with the Child Protection Committee;
- Require acknowledgement from Managers and Senior Managers of the importance of Forum and ensure staff have time to attend;
- Develop practitioners understanding of representation on and the work of the Child Protection Committee. (CPC Chair attending forum on 2 September 2009).

The next practitioners forum will take place on Wednesday 3 June 2009 in Shortlees Community Centre. The current members will be joined by some new members as the Practitioners Sub Group have been reviewing the membership of the forum.

The June forum will be looking at the Joint Area Review Haringey Children's Services Authority Area. Views of the forum will also be sought in relation to the draft Child Protection Evaluation forms for Children and Parent/Carers.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 The Child Protection Committee is asked to:-

- i. note the work of the Practitioners Sub Group;
- ii. agree to the development of a Child Protection Committee Newsletter.
- iii. agree to the development of a guidance note for East Ayrshire Early Information and Pre Referral Group

**Susan Taylor**  
**Chair of Child Protection Committee**  
**7 May 2009**

**Report Prepared by: Diane Burns, Child Protection Co-ordinator**