

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE : 20 MARCH 2007

A GUIDE TO EVALUATING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE USING QUALITY INDICATORS

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise elected Members of the approaches to evaluating services for children and young people presently in place and planned for the future in East Ayrshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The consultation paper issued by HM Inspector of Education *A Common Approach to Inspecting Services for Children and Young People*, published in November 2005, set out proposals for developing and implementing an outcome-focused, intelligence-led and proportionate approach to the inspection of services for children and young people. It included a development and implementation timetable leading to the introduction of a coherent system of inspection by the end of 2008. That timetable gave a commitment to publish generic indicators for self-evaluation and inspection of services for children and young people.
- 2.2 The guide is the outcome of an extended process of discussion and consultation with providers of services for children and young people and with those inspectorates and quality assurance organisations that are involved in the evaluation of aspects of services for children and young people.
- 2.3 The approach to evaluation taken in the guide underlines the complementary roles of self-evaluation and inspection in quality improvement. At the heart of the guide is a set of generic quality indicators that can be drawn on for both self-evaluation and inspection. The indicators are designed to help providers of services to identify the strengths in their provision and to identify where further development or improvement is required.
- 2.4 The generic quality indicators have been developed to help individual organisations and partners in-service provision answer six high-level questions:
- *What key outcomes have we achieved?*
 - *How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?*
 - *How good is our delivery of services for children and young people?*
 - *How good is our management?*
 - *How good is our leadership?*
 - *What is our capacity for improvement?*

3. EXISTING PROVISION

- 3.1** A number of evaluation exercises have already been carried out using the draft framework available since November 2005. The Children's Service Plan Steering Group have taken a broad view of all of the key areas within the framework and using professional judgements graded overall performance against the six-point evaluation scale. Thereafter the group identified two key areas, namely impact on children and young people and leadership to take a closer look at provision. The outcome of these evaluations has informed the future strategy and action of the group.
- 3.2** Similar exercises have been carried out involving the Children's Services Co-ordinators and Quality Improvement Officers linked to the Learning Partnerships. These discussions contribute to the continuous professional development of the officers involved and ensure a shared understanding of the illustrations for each quality indicator within the framework. This will ensure a co-ordinated and integrated approach to evaluating services for children and young people.

4. FUTURE PROVISION

- 4.1** A roll out of "taking a broad view" and "taking a closer look at" key indicators will be undertaken within each Learning Partnership prior to any inspection. This will be facilitated by the Children's Services Co-ordinators and Quality Improvement Officers via the evaluation subgroups with representation from all the partners.
- 4.2** Following the high level evaluation carried out by the Children's Service Plan Steering Group it was agreed that more operational practitioners groups would, again, take a closer look at identified quality indicators thus providing a strongly evidence-based self-evaluation of provision.
- 4.3** The various approaches described in 4.1. and 4.2. above will be overseen by the Learning Partnership Steering Group, and self evaluation and preparation for inspection will be a standing agenda item on both the Learning Partnership Steering Group and the Children's Service Plan Multidisciplinary Steering Group.

5. COMMUNITY PLAN

- 5.1** The approaches to self-evaluation and preparation for inspection are consistent with the underlying principles of community planning and best value.

6. FINANCIAL / POLICY / LEGAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** None

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Elected Members are invited to:

- i) approve the approaches to evaluation of services for children and young people
- ii) invite the Executive Director to report on progress in due course.
- iii) note that the same report is also being presented to Social Work Committee.
- iv) otherwise note the contents of this report.

Graham Short
Executive Director (Educational and Social Services)

KMcK/MR
27 February 2007

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

Members wishing further information should contact Kenneth McKinlay, Principal Quality Improvement, Tel: (01563) 555650

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