

Notice of Meeting and Agenda

Education and Children's Services Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 19 January 2023	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

MARK CONAGHAN
Head of Corporate Governance

Membership

Councillor Emma Rodden (Convener): Councillor Jim Paterson (Depute Convener):

Ms Mary Jane Bird: Mr Jack Nellaney: Mr Ravinder Singh: Councillor Jennifer Adam: Councillor Fiona Airlie-Nicolson: Provost Lorraine Cameron: Councillor Carolann Davidson: Councillor Audrey Doig: Councillor Edward Grady: Councillor Gillian Graham: Councillor John Gray: Councillor Anne Hannigan: Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes: Councillor Robert Innes: Councillor David McGonigle: Councillor Iain McMillan: Councillor Will Mylet: Councillor Ben Smith:

Hybrid Meeting

Please note that this meeting is scheduled to be held in the Council Chambers. However, it is a hybrid meeting and arrangements have been made for members to join the meeting remotely should they wish.

Webcasting of Meeting

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<https://renfrewshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Members of the Press and Public

Members of the press and public wishing to attend the meeting should report to the customer service centre where they will be met and directed to the meeting.

Further Information

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

A copy of the agenda and reports for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the Customer Service Centre, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley and online at <http://renfrewshire.cmis.uk.com/renfrewshire/CouncilandBoards.aspx>
For further information, please either email democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk or telephone 07483410945.

Apologies

Apologies from members.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare an interest in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest.

- | | | |
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| | Joint report by the Directors of Children's Services and Finance & Resources. | |
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Report by the Director of Children's Services.



To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 19 January 2023

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources and Director of Children's Services

Heading: Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring as at 11 November 2022

1. Summary of Financial Position

- 1.1. The projected Revenue outturn at 31 March 2023 for Children's Services is an overspend of £5.269m (2.3%) against the revised budget for the year.
- 1.2. The projected Capital outturn at 31 March 2023 for Children's Services is an underspend of £0.100m (0.6%).
- 1.3. This is summarised over the relevant service in the table below and further analysis is provided in the Appendices.

Division	Revised Annual Budget £m	Projected Outturn £m	Budget Variance £m	Budget Variance %
Children's Services	£225.765	£231.034	(£5.269m)	(2.3%)

Division	Revised Annual Budget £m	Projected Outturn £m	Budget Variance £m	Budget Variance %
Children's Services	£5.753	£5.653	£0.100	1.7%

2. Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- 2.1. Note the projected Revenue outturn position for Children's Services detailed in Table 1 above, and further note that the forecast position is based on best

estimates and confirmed government support at this point in time; forecasts are likely to be subject to fluctuation as the year progresses;

- 2.2. Note projected Capital outturn position for Children's Services detailed in Table 2 above; and
- 2.3. Note the budget adjustments detailed in sections 4 and 6.

3. Children's Services Revenue

- 3.1. The Revenue Budget Monitoring report at Appendix 1 identifies a projected annual overspend of £5.269m (2.3% of total budget). Detailed service division reports can be found in Appendix 2, along with an explanation of each significant projected variance.
- 3.2. The projected outturn is based on available information and assumptions made by service budget holders in November 2022. These assumptions will be refined during the year as more information becomes available.
- 3.3. The main reasons for the projected outturn position are indicated below the table showing the objective analysis (which division is spending the budget).
- 3.4. A £4.158m overspend is anticipated within Children & Families related mainly to external residential accommodation placements. During the second year of the pandemic the service required to place a number of children and young people in external residential accommodation. These placements have resulted in overspend due to the cost of the specialised services required to meet the complex needs of the children and young people who have been accommodated.
- 3.5. All external placements are held under continual review by the service to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the individual children and young people. Options to mitigate cost pressure are examined on an ongoing basis.
- 3.6. The impact of rising energy costs across the various divisions of service is contributing a further £1.502m to the full-year projected overspend. This service is responsible for around 75% of the Council's annual electricity and gas costs.

4. Revenue Budget Adjustments

- 4.1. Members are requested to note from Appendix 1 that budget adjustments totalling £0.202m have been processed since the last report. These relate mainly to an adjustment to remove rates budgets from Early Learning & Childcare Centres (£0.177m) and transfers to other services for property adaptations (£0.025m)

5. Children's Services Capital

- 5.1. The Capital Investment Programme 2022/23 to 2026/27 was approved by the Council on 3 March 2022.
- 5.2. The Capital Monitoring report at Appendix 3 indicates changes totalling £9.735m in the approved capital programme for Education and Children's

Services since the previous Policy Board, bringing the total changes to date to a net of £7.606m. This relates to budget carried forward into 2023/24 from 2022/23 in relation to the new Paisley Grammar Campus.

- 5.3. Further detail, including reasons for significant variances, can be found at Appendix 3.

6. Capital Budget Adjustments

- 6.1. Since the last report, budget changes totalling £9.735m have arisen which reflect the following:

Budget carried forward to 2023/24 from 2022/23 (9.735m)

- Paisley Grammar New Campus (£9.735m) to reflect the expected project timescales.

Implications of this report

1. Financial

The projected budget outturn position for Children's Services' Revenue budget is an overspend of £5.269m. Income and expenditure will continue to be monitored closely for the rest of the financial year and, where necessary, steps will be taken to mitigate any overspend including applying flexibility within specific grant funding as permitted by the Scottish Government.

The projected outturn position for Children's Services' Capital budget is an underspend of £0.100m. The Capital programme will continue to be monitored closely for the rest of the financial year.

Any changes to current projections in either Revenue or Capital budgets will be reported to the board as early as possible, along with an explanation for the movement.

2. HR and Organisational Development

None directly arising from this report.

3. Community/Council Planning

None directly arising from this report.

4. Legal

None directly arising from this report.

5. Property/Assets

None directly arising from this report.

6. Information Technology

None directly arising from this report.

7. Equality and Human Rights

The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. Health and Safety

None directly arising from this report.

9. Procurement

None directly arising from this report.

10. Risk

The potential risk that the Council will overspend its approved budgets for the year will be managed at a Council-wide level by the Chief Executive and Directors.

11. Privacy Impact

None directly arising from this report.

12. CoSLA Policy Position

n/a

13. Climate Risk

None directly arising from this report.

List of Background Papers: None

Authors: Richard Conway, Extension 0879
Kevin Festorazzi, Extension 4885

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2022/23
1 April 2022 to 11 November 2022

POLICY BOARD : EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Subjective Summary	Approved Annual Budget at Period 6	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget at Period 8	Projected Outturn	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable		Previous Projected Outturn Variance	Movement
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%	£000	£000
Employees	155,932	5,696	161,628	159,459	2,169	1.3%	735	1,434
Premises Related	9,221	(201)	9,020	10,832	(1,812)	(20.1%)	(1,642)	(170)
Transport Related	4,598	1	4,599	5,780	(1,181)	(25.7%)	(898)	(283)
Supplies and Services	35,031	(4,906)	30,125	29,420	705	2.3%	779	(74)
Third Party Payments	13,199	5	13,204	17,785	(4,581)	(34.7%)	(4,676)	95
Transfer Payments	14,394	(6)	14,388	15,591	(1,203)	(8.4%)	(256)	(947)
Support Services	46	22	68	61	7	10.3%	7	(0)
Depreciation and Impairment Losses	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0
GROSS EXPENDITURE	232,421	611	233,032	238,928	(5,896)	(2.5%)	(5,951)	55
Income	(6,454)	(813)	(7,267)	(7,894)	627	8.6%	517	110
NET EXPENDITURE	225,967	(202)	225,765	231,034	(5,269)	(2.3%)	(5,434)	165

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2022/23
1 April 2022 to 11 November 2022

POLICY BOARD : EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Objective Summary	Approved Annual Budget at Period 6	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget at Period 8	Projected Outturn	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable		Previous Projected Outturn Variance	Movement
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%	£000	£000
Directorate	486	(14)	472	442	30	6.4%	0	30
Early learning and childcare	34,056	(194)	33,862	32,476	1,386	4.1%	1,682	(296)
Primary	56,779	985	57,764	58,476	(712)	(1.2%)	(1,113)	401
Secondary	78,501	611	79,112	80,072	(960)	(1.2%)	(735)	(225)
ASN (Special) Schools	6,397	31	6,428	6,512	(84)	(1.3%)	(87)	3
Additional support for learning (ASL)	15,441	146	15,587	16,319	(732)	(4.7%)	(688)	(44)
Psychological services	744	0	744	764	(20)	(2.7%)	(39)	19
Education development	1,790	(20)	1,770	1,770	0	0.0%	0	0
Attainment Challenge	635	(1,366)	(731)	(731)	0	0.0%	0	0
Facilities management	598	(21)	577	596	(19)	(3.3%)	0	(19)
Children & Families	30,540	(360)	30,180	34,338	(4,158)	(13.8%)	(4,454)	296
NET EXPENDITURE	225,967	(202)	225,765	231,034	(5,269)	(2.3%)	(5,434)	165

Objective Heading	Key Reasons for Projected Variance
Directorate	An underspend in Employee Costs is projected, mainly in relation to indirect employee costs.
Early Learning and Childcare	An underspend in Employee Costs is projected due to vacancies within the authority's Early Learning & Childcare Centres. This underspend is offset by a projected overspend in Transfer Payments in relation to an increase in the rate paid to funded providers (private and voluntary sector nurseries and childminders), and a projected overspend in Premises Costs resulting from the increase in energy costs.
Primary Schools	Overspends in Premises Costs and Transport Costs are projected. The overspend in Premises Costs is due an expected increase in energy and refuse collection costs. The overspend in Transport is due to an expected increase in the cost of the mainstream school transport contract.
Secondary Schools	Overspends in Premises Costs and Transport Costs are projected. The overspend in Premises Costs is due an expected increase in energy and refuse collection costs. The overspend in Transport is due to an expected increase in the cost of the mainstream school transport contract.
ASN Schools	An overspend in Premises Costs is projected. This is due to the increase in energy costs.
Additional Support for Learning	An overspend in Transport Costs is projected. This is due to increases in the cost of transport contracts for pupils with additional support needs.
Psychological Services	An overspend in Employee Costs is projected.
Education Development	No significant projected year end variances to report.
Facilities Management	An overspend in employee Costs is projected, arising the service's share of the council-wide occupational health contract.
Children & Families	An overspend in Transfer Payments is projected, mainly in relation to external residential accommodation placements, where the number of complex, expensive packages has increased significantly. All external placements are held under continual review by the service, with options to mitigate cost pressure being examined on an ongoing basis. The full-year projected (adverse) variance has improved since the previous position due mainly to staff vacancies within Children's Residential Accommodation and to an increase in the number of placements for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (for which Home Office funding is provided).

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY - NON-HOUSING SERVICES
1st April to 11th November 2022
POLICY BOARD: EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Project Title	Prior Years Expenditure to 31/03/2022 £000	Current Year 2022-23						Full Programme - All years			
		Approved Budget 2022-23 £000	Budget Adjustments in 2022-23 £000	Revised Budget 2022-23 £000	Projected Outturn 2022-23 £000	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable		Total Approved Budget to 31-Mar-27 £000	Projected Outturn to 31-Mar-27 £000	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable	
EDUCATION & CHILDREN SERVICES											
Primary Schools Estate Programme(SEMP)	42,665	0	233	233	133	100	43%	42,898	42,798	100	0%
Paisley Grammar New Campus	1,110	10,950	(9,950)	1,000	1,000	0	0%	51,250	51,250	0	0%
Primary Schools Estate Programme(SEMP 2020)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	10,000	10,000	0	0%
Other Schools Investment Programmes	22,057	2,009	2,111	4,120	4,120	0	0%	26,231	26,231	0	0%
Technology Replacement Strategy ICT	0	400	0	400	400	0	0%	2,000	2,000	0	0%
TOTAL EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES BOARD	81,011	13,359	(7,606)	5,753	5,653	100	2%	147,558	147,458	100	0%

*Rolling programmes have a prior year year expenditure of £0 as the expenditure is not directly linked from one year to the next as a singular project.

Objective Heading	Key Reasons for Projected Variance
Primary Schools Estate Programme(SEMP)	Minor underspends relate to St Fergus new build and St Anthony refurbishment.
Paisley Grammar New Campus	
Primary Schools Estate Programme(SEMP 2020)	
Other Schools Investment Programmes	
Technology Replacement Strategy ICT	



To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 19 January 2023

**Report by: Joint Report
Director of Children's Services &
Director of Finance and Resources**

Heading: Paisley Grammar School Community Campus: Update Report

1. Summary

- 1.1 A formal consultation on the proposal to relocate Paisley Grammar School to a new community campus building at Renfrew Road in Paisley commenced on 31 August 2020 and closed on 20 October 2020.
- 1.2 The proposal gained support from the school, wider community and Education Scotland and the recommendation to progress the new build community campus was approved by the Education and Children's Services Policy Board in January 2021.
- 1.3 The new community campus will provide facilities for the full breadth of the curriculum. It will incorporate a flexible learning resource for young people with additional support needs and a variety of facilities to support community learning and enterprise activity for the wider community.
- 1.4 To supplement its investment the Council secured Scottish Government - Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) - Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) funding of £1.45m per annum over a 25 year period. Conditions of funding targetted completion of the project by December 2025. Detail of LEIP funding conditions were detailed in a previous report to Board (Paisley Grammar School Community Campus: Update Report 18 August 2022).
- 1.5 This report seeks to provide elected members with an update on progress including the target completion date following project development with the Multi Disciplinary Design Team, the pre construction services Contractor and crucially, the Scottish Futures Trust.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Education and Children's Services Policy Board is asked to:
- Note the progress made to date including the updated target completion date.
-

3. Background

- 3.1. A formal consultation on the proposal to relocate Paisley Grammar School to a new community campus building at Renfrew Road in Paisley commenced on 31 August 2020 and closed at 12 noon on 20 October 2020.
- 3.2. The proposal gained support from the school, wider community and Education Scotland and the recommendation to progress the new build community campus was approved by the Education and Children's Services Policy Board in January 2021.
- 3.3. The new community campus will provide facilities for the full breadth of the curriculum. It will incorporate a flexible learning resource for young people with additional support needs and a variety of facilities to support community learning and enterprise activity for the wider community.
- 3.4. The Council's vision for the new Campus is ambitious and forward thinking. It is expected that our Project Team will deliver an innovative and creative learning environment which is welcoming to all; learner focused; supportive and inclusive; sustainable; and agile enough to support the needs and aspirations of all users.
- 3.5. The project has been developed through a stand-alone Multi-Disciplinary Design Team (MDDT) appointment (as well as QS, BIM manager; Principal Designer; and Passivhaus certifier appointments) and a stand-alone Design and Build Contractor. Information regarding appointments were detailed in a previous report to Board (Paisley Grammar School Community Campus: Update Report 18 August 2022).
- 3.6. A communications plan has also been developed to ensure pupils, parents and staff are kept up to date. It supports community engagement and it will raise wider local awareness. The plan also aligns with communication relevant to wider regeneration of the area.
-

4. Progress Update: Multi-Disciplinary Design Team and Principal Contractor

- 4.1. A Multi Disciplinary Design Team was appointed on 20 May 2022. The design team is being led by Ryder Architecture Limited which has a wealth of experience of schools' construction and Passivhaus building structures.
 - 4.2. Galliford Try, trading as Morrison Construction, have been appointed as the Principal Contractor for delivery of the project. At this stage the appointment is in respect of Pre-Construction Services only. A further report will be taken to FRCS board to enter into the Design and Build Contract with Morrison Construction when the design is sufficiently advanced.
 - 4.3. The design development has progressed well including staff, pupil and wider access workshops being undertaken to consider space typologies and new learning spaces and a presentation on the new learning landscape has been delivered to the parent council.
 - 4.4. The first 'Design Sprint' has taken place which was a 2 day event facilitated by Ryder Architecture involving the full design team and RC internal stakeholders. This allowed intense design workshops to be undertaken to help drive the direction of the technical development of the building.
 - 4.5. The MDDT are currently reviewing the standard 'Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Plan of Works Stage 2 Report with positive feedback. The outcome of RIBA Stage 2 should be the Architectural Concept being approved by the client which aligns to the Project Brief.
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5. Programme Update

- 5.1. It should be noted that a condition of LEIP funding was that the new Paisley Grammar School Community Campus targeted operation by December 2025. Given the global market conditions affecting the availability of materials and labour in the construction industry, this was recognised as an extremely challenging delivery programme.
- 5.2. Property Services have undertaken a thorough review of the delivery programme in conjunction with the MDDT and pre-construction services Contractor. The result is that it has become clear that it will not be optimal to meet the target operational date of December 2025. In developing the optimum delivery strategy it would be beneficial to attain 100% design, excepting some Contractor Designed Portions, prior to agreement of the contract for the main works. The MDDT also wish to ensure that the golden thread from design to construction to operation is given due consideration to provide an excellent facility that performs well throughout its life cycle. The Project Team are minded that a delivery programme of December 2025 would not meet this objective and is likely to create substantial financial and programme risks to any contractual agreement we would enter on this basis. Furthermore, this programme could not deliver a building of the form and function that would best suit pedagogy for this School in the aforementioned target timescale.

- 5.3. To deliver the proposed Paisley Grammar School Community Campus (PGSCC) in the optimal way the team would like to implement an improved approach to quality which has been developed in partnership with the MDDT and pre-construction services Contractor. It is intended to meaningfully engage with the Sub-Contractor market in a competitive manner as soon as possible during RIBA Stage 3 to develop 'not to exceed' work package costs with the intention to align design with key Sub-Contractor partners who may then be appointed for the main works. This will continue during RIBA Stages 3 and 4 with all Sub-Contractors where design engagement will be carried out to varying degrees, based on the particular work package, to achieve as close as possible to 100% design and 100% cost certainty. This strategy flips some traditionally post contract design work into the pre-contract stage and this can substantially decrease risk and improves quality, however, this process inevitably extends the programme during the pre-contract phase of development. The Project Team have worked closely with the MDDT and pre-construction services Contractor as well as the Scottish Futures Trust to develop a robust delivery programme that responds to the reality of the current circumstances of the construction industry and the quality aspirations of the Team. This process led to the identification of an operational ready date during Summer 2026 that best suits the needs of pupils and staff alike. This programme would also avoid a school relocation over the Spring Break which could be disadvantageous to the senior school pupils' exam diet.
- 5.4. SFT have advised that a number of LEIP funded projects across Scotland are similarly considering revised target operation dates. SFT also noted that our approach was realistic in terms of the factors affecting the industry, it was quality focussed and prudent.

Implications

1. Financial

As previously reported (Paisley Grammar School Community Campus: Update Report 18 August 2022)

2. HR and Organisational Development

None.

3. Community/Council Planning

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Our Renfrewshire is thriving | - The new learning environment will support learning and achievement for all. |
| Our Renfrewshire is well | - The new learning environment will support the Health and Wellbeing of all. |
| Our Renfrewshire is safe | - The new learning environment will provide safe and secure spaces for all users. |

Reshaping our place, our economy and our future

- The new learning environment will provided spaces which support local enterprise.

Building strong, safe and resilient communities

- The new learning environment will provide spaces to support community activities.

4. Legal

Renfrewshire Council adheres to all relevant legislation.

5. Property/Assets

Through its school estate management plan the Council aims to have an efficient and well maintained property portfolio which provides learning environments which support the delivery of the curriculum.

6. Information Technology

The new campus will have IT provision which supports digitally enabled learning.

7. Equality and Human Rights

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. Health and Safety

None.

9. Procurement

Renfrewshire Council adheres to all procurement regulations.

10. Risk

A full risk register will be compiled for the project in accordance with the Council's established risk management protocols.

11. Privacy Impact

None.

12. Cosla Policy Position

None.

13. Climate Risk

The project aims to comply with the requirements for ambitious energy efficiency targets over the long term and to contribute to the Council's net-zero commitments.

List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Paper 1: Paisley Grammar School Community Campus:
Update Report 18 August 2022

The foregoing background paper(s) will be retained within children's services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Ian Thomson, education manager.

Author: Joe Lynch – Head of Property Services



To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 19 January 2023

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level (CfE) Level Return 2022

1. Summary

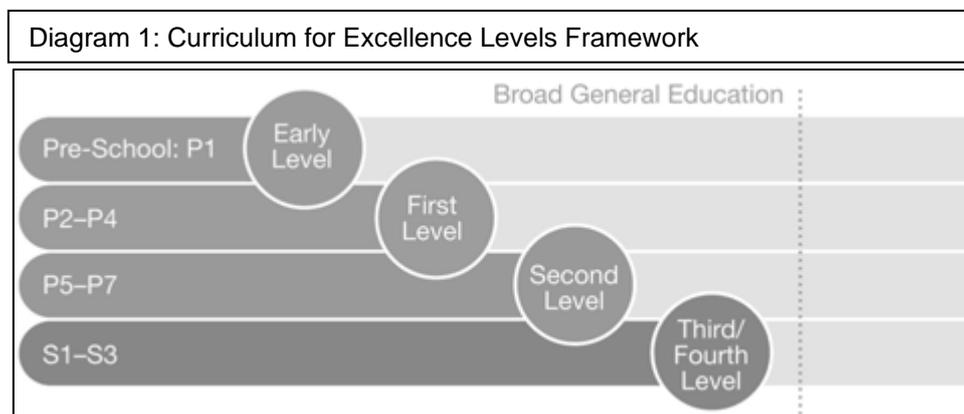
- 1.1. This report summarises attainment in the Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level return (ACEL) 2021-22. The ACEL return contains data on the highest Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level achieved for all pupils in Primary 1, Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 3.
 - 1.2. The 2021-22 return demonstrates that there has been an increase in attainment across all curricular areas. This follows the 2020-21 data which saw decreases across all curricular areas as a result of pandemic related disruption. This trend is visible within Renfrewshire and nationally. However, attainment in Renfrewshire remains in line with or above the national figures across all stages and curricular areas.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members of the education and children's policy board are asked to:
 - note the content of this report;
 - note the efforts of the children and young people and the significant commitment of teachers and support staff.
-

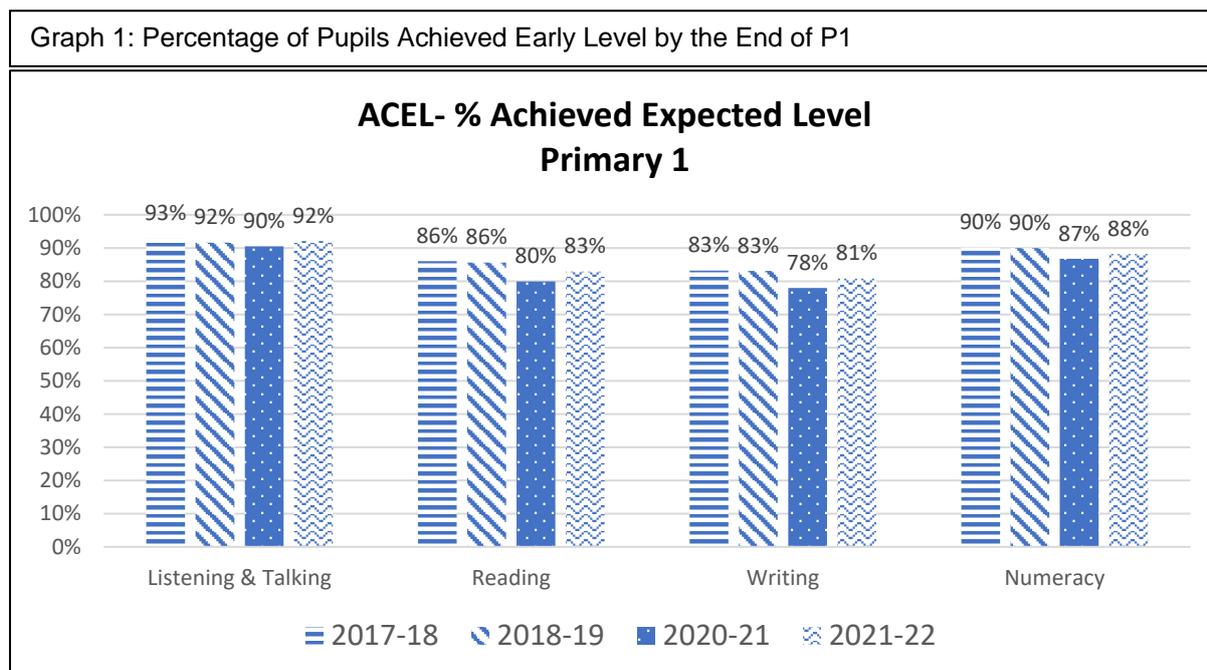
3. Background

- 3.1. The 2022 ACEL return includes data on all Primary 1, Primary 4 and Primary 7 pupils. Secondary schools were included in the 2022 return after being omitted nationally from 2020 and 2021 due to the implementation of the SQA National Qualifications Alternative Certification Model as well as other challenges. The data measures performance in the literacy curricular areas (listening & talking, reading, writing) and numeracy. Assessment of the level achieved is based on teacher professional judgements.



- 3.2. Diagram 1 shows the four curriculum levels within Broad General Education (BGE) (P1-S3). The ACEL return measures the percentage of pupils that have achieved early level by the end of Primary 1, first level by the end of Primary 4, second level by the end of Primary 7 and third/fourth level by the end of S3. This reflects the path that most children and young people are expected to follow. However, the framework displayed in diagram 1 is designed to be flexible to permit careful planning for those children and young people with additional support needs.
- 3.3. The return is submitted for the 2021-22 school session and is published nationally in December 2022. Due to school closures, there was no national return for the 2019-20 school session as it would not have been possible to gather accurate data. The closure of schools in March 2020 and January 2021 had a negative effect on some pupils' progress and attainment with socio-economically deprived children amongst those who were most negatively affected. This was reflected in the 2020-21 figures, present in this report, and should be kept in mind when interpreting figures from this year and those from 2018-19 and before.

4. Attainment by Stage



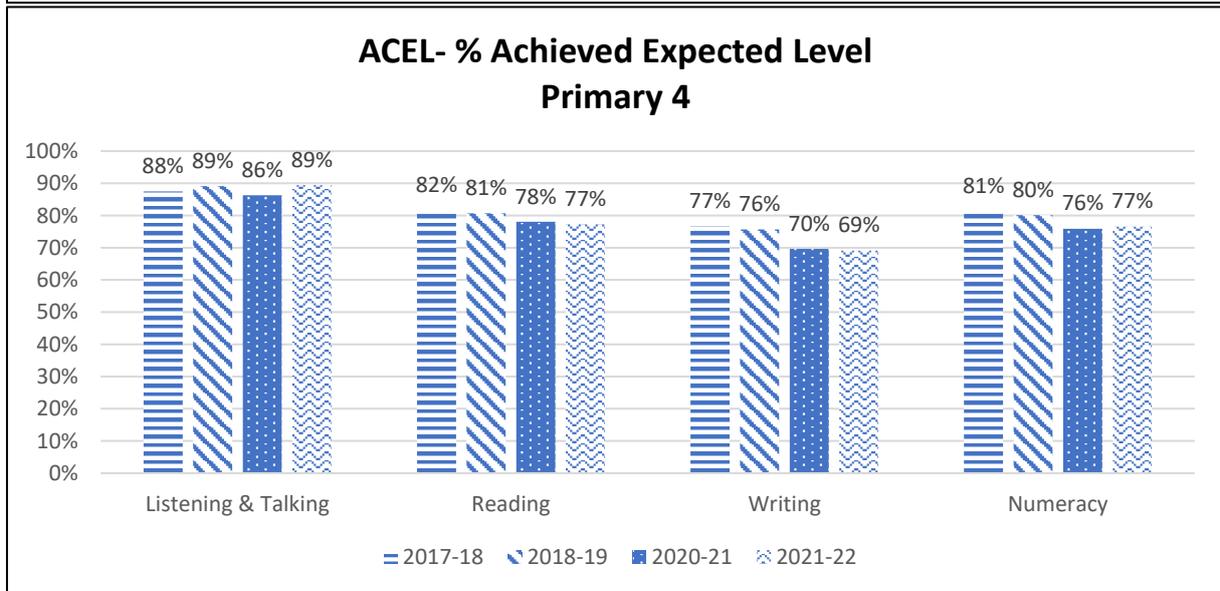
4.1. Graph 1 shows that attainment was lower in 2020-21 than previous years in all curricular areas but has recovered somewhat in 2021-22. This year's figures have returned to pre pandemic figure for listening and talking but remain slightly behind for reading, writing and numeracy. Attainment remains highest in listening and talking, followed by numeracy. Primary 1 attainment continues to be higher than in other primary stages.

Table 1: Percentage of Pupils Achieving Early Level by the end of P1. 2021-22

	Listening & Talking	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
Renfrewshire	92%	83%	81%	88%
National	86%	79%	77%	84%

4.2. Renfrewshire performs above national levels in all curricular areas in Primary 1, as shown in table 1. This is the fifth year that Primary 1 pupils in Renfrewshire have performed above national levels of attainment. The patterns of attainment in P1 are similar to national, with the highest attainment in listening and talking and the lowest in writing. Like in Renfrewshire, national attainment has increased against last year in all curricular areas.

Graph 2: Percentage of Pupils Achieved First Level by the End of P4

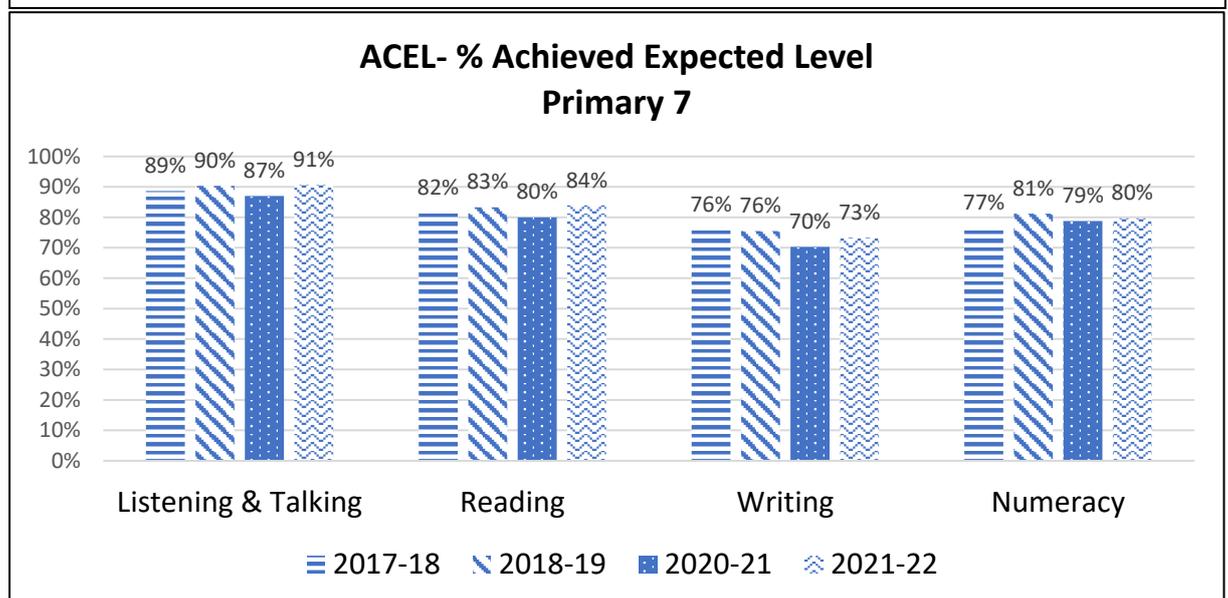


4.3. Graph 2 demonstrates that attainment is highest in listening and talking followed by reading and numeracy. Attainment is lowest in writing. Attainment in 2020-21 had decreased in all areas from 2018-19, but we now see improvements in listening and talking and numeracy attainment. Reading and writing attainment decreased slightly on 2020-21 figures.

	Listening & Talking	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
Renfrewshire	89%	77%	69%	77%
National	85%	76%	70%	75%

4.4. Table 2 shows that Renfrewshire performs above national in all curricular areas aside from Writing in 2021-22. Nationally, attainment in Primary 4 and Primary 7 is lower than in Primary 1. Renfrewshire attainment patterns replicate national trends.

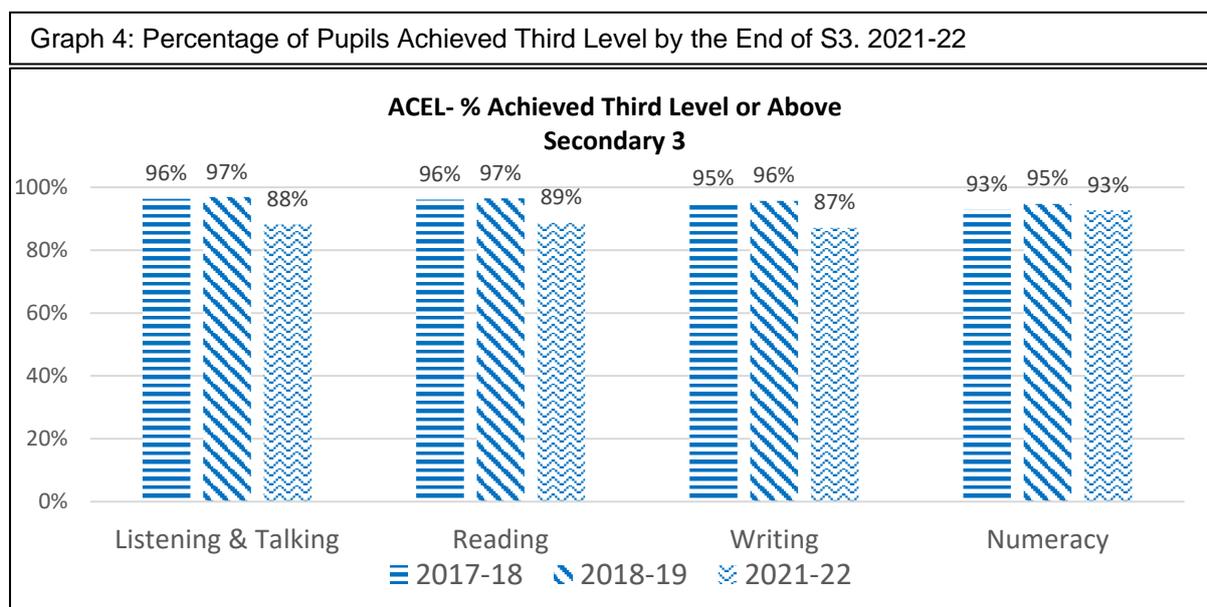
Graph 3: Percentage of Pupils Achieved Second Level by the End of P7



4.5. In Primary 7, attainment has increased in all areas versus 2020-21 figures. This is in contrast to 2020-21 which saw decreases across all curricular areas against 2018-19. Listening and talking and reading figures are at the highest they have been in 5 years. Patterns of attainment are similar to other stages, with attainment highest in listening and talking and lowest in writing.

	Listening & Talking	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
Renfrewshire	91%	84%	73%	80%
National	86%	79%	73%	76%

4.6. Table 3 demonstrates that Renfrewshire performs above national across all curricular areas aside from writing, for which it is equal with the national figure. The largest difference is in listening and talking as well as reading, where Renfrewshire is 5 percentage points above the national figures. The patterns of attainment across the four curricular areas are the same as national, with the highest levels coming from listening and talking and the lowest found in writing.

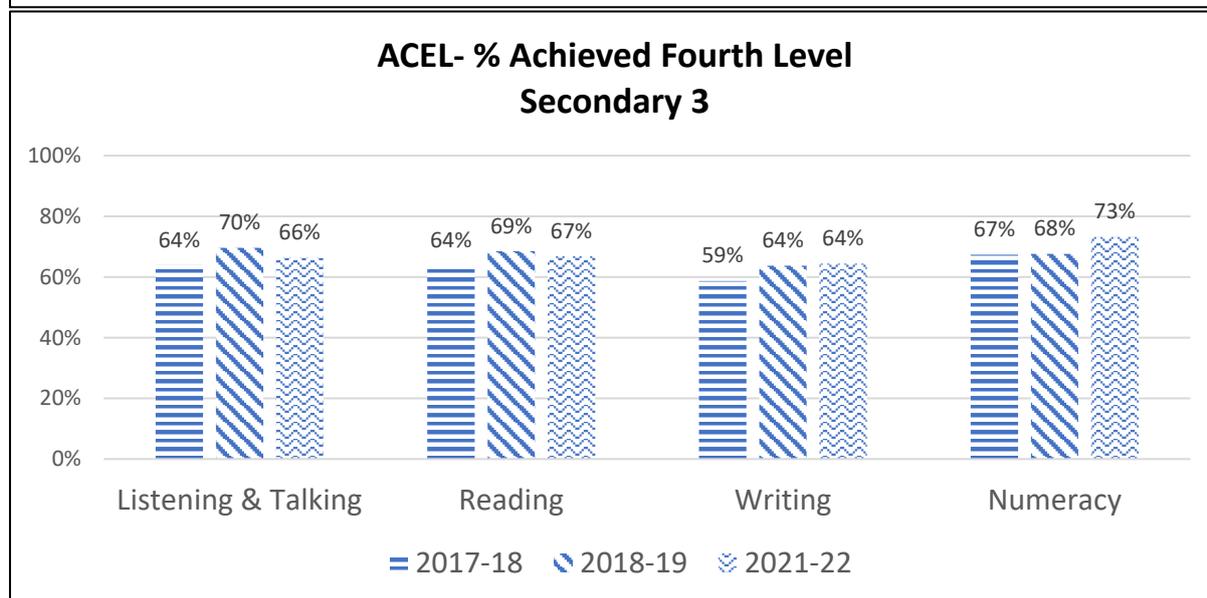


4.7. The ACEL return measures the percentage of pupils who achieve third and fourth level in S3. The percentage of pupils that achieved third level or above are displayed in graph 4. This graph demonstrates how listening and talking, reading, and writing have decreased significantly since 2018-19. Numeracy has also decreased from the 2018-19 figure but only by 2 percentage points and remains level with 2017-18 figures.

	Listening & Talking	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
Renfrewshire	88%	89%	87%	93%
National	89%	88%	87%	89%

4.8. Renfrewshire performs close to or above national figures across all curricular areas in 2021-22 as demonstrated in table 4. Listening and talking, reading and writing are all within 1 percentage point either side of the national figures. The largest difference is in numeracy, which is 4 percentage points above the national figure. I

Graph 5: Percentage of Pupils Achieved Fourth Level by the End of S3. 2021-22



4.9. Graph 5 shows the percentage of pupils achieving fourth level across all curricular areas. Small decreases have occurred in listening and talking and reading, although these figures are in line with 2017-18 levels. Writing has remained the same as 2018-19 and numeracy has increased by 5% points.

	Listening & Talking	Reading	Writing	Numeracy
Renfrewshire	66%	67%	64%	73%
National	55%	54%	52%	59%

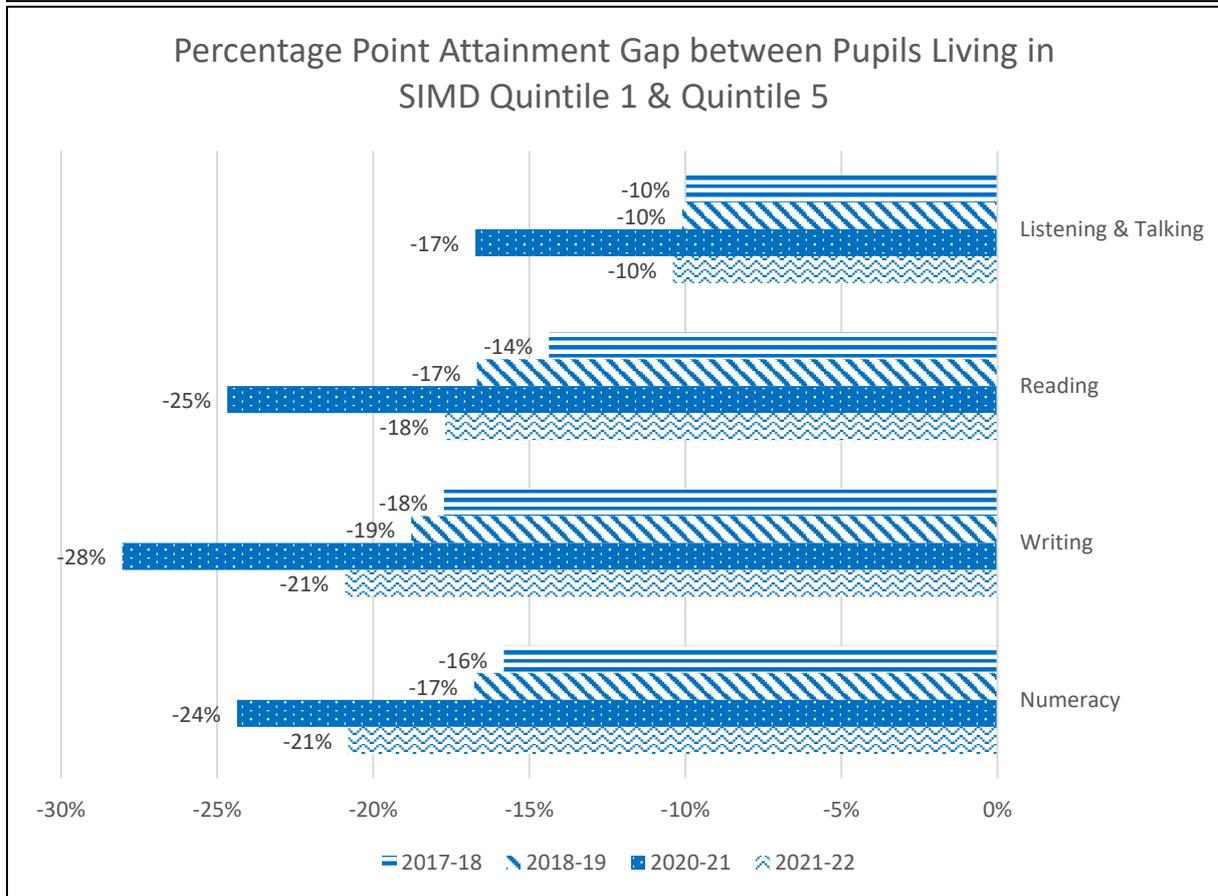
4.10. The percentage of pupils achieving fourth level in S3 is considerably above national for all curricular areas. The biggest difference is in numeracy, which is 14 percentage points above the national figure. The differences between Renfrewshire and the national figures are larger in this measure than other stages. However, the national figures are impacted by a high degree of variation between local authorities in the percentage of pupils achieving fourth level.

5. Poverty- Related Attainment Gaps

5.1. The attainment gap is measured using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), which is an area-based measure, as well as free meal and clothing grant entitlement as an individual measure of deprivation. By considering both measures, a more robust analysis of attainment gaps in Renfrewshire can be achieved. The data from the 2021-22 ACEL return indicates that attainment gaps have closed following an increase in 2020-21.

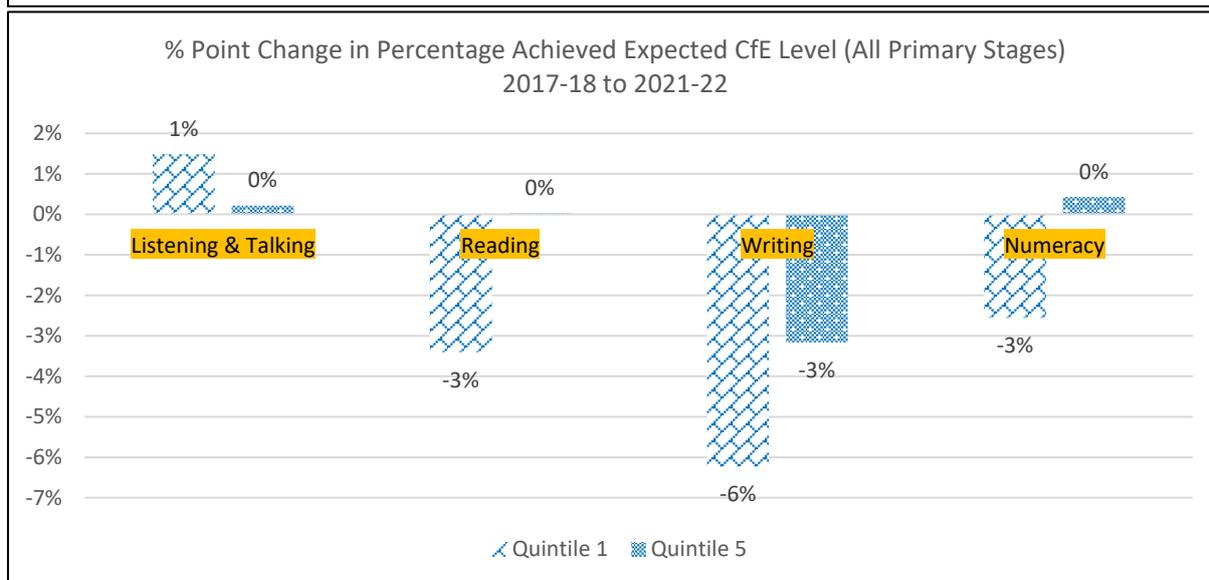
This is due to larger attainment increases for pupils living in most deprived areas and those entitled to free meals or clothing grants. Although similar decreases have been seen in national data, Renfrewshire continues to perform well against the national picture.

Graph 6: Percentage Point Gap between Pupils Achieving Expected Level in SIMD Quintile 1 & 5 (All Primary Stages Combined)



5.2. Graph 6 shows that the size of the attainment gap between pupils living in SIMD quintile 1 (20% most deprived areas) and those living in SIMD quintile 5 (20% least deprived areas) has decreased across all curricular areas, reversing the large increase in 2020-21. This change is consistent with national data which shows that pupils living in most deprived areas were most significantly impacted by school closures.

Graph 7: Percentage Point Change in Percentage of Pupils Achieving Expected Level. 2017-18 to 2021-22.



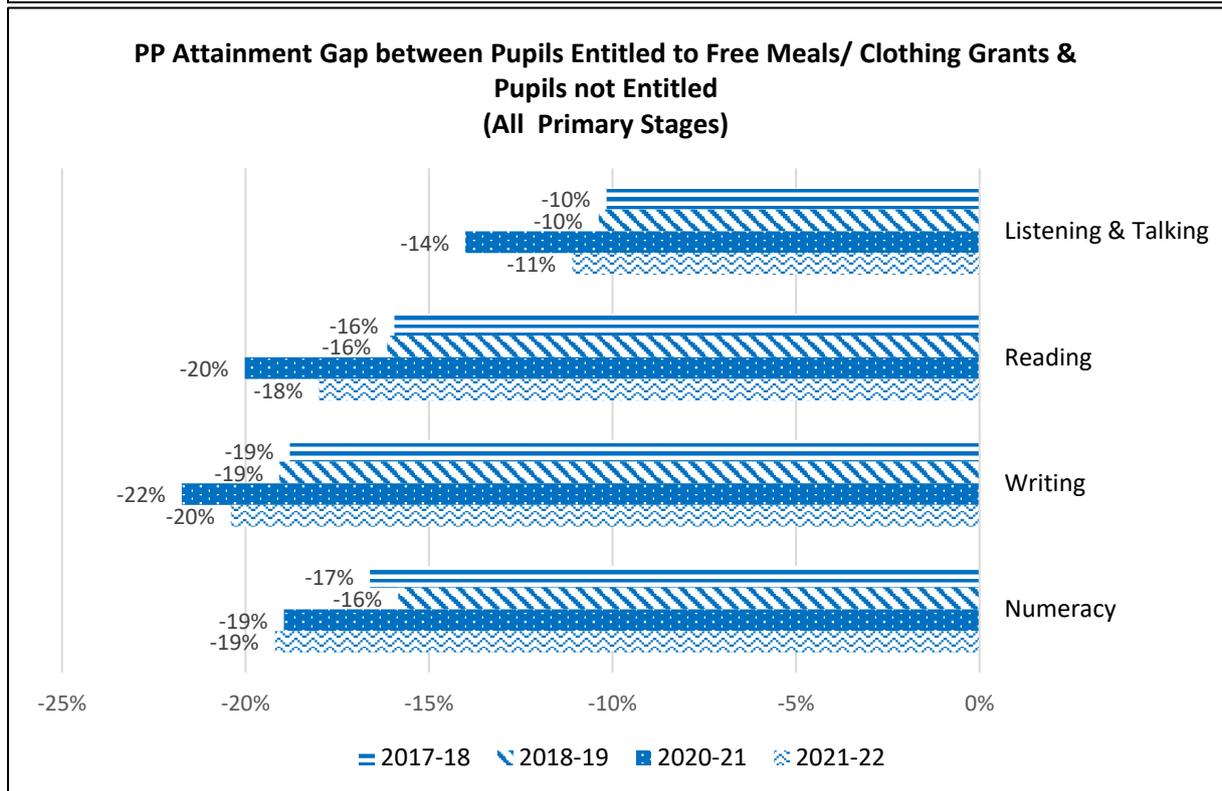
5.3. Graph 7 demonstrates that attainment of pupils living in quintile 1 (20% most deprived) areas is lower than in 2017-18 across all curricular areas aside from listening and talking. Attainment of pupils living in quintile 5 (20% least deprived) areas is unchanged in listening and talking, reading, and numeracy. Attainment in writing for quintile 5 pupils has declined by 3 percentage points.

Table 6: Percentage of Pupils Achieved Literacy & Numeracy in Primary (P1,P4 & P7) 2021-22

	Literacy		Numeracy	
	Renfrewshire	National	Renfrewshire	National
Quintile 1 (Most Deprived)	61%	61%	70%	70%
Quintile 2	68%	65%	76%	74%
Quintile 3	74%	70%	82%	78%
Quintile 4	79%	76%	87%	82%
Quintile 5 (Least Deprived)	82%	82%	91%	88%
Percentage Point Gap between Quintiles 1 and 5	21%	21%	21%	18%

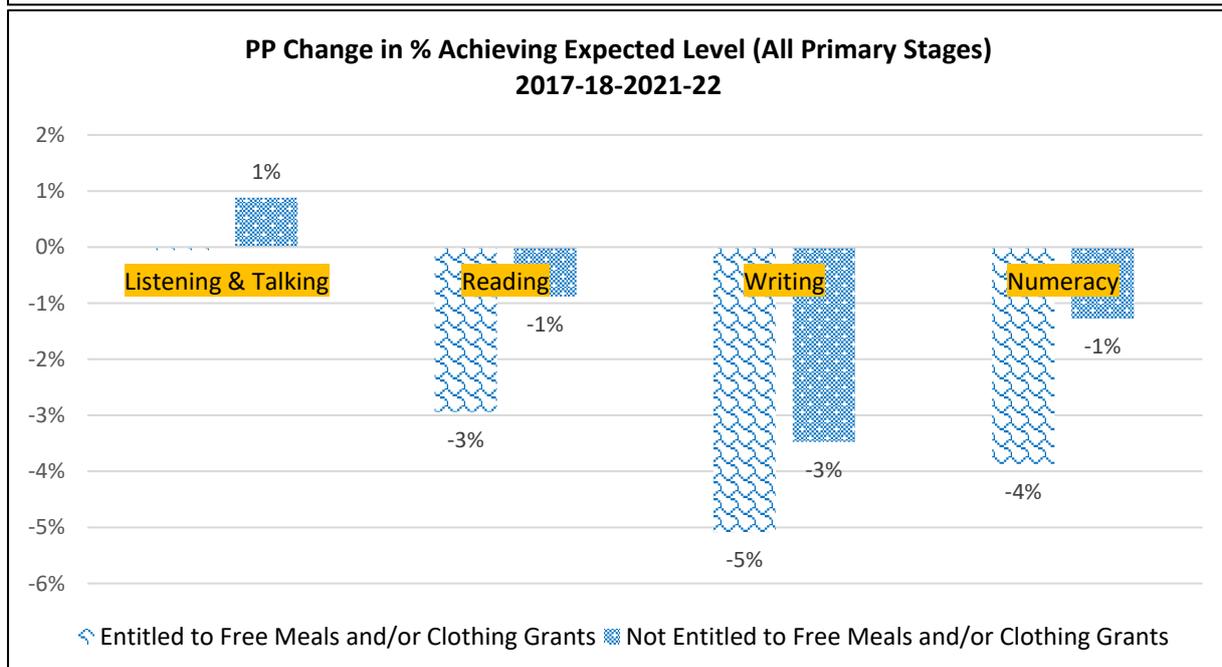
5.4. Table 6 demonstrates that Renfrewshire performs in line with or above national figures across all SIMD quintiles in both literacy and numeracy. Attainment in literacy measures whether a pupil has achieved the expected level for their stage across all three literacy organisers. The size of the gap between pupils living in quintile 1 and quintile 5 is equal to the national figures in literacy, but larger in numeracy. This is because of the higher attainment of Renfrewshire pupils living in the 20% least deprived areas.

Graph 8: Percentage Point Gap Between Percentage Pupils Achieving Expected Level for Entitled to Free Meals and/or Clothing Grants and Pupils Not Entitled.



5.5. Graph 8 demonstrates that the gap between pupils entitled to free school meals and/or clothing grants and pupils not entitled to either has decreased for all measures apart from numeracy. However, the decreases have not been big enough to return to the 2018-19 pre-pandemic level. As such, attainment gaps have increased over the last 5 years in across all measures.

Graph 9: Percentage Point Change in Percentage Pupils Achieving Expected Level for Entitled to Free Meals and/or Clothing Grants and Pupils Not Entitled to Either. 2017-18 to 2021-22



- 5.6. Graph 9 shows that the increases in the size of the gap are due to the performance of pupils that are entitled to free meals or clothing grants having decreased more than those who are not entitled over the last 5 years. For listening and talking the percentage of those not entitled to free meals or clothing grants has increased by 1%, whilst those entitled to receive the grants has not changed. For reading, writing and numeracy, both groups have decreased over the last 5 years with those not entitled to free meals or clothing grants decreasing by a smaller percentage.
-

6. Conclusion and Next Steps

- 6.1. The ACEL Return in 2021-22 has demonstrated that there has been some recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic which negatively impacted pupil attainment, particularly for those living in most deprived areas. Attainment gaps have closed in comparison to 2020-21 but remain slightly wider than pre-pandemic. Whilst the pandemic negatively impacted attainment across the board, those pupils from the most deprived areas saw the greatest decreases. The 2021-22 data suggests that these same pupils have seen the greatest increases in attainment, with the result being the closing of attainment gaps.
- 6.2. Patterns of attainment remain similar to before the pandemic. Attainment in listening and talking remains higher than other curricular areas and P1 attainment continues to outperform other stages.
- 6.3. Despite increases in attainment nationally, Renfrewshire continues to perform in line with or above national figures at all stages and in all curricular areas. Renfrewshire is also in line with or above national figures across all SIMD quintiles. The size of the attainment gap between quintile 1 and quintile 5 is slightly larger than national figures for numeracy, however this is due to higher attainment for pupils living in the 20% least deprived areas in Renfrewshire.
- 6.4. This data has been utilised to inform planning and a range of targeted support is now in place across schools. This includes reinforcement of high-quality professional learning with a strong focus on improving outcomes with writing at all stages. This support will continue to be evaluated to ensure that it is delivering what our pupils need to thrive and be successful.
-

Implications of this report

- 1. Financial Implications**
None.
- 2. HR and Organisational Development Implications**
None.

3. Community Plan/Council Plan Implications

Children and Young People - High levels of attainment and achievement provide our children and young people with the best start in life

4. Legal Implications

None.

5. Property/Assets Implications

None.

6. Information Technology Implications

None.

7. Equality and Human Rights Implications

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. Health and Safety Implications

None.

9. Procurement Implications

None.

10. Risk Implications

None.

11. Privacy Impact

None.

12. COSLA Policy Position

None.

13. Climate Risk

None.

List of Background Papers

(a) None

*Children's Services
SQ/JB/JC
9 January 2023*

*Author: James Bowness, Data and Evaluation Officer, Children Services,
james.bowness@renfrewshire.gov.uk*



To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 19 January 2023

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Education Scotland Inspection of Cochrane Castle Primary School

1. Summary

- 1.1 Cochrane Castle Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in October 2022 as part of a national sample of education. Education Scotland uses different models of inspection and at Cochrane Castle Primary School the duration of the inspection was three days i.e. the short model. Inspectors assessed the school, with a focus on two quality indicators, which were: learning, teaching and assessment; and raising attainment and achievement.
- 1.2 This was a positive inspection which evaluated learning, teaching and assessment as 'good' and raising attainment and achievement as 'satisfactory'.
- 1.3 The inspection report in the form of a letter to parents, published by Education Scotland on 22 November 2022, is attached as an appendix to this report and is also available from the Director of Children's Services or from the Education Scotland website. The letter to parents identified four key strengths of the school. These were:
- Led very effectively by the headteacher and acting depute headteacher, the strong approach to inclusion which is supporting all children to improve their involvement in their learning.
 - Positive relationships across the school which are helping children to feel safe and become more supportive of each other.

- Teachers who work well together to understand children’s progress and plan appropriate next steps in learning. This is supporting children to build on what they already know.
- Staff know their context and community very well and work effectively with a range of partners to improve wellbeing outcomes for children.

1.4 The inspection report also identified three areas for further improvement:

- Ensure learning is planned at an appropriate pace and the right level of difficulty for all children.
- Improve attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Continue to evaluate the impact of planned interventions to ensure these are impacting positively on children’s progress over time.

1.5 There is an agreed set of procedures for responding to inspection reports which will support the school and Children’s Services to plan how the areas for further improvement will be addressed. Actions are detailed within the school improvement plan which is shared with parents. In addition, the school will be supported in its improvement journey by Children’s Services.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members of the Education and Children’s Services Policy Board are asked to note and celebrate the key strengths and recognise the areas for further improvement in the Education Scotland report on Cochrane Castle Primary School.

3. Background

3.1 Following a pause to inspections due to the pandemic, Education Scotland’s routine programme of inspection of schools and early years settings resumed in September 2022. Children’s Services welcomes the process of audit undertaken by Education Scotland as supportive to continuous improvement in Renfrewshire’s education establishments. The school team at Cochrane Castle approached the inspection in a very positive manner and embraced it as an excellent professional learning opportunity in partnership with colleagues at Education Scotland.

3.2 The report includes three areas for further improvement and progress in addressing these will be monitored by Children’s Services staff through the Quality Improvement Framework.

3.3 The inspection report will inform planned improvement activity, and will enable the school and wider service, to build on the recognised strengths and focus

further development on areas for improvement to enable the school to continue to deliver a quality educational provision.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community/Council Planning** – engaging with, and learning from external inspection, ensures that our Renfrewshire is thriving: high standards of education provision ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life so that they promote and contribute to a more prosperous, fairer society. It also ensures our Renfrewshire is well – by providing an environment which encourages care, welfare and development, establishments play a crucial role in developing children and young people so that they become responsible citizens.

The inspection process also supports delivery of the Council Plan cross-cutting theme of improving outcomes for children and families as well as other Council Plan key strategic outcomes, for example:

- Economy** - Equipping all children and young people to achieve success in life
- Fair** - Creating inclusive and supportive learning environments for children and young people
- Embedding children’s rights in our decision-making processes

4. **Legal** - None
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals’ human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council’s website.

8. **Health & Safety** - None
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** - None

11. **Privacy Impact** - None
 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – N/A
 13. **Climate Risk** - None
-

List of Background Papers - The inspection report and additional evidence is published on the Education Scotland website and can be accessed via this [link](#).

Author: Mairi Thomas, Education Manager
mairi.thomas@renfrewshire.gov.uk
0141 618 3994

22 November 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

In October 2022, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Cochrane Castle Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Led very effectively by the headteacher and acting depute headteacher, the strong approach to inclusion which is supporting all children to improve their involvement in their learning.
- Positive relationships across the school which are helping children to feel safe and become more supportive of each other.
- Teachers who work well together to understand children's progress and plan appropriate next steps in learning. This is supporting children to build on what they already know.
- Staff know their context and community very well and work effectively with a range of partners to improve wellbeing outcomes for children.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Renfrewshire Council.

- Ensure learning is planned at an appropriate pace and the right level of difficulty for all children.
- Improve attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Continue to evaluate the impact of planned interventions to ensure these are impacting positively on children's progress over time.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Cochrane Castle Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:
[Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#).

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Renfrewshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Gillian Frew
 HM Inspector



To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 19 January 2023

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Education Scotland Inspection of Barsail Primary School

1. Summary

- 1.1 Barsail Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in September 2022 as part of a national sample of education. Education Scotland uses different models of inspection and at Barsail Primary School the duration of the inspection was the full model which took five days. Inspectors assessed the school, with a focus on four quality indicators, which were: leadership of change; learning, teaching and assessment; ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion and; raising attainment and achievement.
- 1.2 This was a very positive inspection which evaluated all four quality indicators as 'very good'.
- 1.3 The inspection report in the form of a letter to parents, published by Education Scotland on 08 November 2022, is attached as an appendix to this report and is also available from the Director of Children's Services or from the Education Scotland website. The letter to parents identified six key strengths of the school. These were:
- The motivational leadership of the headteacher. She promotes a strong sense of teamwork, with everyone involved in progressing the work of the school. She is supported ably by the depute headteacher and the principal teacher.
 - Children who are friendly, polite and eager to learn. They work well together, support one another and demonstrate the school's values well. They feel happy, safe and included in decisions about school life.

- The highly effective leadership of all staff and their relentless focus on improving outcomes for children. The increasing opportunities staff provide for children to lead learning and influence the life and work of the school.
- Highly effective approaches to developing staff, children’s and parents’ knowledge and understanding of the language of wellbeing, nurturing values and a caring and compassionate ethos.
- The rigorous processes for identifying children who may require additional support for learning and the quality and range of support helping children to overcome barriers to learning.
- The significant dedication of all staff to professional learning. They focus on research-based approaches to further develop and implement creative learning and teaching. This leads to improving outcomes for children.

1.4 The inspection report also identified one area for further improvement:

- Staff should continue to develop approaches to planning, assessment and moderation of learning and teaching to meet the needs of all children. This should include increasing opportunities for children to use their learning in new and unfamiliar situations.

1.5 There is an agreed set of procedures for responding to inspection reports which will support the school and Children’s Services to plan how the area for further improvement will be addressed. Actions are detailed within the school improvement plan which is shared with parents. In addition, the school will be supported in its improvement journey by Children’s Services.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members of the Education and Children’s Services Policy Board are asked to note and celebrate the key strengths and recognise the area for further improvement in the Education Scotland report on Barsail Primary School.

3. Background

3.1 Following a pause to inspections due to the pandemic, Education Scotland’s routine programme of inspection of schools and early years settings resumed in September 2022. Children’s Services welcomes the process of audit undertaken by Education Scotland as supportive to continuous improvement in Renfrewshire’s education establishments. The school team at Barsail Primary approached the inspection in a very positive manner and embraced it as an excellent professional learning opportunity in partnership with colleagues at Education Scotland.

- 3.2 The report includes one area for further improvement and progress in addressing this will be monitored by Children’s Services staff through the Quality Improvement Framework. It should be noted however that overall, this was an extremely positive inspection report.
- 3.3 The inspection report will inform planned improvement activity, and will enable the school and wider service, to build on the recognised strengths and focus further development on areas for improvement to enable the school to continue to deliver a quality educational provision.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community/Council Planning** – engaging with, and learning from external inspection, ensures that our Renfrewshire is thriving: high standards of education provision ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life so that they promote and contribute to a more prosperous, fairer society. It also ensures our Renfrewshire is well – by providing an environment which encourages care, welfare and development, establishments play a crucial role in developing children and young people so that they become responsible citizens.

The inspection process also supports delivery of the Council Plan cross-cutting theme of improving outcomes for children and families as well as other Council Plan key strategic outcomes, for example:

- Economy** - Equipping all children and young people to achieve success in life
- Fair** - Creating inclusive and supportive learning environments for children and young people
- Embedding children’s rights in our decision-making processes

4. **Legal** – None
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals’ human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored,

and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** - None
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** - None
11. **Privacy Impact** - None
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – N/A
13. **Climate Risk** - None

List of Background Papers - The inspection report and additional evidence is published on the Education Scotland website and can be accessed via this [link](#).

Author: Susan Bell, Education Manager
Susan.bell-hq@renfrewshire.gov.uk
07983 855712

8 November 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

In September 2022, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Barsail Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The motivational leadership of the headteacher. She promotes a strong sense of teamwork, with everyone involved in progressing the work of the school. She is supported ably by the depute headteacher and the principal teacher.
- Children who are friendly, polite and eager to learn. They work well together, support one another and demonstrate the school's values well. They feel happy, safe and included in decisions about school life.
- The highly effective leadership of all staff and their relentless focus on improving outcomes for children. The increasing opportunities staff provide for children to lead learning and influence the life and work of the school.
- Highly effective approaches to developing staff, children's and parents' knowledge and understanding of the language of wellbeing, nurturing values and a caring and compassionate ethos.
- The rigorous processes for identifying children who may require additional support for learning and the quality and range of support helping children to overcome barriers to learning.
- The significant dedication of all staff to professional learning. They focus on research-based approaches to further develop and implement creative learning and teaching. This leads to improving outcomes for children.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Renfrewshire Council.

- Staff should continue to develop approaches to planning, assessment and moderation of learning and teaching to meet the needs of all children. This should include increasing opportunities for children to use their learning in new and unfamiliar situations.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Barsail Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	very good
Learning, teaching and assessment	very good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	very good
Raising attainment and achievement	very good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

[Reports page](#) | [Inspection reports](#) | [Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Renfrewshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Rosalind J Webster
Managing Inspector



To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 19 January 2023

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Annual report of the Fostering and Adoption Service 2021/22
Update on developments for Fostering Service

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides elected members with the opportunity to review the 15th annual report of Renfrewshire's Fostering and Adoption Service (appendix1).
 - 1.2. The annual report sets out the work undertaken by the Fostering and Adoption Panel and the Fostering and Adoption Service in the period 1 August year 2021 to 31 July 2022. The annual report notes that on 31 July 2022 there were 73 fostering households approved by Renfrewshire. During the period covered by this report, 15 children and young people had a permanency plan considered by the panel and approved.
 - 1.3. The annual report refers to how the service managed and developed in the recovery period of the COVID pandemic. The report considers the future work of the panel and the continued work of the fostering and adoption service.
 - 1.4. The service has reviewed the Fostering and Adoption Constitution and made some minor changes to it. The changes are highlighted in appendix 2. During the current year the head of child care and criminal justice under delegated powers made some changes to the partnership agreement with foster carers. The changes are highlighted in appendix 3.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Education and Children's Services Policy Board is asked to:
 - a) note the contents of the Fostering and Adoption Annual Report 2021/22 attached as appendix 1;
 - b) agree the updated Constitution attached at appendix 2; and

c) agree the updated partnership agreement attached at appendix 3.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Looked After (Scotland) Regulations 2009 and the Adoption Agencies (Scotland) Regulations 2009 require Social Work in its role as a Fostering and Adoption agency to operate a Fostering Panel and an Adoption Panel. This panel has the responsibility for putting forward recommendations to the agency decision makers John Trainer (Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice Services) and Michelle McCargo, (Children's Services Manager) regarding the suitability of people to adopt or foster children. Furthermore, the Panel considers and approves plans for children to be adopted or for the Council to apply for Permanence Orders on a child. The Panel also considers and approves the matching of a particular child with a particular family where the plan is for the child to live there permanently.
- 3.2. Renfrewshire operates a Fostering Panel and Adoption Panel with one constitution. The panel separates out the Fostering business from the Adoption business to ensure that the appropriate regulations are met regarding a quorum, and for the attendance of the legal and medical adviser. The panel has two chairpersons who are independent from the work of the service: One is a Social Work manager, and the other is from the Association for Fostering Adoption and Kinship Scotland (AFKA).
- 3.3. There are currently 11 members of the panel comprising elected members, social work staff, a legal adviser, a medical adviser, carers, independent panel members, and an independent member from AFKA. The panel sits at least monthly. There are typically 3 panel members at each meeting along with appropriate advisors. The panel considered 82 agenda items over the course of the year.
- 3.4. The panel has a unique overview of the work being undertaken to assess and approve foster carers and adopters alongside the work being undertaken by social workers to progress plans for children who cannot be cared for within their own family. The annual report has been produced as a means of sharing this work with a wider audience and to assist in the process of service planning.
- 3.5. Between 1/08/21 and 31/07/2022 the fostering and adoption team held 1 set of preparation groups and 8 households subsequently applied to be assessed as foster carers. Renfrewshire had 73 active households of foster carers on 31st July 2022. In the period 1/08/21 and 31/7/2022 an additional 2 households were registered as foster carers, and 9 foster care households left the service. 5 foster care households left the service due to changes in their circumstances, 3 retired after a lengthy career in fostering and 1 retired and offered a continuing care option for an individual young person.
- 3.6. The report notes the ongoing need to recruit Renfrewshire foster carers and adopters because of children being accommodated and in need of permanent care, and our commitment to reducing the number of children being placed externally. In the past we have had high-profile recruitment activity which only

produced 1 or 2 more applications to foster. Most of our fostering application come from people who already have foster carers as friends or family. There is a national difficulty in recruitment of foster carers. The service will work with communication and marketing to consider how best to promote fostering recruitment.

- 3.7. In the period 1/08/21 and 31/07/2022 a total of 2 Renfrewshire households were approved as adopters at the Renfrewshire panel.
- 3.8. The Fostering and Adoption services are subject to regulation and were last inspected by the Care Inspectorate in May 2017. The Care Inspectorate reports were positive with gradings of 5 (very good) being applied to all domains inspected. The next Inspection was due to take place in 2020 however has been postponed due to the pandemic. The service has been advised the next inspection will be undertaken in January 2023.
- 3.9. The Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014 increases the responsibility/ duty of Local Authorities to provide continuing care placements for young adults up to the age of 21. This means that more young people are remaining in the same placement after they are 18. The service continues to assess foster carers to become supported carers wherever this is appropriate.
- 3.10. We currently have 11 young adults living with supported carers. Many of these carers were previously the young adults' foster carers.
- 3.11. The Children (Scotland) Act 2020 became law in 2021 and places new duties on local authorities to place brothers and sisters together in placements and place a new duty on local authorities to promote contact between brothers and sisters who are looked after. This is in keeping with the independent care review report, The Promise.
- 3.12. Renfrewshire approved the "Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together Policy" in May 2021. The policy contains the following pledge "When children come into care Renfrewshire will place brothers and sisters together". The policy recognises that there will be times that brothers, and sisters can't be placed together but requires us to report on this.

4. Constitution

- 4.1. The Fostering and Adoption Panel requires to have a constitution. The current constitution was approved in January 2021. The constitution has been reviewed and updated to take account of developing practices particularly in relation to Adoption and birth parents views being considered.

5. Partnership Agreement

- 5.1. The partnership agreement is signed by foster carers and Renfrewshire Council at the point that new foster carers are approved.

- 5.2. The partnership agreement was last updated in 2019. Following discussion with foster carers it was agreed that there was a need to make some minor changes to the agreement. The Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice exercised his delegated authority to make changes to the agreement to address some financial pressures experienced by foster carers. The change to the agreement allows for flexibility in relation to financial arrangements.
 - 5.3. Under delegated authority it was agreed on 24 October 2022, to increase the amount of clothing allowance when a child is placed in foster care from £100 per child to £350 per child plus £100 for a school age child. This increase has been due to the fact that it hadn't been increased since 2009 and also due to the cost-of-living crisis.
 - 5.4. The second area of change was in relation to arrangements for foster carers claiming mileage for a range of journeys to ensure the needs of children in their care are met.
-

Implications of this report

1. Financial

The changes to the clothing grant and mileage will have minor impact on the overall budget for fostering and adoption services.

2. HR and Organisational Development

None.

3. Community/Council Planning

Our Renfrewshire is safe - *The provision of foster care provides Renfrewshire's children with safety and care.*

4. Legal

None.

5. Property/Assets

None.

6. Information Technology

None.

7. Equality and Human Rights

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.

8. Health and Safety

None.

- 9. Procurement**
None.
- 10. Risk**
None.
- 11. Privacy Impact**
None.
- 12. Cosla Policy Position**
None.
- 13. Climate Risk**
None.
-

List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Paper 1: Fostering and Adoption Annual Report.
- (b) Panel Constitution
- (c) Partnership Agreement.

The foregoing background papers will be retained within children's services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Clare Cuning 0141 618 6650

Children's Services
CC 6/12/22

Author: Clare Cuning 0141 618 6650 clare.cuning@renfrewshire.gov.uk



**THE FOSTERING
AND
ADOPTION
PANEL**

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022

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Foreword

Welcome to the annual report of Renfrewshire's Fostering and Adoption Service. This report reviews the previous year and looks future developments.

As at 31.07.22, Renfrewshire Council had 581 Looked After Children. Of these, 143 children and young people were looked after at home, 220 were looked after by Kinship carers/friends/relatives, and 214 were accommodated with foster carers, in pre-adoption arrangements or within residential placements. Renfrewshire Council had 73 Fostering households at this time.

The balance of Looked After children continues to shift towards our own internal foster care, rather than purchased external placements. On 31.07.22 there were 39 children/young people living with foster carers from external fostering agencies compared to 48 in 2021 and 60 in 2020. This is a substantial decrease over this period and is in line with Renfrewshire's strategy to ensure children are cared for by their own family, in kinship or with Renfrewshire's internal services.

The work of the Fostering and Adoption Service continues to ensure that children are living in the best and safest environments to meet their individual needs, and that children who require to live permanently in foster care are matched with an appropriate foster family at the earliest opportunity.

The Fostering and Adoption service remains committed to ensuring that the principles of Renfrewshire's 'Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together' policy are embedded in all aspects of its practice. Where we cannot place brothers and sisters together, the service supports natural family time between brothers and sisters outwith formal arrangements wherever possible.

The Fostering and Adoption Panel provides an important quality assurance role in ensuring that the work undertaken to assess children's long-term care needs, and the assessment of their potential carers, is carried out to the highest standards. The Panel's role is to make recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) who ultimately approves children's permanence plans or confirms that a household can adopt or become foster carers.

The Panels continue to be busy. Between 01.08.21 to 31.07.22, 15 children's permanence plans were approved by the Agency Decision Maker.

We hope that you enjoy reading this year's annual report.

John Trainer
Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice
Chief Social Work Officer

Michelle McCargo
Social Work Children's Services Manager

Introduction

This is the 15th annual report of Renfrewshire Council's Fostering and the Adoption Panel and Service.

Renfrewshire Council has a statutory duty to operate fostering and adoption panels. In Renfrewshire we have one panel which carries out both functions.

The Adoption and Fostering Panel operates within the statutory framework of the Adoption Agencies (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (Part II) (AAS Regulations) and the Looked After (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (Part VI) (the LACS Regulations).

These regulations set the basis for the membership of the panel, the frequency of meetings, the appointment of advisors and the different functions of the panel.

The Renfrewshire panel has at least one business meeting with panel members, advisors, and the Agency Decision Makers in attendance on an annual basis. It is good practice for all panels to have regular planned business meetings to review their overall functioning. The quorum for individual meetings of the panel is three members, and we ensure this number includes people with relevant experience and a range of backgrounds to provide robust and independent scrutiny of the business presented.

Responsibility for the functions and decisions of the panel rests with the Chief Social Work Officer. Authority is delegated to a Senior Manager in Children's services to chair the panel. The Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice and the Social Work Children's Services Manager act as Agency Decision Makers for the panel.

The purpose of the Panel is to consider prospective foster carers, prospective adopters, and supported carers. In addition, the Panel considers individual children's needs for alternative permanent carers (where the care plan for the child is that they do not return home to their birth family), this includes considering the most appropriate legal route to secure this outcome. The Panel also considers the matching of a child with specific foster carers or adoptive parents.

The fostering and adoption team is responsible for the recruitment, training, supervision and support of suitable foster carers and prospective adopters. Ensuring we have sufficient carers with the skills and experience necessary to meet the needs of the diverse range of babies, children and young people who need care away from their birth families is the over-arching objective of the team.

Context

The work of the Fostering and Adoption Panel should be viewed in the context of the overall numbers of Renfrewshire Council's Looked After and Accommodated children.

Accommodated and Looked After Children/Young People

As of 31st July 2022, Renfrewshire Council had 581 Looked After Children/Young People. The number of children living in Kinship arrangements increased slightly from the previous year. The number of children living with Renfrewshire Council's foster carers remained the same whilst those residing with independent sector foster carers reduced. The number of children residing in independent sector foster carers decreased again in the reporting year continuing a trend of steadily decreasing each year over the past 10 years.

31.07.21

31.07.22

	31.07.21	31.07.22
Independent Sector-Children - Foster Care	48	39
Local Authority-Children - Foster Care	110	110
Local Authority-Children – Houses	17	17
Independent Sector-Children - Residential Schools	11	13
Independent Sector-Children - Residential Special Needs	12	18
Pre-adoption	8	8
Independent Sector-Children - Secure School	4	3
Children looked after by kinship carers/friends/relatives	216	230
Children looked after at home	162	143
Total	588	581

Cases presented to the Fostering and Adoption Panel 1.08.21 – 31.07.22

Business Item	Previous Year	Aug 21 – July 22
Child adoption plans and links	13	6
Approval of Renfrewshire adopters (households)	2	2
Approval of adopters to increase Household	1	1
Conversion of Foster carers to Adopters	0	1
Approval of Adopters with a foreign element	1	0
De registration of adopters	1	1
Review of Registration (adoption)	1	1
Request/review of adoption allowance	4	3
Children's Permanence Order plans	3	9
Links with permanent foster carers	3	6
Approval of new foster carers	3	2
Approval of Renfrewshire interim foster carers as permanent foster carers (households)	3	6
Deregistration of foster carer	5	9
Approval of supported carers (households)	6	8
Initial review of foster carer after their 1 st year	5	3
Foster care reviews out with 1 st year	5	20
Review of foster carers registration – due to change in registration/circumstances	4	1
Total number of agenda items	60	79

Panel Membership

The service has continued to have a consistent and committed panel membership over the past year. However, because of natural attrition, the number of panel members has reduced to 11 including 2 chairpersons – one of whom is commissioned from the Association of Fostering, Kinship and Adoption (AFKA). During the coming year there will be active recruitment of panel members to ensure that the panel membership continues to reflect a wide range of experience from a range of areas including social work, education, health, independent sector, and those with lived experience of fostering and adoption.

The medical advisers continue to offer a valuable service and support to the panel in respect of provision and interpretation of medical information in relation to the children and adults being presented to panel. The medical adviser provides up-to-date written information regarding any health issues in relation to a child or a prospective foster carer or adopter.

The panel has a representative from the council's legal services who acts as legal advisor and provides written legal advice to the Panel in relation to adoption and permanence work. The legal advisor attends the Panel whenever permanence is being considered, and on other occasions where the chairperson feels their advice is required.

The Fostering and Adoption Service Manager acts as the panel professional advisor.

Panel members attend appraisal meetings with the panel chair and panel professional adviser. Feedback from panel members is gathered from this meeting and ideas generated are incorporated into the business meeting agenda for consideration on how to improve the functioning and participation at panel.

Staffing

The structure of the Fostering and Adoption Service is: -

Social Work Manager (Operations) Registered manager of the service.

Service Manager (responsible for operational management of the fostering and adoption service).

1 senior social worker (responsible for adoption and permanence service, and management of staff)

1 senior social worker (responsible for the fostering service and management of staff)

8 full time social workers (one vacancy as worker on year secondment)

2 part time social workers (one current vacancy)

1 social work assistant.

The fostering and adoption service now has a separate fostering team and an adoption and permanence team. This has separation allowed the development of more specialist skills regarding fostering and adoption. Both teams work closely together and share expertise and learning.

Commitment to permanence planning 1.08.21 to 31.07.22

Between 01.08.21 and 31.7.22, Renfrewshire has progressed adoption and permanence plans for 15 children. This is one fewer than last year with more Permanence Order Plans being approved than Adoption Plans. Renfrewshire Council recognises the importance in progressing plans for children within appropriate timescales. There are different initiatives being implemented by senior management to support and enable social work staff involved in permanence work to undertake both the direct work with the child and family and to complete the necessary reports. These initiatives include training for social workers and carers on issues specifically relevant to permanence, working closely with social work staff with regards to the needs of the child and planning for adoption or permanency.

The decision to place a child permanently outwith their birth family rightly involves a high level of assessment to ensure the plan is in the best interests of the child and will meet their needs throughout their childhood. During the permanency process, checks and balances are in place to ensure the best possible outcome for the child. Permanence planning work is complex however, it is also highly rewarding when children find new 'forever' families and have the opportunity to thrive into adulthood.

Inspection

The Fostering Service and Adoption Service is a regulated service, is registered with and subject to inspection by the Care Inspectorate. The last inspection took place in May 2017 where all aspects of service delivered remained Grade 5 which is 'very good'. While there has not been a full inspection since 2017, meetings have taken place between the link inspector and both the Registered Manager and Service Manager of the Fostering and Adoption Service to discuss practice developments and reflect upon performance. The Care Inspectorate has announced it intends conducting an inspection of the Renfrewshire Fostering and Adoption Services in January 2023.

Report on Fostering Service

The fostering service continues to offer a high standard of care to children in our care. All supervision and unannounced visits have continued face to face. The Fostering and Adoption Panel and Foster Carer Reviews continued online while training and other related meetings have continued to be hybrid.

Developments within the Fostering Service 2021 – 2022

- During Fostering Fortnight in May 2022, the service made use of social media, offering virtual drop in and articles from our foster carers.
- The Service continued to work with neighbouring authorities regarding shared services.
- We Introduced a "Letter to the Child" which foster carers write.
- We continued with Covid recovery.
- Children in foster care continued to be involved in participation strategies through the Breakthrough group with Who Cares? Scotland.
- Managers within the Fostering Service continued to attend Social Work Scotland meetings and liaise with neighbouring authorities.
- We have encouraged birth families to contribute to foster care reviews.
- We have continued to offer Non-Violent Resistance training to carers.
- We have continued to try to increase the number of support carers
- Evening training was re-introduced.
- The service began embedding Egress which is an electronic communication system to allow us to communicate electronically and securely with our foster carers.

Recruitment activity

The Service Manager and the fostering Senior Social Worker work with Renfrewshire Council's Communication team to continue to develop and refine our recruitment strategy. It is recognised nationally that there is a shortage of foster carers. We know that fear of the unknown and concerns about managing complex behaviours often get in the way of people coming forward to foster. For these reasons, our recruitment strategy will focus on the excellent wraparound support we provide to our carers.

If the person who has enquired wishes to take the next step, an initial visit is completed by a social worker from the fostering team. After the initial visit, a discussion takes place between the visiting social worker and the senior social worker to consider whether the enquirers should be invited to preparation groups. (See appendix 1 for fostering criteria). The usual process is that applications to be assessed as a foster carer are not submitted by applicants until after they have completed the preparation groups.

During the period 1 August 2021- 31 July 2022 the service assessed eight households to become foster carers. Of these, four are being assessed as short break carers, one as an interim carer and one as interim and permanent. Two households decided not to continue with the process.

Preparation groups

The Fostering Service ran only one set of preparation groups in the reporting period due to low numbers. The group ran over April and May 2022 and included two households from Renfrewshire and one household from a neighbouring authority.

The preparation groups are the start of the assessment process and an opportunity for the participants to receive more in-depth information and to discuss the implications of fostering and as such it is important that all enquirers attend. Experienced foster carers come along to talk to the group about their different experiences of caring for foster children. The preparation groups cover a range of topics including managing challenging behaviour, brain development, attachment issues, safer care and working with birth parents.

Preparation groups run for five evening sessions. The facilitators from the fostering team make use of the Fostering Network 'Skills to Foster' materials, as well as up-to-date research and our own training materials.

New foster carers and carers deregistered

In the period 01.08.21 – 31.07.22, an additional two fostering households were approved as new foster carers. One household was approved as interim and one household as a short break foster carer.

Between 01.08.21 – 31.07.22, nine fostering households were deregistered for the following reasons:

- Five fostering household resigned due to a change in their personal circumstances.
- Three fostering households retired after many years and coming to the end of their fostering career.
- One fostering household retired to become a supported carer for the young person in their care.

Foster Carer Reviews

Foster Carers have a review by the Fostering Panel at the end of their first year of fostering and every three years thereafter. Outwith this timescale, foster carers will also return to Panel if their registration requires a review due to a change in registration, consideration of a complaint or allegation, breakdown, or a significant change in circumstances.

Between 1.08.21 and 31.07.22 the Fostering and Adoption Panel reviewed 20 foster care households in addition to the two first year reviews (total 22).

Foster carer reviews are an opportunity for foster carers to talk about their experience, training, and support etc. Renfrewshire Council's foster carers, in the main expressed satisfaction with their experiences of fostering and their learning and remain enthusiastic and committed. They have found the support provided by their social worker to be beneficial and available as required. Foster carers have attended less training during this period as many do not find the virtual method conducive to their learning. (We have since reverted to face-to-face training).

Foster carers are internally reviewed on an annual basis, by Social Work Managers. The foster carers provide written and verbal contribution to the review process, as well as written reports from their birth children. Reports by their supervising social worker and child's social worker are all part of the review process. Foster children are encouraged to contribute to the review process and this year there has been a development with regards to birth parents being encouraged to submit a report for the Foster Carer Review regarding the care their child/children is receiving.

Within the reporting period, 55 Foster Carer Reviews took place in total including those at panel.

The duties of the supervising social workers from the fostering team are to keep regular contact with the foster carers, this includes home visits and telephone contact. Between January and May 2021 home visits were again suspended and all communication was virtual. Visits would generally take place on a four to six-weekly basis, depending on the issues arising. Contact and support was much more frequent during the pandemic. Home visits consist of supervision, training, and development, as well as performing a range of duties including ensuring health and safety checks are carried out annually, annual medical information is received and PVG checks are up to date. Safer caring policies are in place for each fostering household which include a minimum of two unannounced visits annually. Supervising social workers will also attend Looked After Children review meetings and Children's Hearings with the carers. Joint visits by the child's social worker and the social worker from the fostering team takes places when a child first moves to live with a foster carer and routinely thereafter.

Permanent Foster Carers

Nine children's plans for Permanence Orders were approved between 1.08.21 - 31.07.22. Six of the children were liked to their current foster carers for the purpose of permanent fostering. These children remained with their carers who were re-assessed as permanent carers by the fostering team.

Foster carer training

Changes to training provided to Renfrewshire Council foster carers had to be addressed due to the pandemic. The support provided to foster carers by their supervising social worker continued to address training needs and the development of skills etc.

The fostering service also provided mandatory training on fire safety, first aid and safer caring. Some of this training was disrupted by the pandemic. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service resumed fire safety training in June 2022 which will be offered on an ongoing basis and all carers will be expected to attend. West of Scotland College is to restart first aid training. Mandatory training should be updated every three years.

Social workers and foster carers can also attend external training courses. The Fostering Network and AFKA have provided training to new social workers within the Fostering and Adoption Team including Skills to Foster, the Role of the Supervising Social Worker and Assessment of foster carers and adopters. Staff have also attended other training relevant to their role.

Non-Violent Resistance Intervention

Non-Violent Resistance (NVR), is an intervention to address children and young people's violent or controlling behaviours. It was developed by Haim Omer, a psychotherapist, academic researcher, and tenured professor of Psychology at Tel Aviv University. NVR is grounded in attachment theory and an understanding of the impact of early trauma. Within NVR, the target for change is the carer rather than the child.

Foster carers' NVR group April to June 2022

Four households participated in this training. The children ranged between five and nine years with behaviour issues including violence at home, violence in school and difficulty with relationships.

The course input was tailored to the needs of foster carers and covered NVR principles, attachment theory, the impact of trauma on brain development and emotional regulation and the risk of Blocked Care (secondary trauma experienced by carers). NVR tools explored included encouraging self-awareness and self-care, understanding of the child's perspective in situations of control, de-escalatory techniques, techniques to maintain the connection between carer and child and the importance of actively using supports.

Numerous positive comments were received from carers who have used this intervention all of which felt it helped their situation with the child they were caring for.

NVR will remain a feature in the fostering service's role in supporting young people and their carers sustain stable family life and, in many cases, prevent breakdown.

Foster Carers' Support Group

The foster carers have their own informal support group where they can share information/experiences and any issues raised within the group are fed back to the fostering team via the carers supervising social worker or the foster carers consultation group. This group had become a "What's App" group during the pandemic with active and ongoing communication. Some carers were keen to get back to a face-to-face group and this has taken place monthly over the past few months.

On Sunday 29th May the fostering service hosted a Foster Carer Day out. The location was Finlaystone House Country Park, and the event had a great response from our carers. 21 fostering households took part. It was fantastic to see a mix of foster children, carer's children and grandchildren, and the families of some of the fostering team mixing and enjoying the woodland, play equipment, den building and display of birds of prey. This was attended by the Head of Child Care and Justice and the Children's Service Manager. The feedback received

following the event from carers and workers alike has been hugely positive, making this an event we will be keen to repeat.

Consultation Group

The Carers Consultation Group met four times between 01.08.21 and 31.07.22. These have all taken place virtually. All Foster Carers are invited to this group, and it is attended by the Senior Social Worker Fostering, the Service Manager and on two occasions the Registered Manager. This provides an opportunity for foster carers to be kept updated with any changes within the service and discuss any issues that have arisen for them or other carers. It is also the opportunity for more informal discussion. Feedback to carers who do not attend is through the newsletter, minutes, or discussion with their own Supervising Social Worker.

Breakthrough Group (group for children who live in foster care who create a newsletter, taking up issues and campaigns on matters that affect them)

This group was originally set up in November 2015 as a participation group for children and young people in foster care. The group is run and facilitated by Renfrewshire Fostering Team and Who Cares? Scotland. This group meets monthly. The group produce a newsletter which is then sent out to all Renfrewshire children over eight years of age who are in foster care.

The group currently have and always maintained a group membership of around eight to 12 young people.

During the pandemic, the group continued virtually but in consultation with the young people and when allowed it gradually moved to face to face catch ups. Over the past year the group has had various local outings and activities including bowling, Christmas meal and local hikes up Glennifer Braes and an Easter Egg Hunt.

Since March 2022 monthly meet ups have recommenced in local premises face to face.

In consultation with the young people, old and new members, the group have decided to develop their newsletter to online, interactive, communication which is more easily accessible to other young people.

Newsletter for Foster Carers

The fostering newsletter is produced in Spring, Summer and Winter editions and distributed to all foster carers by e-mail. The focus of the newsletter is about providing the carers with updates on legal or practice changes that affect them or the children they care for, providing some thought provoking articles about issues that affect fostered children, keeping them informed of changes within the child care team, and advertising training opportunities. Topics covered in the last year include updates on the implications of 'The Promise', protocols for children who go missing from placement, preparing children for children's hearings, therapeutic life story work, the importance of play in child development and the meaning of care records for young people. Much of the inspiration for the topic choice comes from the Carers' Consultation Group, the CELCIS website and Council's Children's Services 'Learning gone viral' newsletter. The fostering quarterly newsletter continues to go out to all fostering households. Foster carers are encouraged to contribute to the newsletter in relation to their learning and experiences.

Future developments of the fostering service 2022 – 2023

1. Book Group for foster carers.
2. Buddy system for foster carers.
3. Continuing professional development plan for carers training needs analysis.
4. Group for foster carers of teenagers.
5. Digitalisation of records/communication.
6. Links with LGBTQi.
7. Recruitment campaign with Fostering and disability team to develop focussed recruitment for children with disability.
8. All fostering and adoption staff team to become "Promise Keepers".
9. Develop therapeutic based transitions for children moving to permanence similar to adoption transitions.
10. Introduce support network meetings for applicants.
11. Calendar of events for foster carers and families.
12. Improve carer consultation both with fostering service and wider services.
13. Introduce Assessment Agreement with new applicants.
14. Continue to recruit foster carers on an annual basis.
15. Continue to develop specific training for foster carers and peer led workshops.
16. Continue to develop participation of young people in foster carers reviews.
17. Continue to work with neighbouring authorities regarding shared services and development days.
18. To support the Breakthrough Group in relation to increasing their membership.
19. To consult with children/young people of foster carers in relation to future support groups.
20. To improve the quality of information to children and their families about foster care.
21. Move towards electronic communication with carers by introduction of egress.
22. To involve carers in induction process for new social workers.
23. NVR groups to be offered more frequently.
24. Increase the number of support carers to reduce need for formal short breaks.
25. Offer evening training again which also includes support carers.

Report on the Supported Carer and Continuing Care Service

Supported carers are carers who look after young adults (aged 18-21) who have remained in a foster placement on a continuing care basis. Most of our supported carers were previously the fosters carers for the child and transitioned to Supported Carers when the young person reached the age of 18.

The Service has one full time social worker and is managed by the Senior Social Worker in the fostering service and the registered manager is the Service Manager. Supported carer assessments are completed in advance of the young person turning 18 and are presented to Renfrewshire Council's Fostering Panel. Within the period 01.08.21 to 31.07.22 the Fostering Panel has approved 8 supported carers, 5 of whom were previously foster carers for Renfrewshire Council and 3 from Independent Fostering Agencies.

All young adults whose plan is presented at the Fostering Panel have Pathway Plans completed and a Throughcare Worker allocated to them. The outcome for young adults involved in the Supported Carers Service is reported to the Scottish Government twice a year. The outcomes for young people who are in these placements remain overwhelmingly positive and are evidenced below.

The Service currently have 11 supported carers supporting 11 young people. Of the 11 young people in supported care, 8 attend college placements fulltime, 2 are attending university and 1 is in the final year of their secondary education.

4 placements were extended until the end of the academic year 2022 to minimise disruption and allow young people to complete their further education without disruption. This included a young person completing their degree at university and another completed the 3rd year of their nursing degree.

The Supported Carers Service now produces newsletters as an opportunity to promote the service, discuss legislative and operational changes and provide reading materials, relevant to their role.

5 of the carers attended a sexual health awareness training day delivered by an NHS sexual health specialist. The aims of the training to enhance carers knowledge of sexual health matters to allow them to support our young people to develop good sexual health.

The social worker in the Supported Care and Continuing Care service attends the quarterly STAF (Scottish Throughcare & Aftercare Forum) which is a national gathering of equivalent services, where service delivery and development is shared and discussed.

Future Development of the Service

Recruitment campaign, using the skills of some of our care experienced young people who will complete some photography work to help in the advertising campaign to recruit new carers.

Report on the Adoption Service

Developments within the adoption service in Renfrewshire 2021- 2022

1. Distribution and development of a quarterly newsletter.
2. Continued development of the adoption support group and training opportunities for adoptive parents.
3. Developed extended family members' participation in the adoption assessment process.
4. Development of support to birth parents with regards to understanding the plan for their child and supporting a birth parent with letter box contact.
5. Developing further the skillset within the fostering and adoption service to work with foster carers and adopters using Thera play strategies to assist a child with the transition from foster carer to an adoptive family.
6. Continued work with Scottish Adoption Support Services (SAAS - Barnardo's) for young people, birth parents and adopters requiring additional support, where appropriate.
7. Continued work with Scottish Adoption Register/Link maker.
8. Continued work with colleagues in locality teams to raise the profile of the adoption service and to provide a clear understanding of the work being undertaken to ensure positive outcomes for children.

9. Developed specialist practice in the adoption service by working with our neighbouring authorities and social work services.

Recruitment, Preparation & Assessment of Adoptive Parents

Within the reporting period the Adoption Service received 28 initial enquiries which is a significant increase from previous years. Of these 7 did not progress due to a range of issues. There have been 2 preparation groups held, in March/April 2022 and 6 households attended, and in May/June 2022 7 households attended. The feedback received was extremely positive, particularly in relation to guest speakers with lived experience and the interactive and visual experiences. As a service we will be reviewing our preparation group materials with a focus on co-facilitation with adoptive parents and the introduction of handouts and process flowcharts. We started preparation groups in November 2022 and 5 households attended these. We will follow up with a home visit in January 2023 when we will give them applications forms to them to apply to be assessed as adopters.

The Adoption service has received seven adoption applications and at the time of reporting three applications were pending. Three further applications withdrew. Two new adoptive applications were considered and approved at the Adoption panel. Feedback received about the adoption assessment has highlighted that although the process is lengthy there was recognition that the content and discussions although at time difficult are necessary in preparing for the next stages of the adoption journey. Over the course of the reporting period, assessment sessions have returned to face to face which has been welcomed by adoption applicants. The service has also created a new initial enquiry report template which is being piloted. There has been improvement work done on the support network meetings. For every assessment there will be a direct observation of adoption applicant's interactions with children.

Renfrewshire Council's Adoption service has continued to use Scotland's Adoption Register. Once applicants are approved as adopters their information and what age of child they have been approved for is added to the Register. Adoption social workers across Scotland are able to access this information should they be trying to place a child for adoption.

Family Finding

There continues to be a need for adoptive parents for children of all ages particularly for brother and sister groups and older children. Nationally, there has been a reduction in the number of children being placed for adoption which has seen the average wait for a child identified for adoptive families' significantly increase. Consequently, there are a large number of adoptive parents on Scotland's Adoption Register.

Scotland's Adoption Register has reintroduced face to face Adoption Exchange days and Adoption Activity Days. The Register has continued to support practitioners in achieving permanence for children Scotland.

During the recording period, there has been active family finding for 4 children in Renfrewshire. Each has an adoptive family link identified, 3 of these children have been placed with their adoptive family.

The Adoption Register (Scotland)

Scotland's Adoption Register continues to be a statutory service fully funded by the Scottish Government which provides a free service to support local authorities and voluntary agencies with family finding activity. The Adoption Register is where Adoptive families once approved

have their approval details registered. The Adoption Register is committed to facilitating social workers' overall goal of securing children's futures through moves to permanent families.

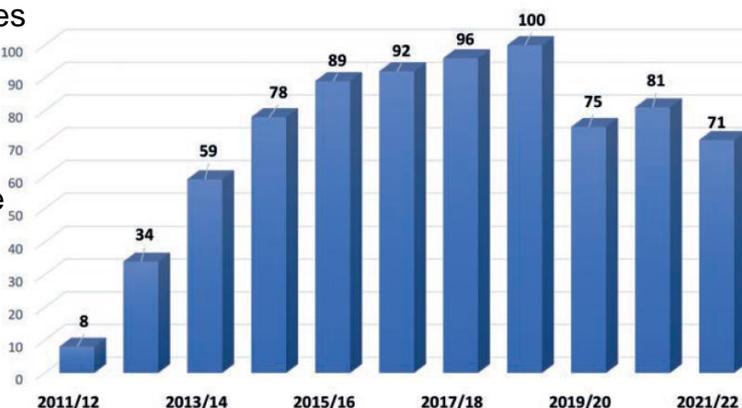
A total of 71 children were matched with adoptive families through the Scottish Adoption Register in 21/22.

The Register played an active role alongside AFKA Scotland and Adoption UK in the delivery of Adoption Week Scotland 2021 which explored the current face of adoption. Throughout the week there was a focus on recent developments that have had a positive impact on the adoption community, from a better understanding of early years trauma to new legislation around the rights of brothers and sisters. The Adoption Register is committed to The Promise Scotland in its encouragement and support for the recruitment of adoptive families for sibling groups, to keep brothers and sister together alongside promoting the importance of informing and preparing adoptive families to maintain relationships between brothers and sisters when they are living apart in addition to maintaining connections with their family of origin.

The Adoption Register also plays an active role in both the National Implementation Group and Short Life Working Group which the Senior Social Worker for Adoption in Renfrewshire is a part of. This group is addressing the requirements for a national response to ensuring that brothers and sisters benefit from the Staying Together and Connected programme arising from both the Promise and the positive changes to the Children (Scotland) Act 2020.

The Adoption Register continues to improve the process and to support adoption agencies in reducing delays in matching children with adoptive families.

MATCHES MADE VIA THE REGISTER 2011-31ST MARCH 2022



In the year 2020/21, matches rose again despite Covid-19, perhaps indicating a more confident approach to seeking permanence for children through adoption. The longer term impact of Covid-19 is being debated as having a major influence on the numbers of children coming to the Adoption Register.

It has impacted upon the ability of practitioners to carry out and complete assessments required to inform decision making for children's plans. However, there is a greater emphasis on keeping children within their wider families and communities resulting a large increase in the number of Kinship families across Scotland. This is likely to be correlated with the decrease in children's permanence plans involving adoption.

The trend for fewer adoptions in Scotland reflects the UK wide experience of lower numbers of children moving to adoptive families. Despite this, there continues to be a vital role played by the Adoption Registers in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. England is also returning to having a central service with its current focus on setting up their Adoption Register.

GENDER

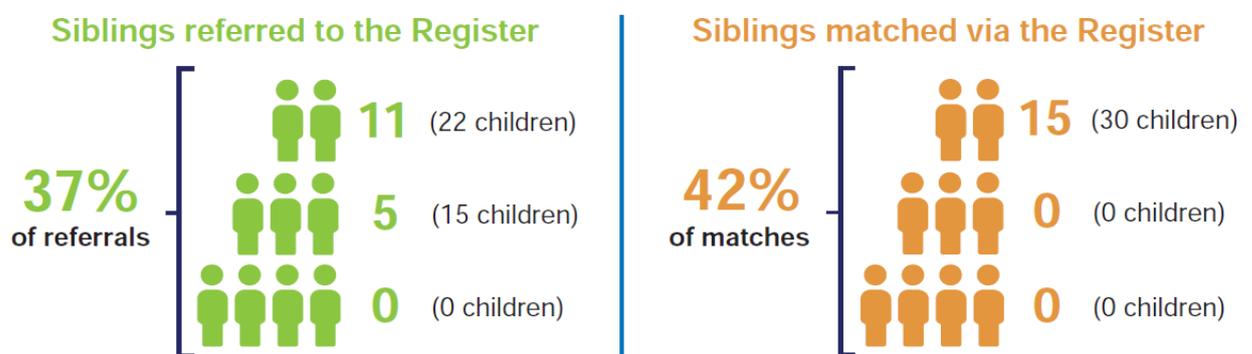
Of the 100 children referred to the Register in 21/22, 56 were girls and 44 were boys. This is the first time that more girls than boys have been referred to the Register since its inception in 2011. However, in a similar trend to last year's figures where 46% of referrals were girls, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of girls referred over the last two years. In 2018/19, only 35% of referrals were girls.

ETHNICITY

92 (92%) were white (87 White Scottish) and (5 White English). 0 (0%) were from an Asian background. 6 (6%) were from a multi-ethnic background. 2 (2%) were from Black African background.

SIBLINGS

37% of the children referred to the register in 2021/22 were part of a sibling group. This is a slight decrease from the 41% last year. 42% of the matches made in 2020/21 were sibling groups. This is a slightly lower percentage than the 48% of matches made in the previous year (2019/20) but in line with an increasing trend of siblings being matched via the Register.



Renfrewshire Adoption Plans and Links

During the period 01.08.2021 to 31.07.22, 6 children were presented to the Adoption Panel for consideration of their adoption plans and links. This is almost half of the number of adoption plans considered in the previous year. The 6 children presented included 2 children from a sibling group. In all cases the Agency Decision Maker accepted the panel's recommendations to approve the adoption plan and links between the child and their prospective adopters.

Renfrewshire Council make good use of the Scottish Adoption Register by way of Link maker and Adoption Exchange days. The Scottish Government's GIRFEC strategy for Looked After Children and Young People (November 2015) identifies the achievement of 'early permanence' as one of its key strategic priorities. Legislation and guidance introduced in 2016 support that goal and reinforced the role of the Adoption Register for the relatively small number of children who are unable to stay with their own family and require an adoptive placement.

Adoption Support Group

Over recent years it has been more challenging to reach out to adoptive families through the adoption support group due to covid restrictions and therefore we have seen a reduction in the number of adoptive families engaging in this support. Feedback would suggest that the virtual opportunities offered were not as helpful as face-to-face group. As 2022 has progressed the adoption support group has returned to being face to face. The support group met in April and in June and the families who attended enjoyed this. The men's adoption support group also met face to face on two occasions and was well attended. Most adopters who attend the group meet other adopters in similar situations and hear about strategies and tips for managing different situations. The group has also been the starting point for the development of friendships and informal supports.

A survey regarding adoption support was shared with our adoptive parents in January 2022 and the overwhelming message was for an increase in support groups and training opportunities for adoptive parents. We continue to offer all adoptive families access to training through Barnardos and we are keen to further develop the support and training offer through our service.

Adoption Support to Individual Families

Throughout the year the adoption team have provided adoption support on an individual basis to 26 adoptive families who have approached the service for support, an increase on the previous year. Barnardo's Scottish Adoption Advice Service. (SAAS) also continues to offer support to Renfrewshire families. 44 children in 33 families received an adoptive allowance during the reporting period.

Post Adoption Support Planning meetings take place, for all children when an adoption order is granted to consider their support needs. During the last year there has been the introduction of an allocated social worker remaining with the adoptive parents for 1 year following the granting of an adoption order at which point the adoptive family are invited to a review meeting to consider any further adoption supports required.

Within Renfrewshire we have just under 70 adoptive families on our mailing list who receive our quarterly newsletter and notification of all support groups and training events.

Adoption Newsletter

The adoption newsletter is produced 4 times per year. Within this newsletter useful articles for national adoption websites and organisations are included. Stories are encouraged from adopters on any issues they have experienced. The feedback received is that the recipients benefit from reading about other adopter's stories.

Also, as the adoption support service has increased over the years, the service has brought out various new leaflets, have summer activities with the children and support group feedback is usually included to encourage others to join. Each newsletter has an update on training information.

During the pandemic lots of useful articles were shared on adoption/parenting and young people's mental health which were current issues for many families.

Birth Relative Support

The service has continued to support birth family members affected by adoption. The approach to this work is building direct relationships with birth parents over time to work together on maintaining a meaningful role in their child's lives or with their own recovery of losing a child through adoption. The service continues to offer support to birth families once the plan is made for their child/children to be adopted and recognise this support will be required at different stages of the adoption journey and should be available lifelong. Through advice and guidance, support is offered to birth family members to understand the process of their child being placed for adoption and work closely with them in order to gather information for the child's life story.

In January 2022, the adoption service made an application through the Corra Foundation to a fund set up by the Scottish Government to support birth parents who no longer have care of their children. In April 2022, Renfrewshire Council were awarded £50,000. This funding will be

predominantly used to fund a temporary social work assistant post for 1 year. We will have the new person in post in January 2023.

In May 2022, the Adoption team had a development session to consider the views and aims of service, the criteria and referral pathway and the project plan which will form the basis of the service proposal. A birth family members consultation will be undertaken in the coming year regarding the setup of the service which will add to the service proposal.

The service is also actively participating in the learning network set up through the Corra Foundation of all grant holders.

Letter Box Contact

Letterbox contact provides contact between birth families and the adoptive parents or contact between siblings. The letterbox service can provide support in writing and replying to letters. Currently the letterbox service has a caseload of 115 which 71 are operational. Letterbox contact varies on an individual case basis, mostly contacts are annual, however we have some which are twice, three times or quarterly.

The service has now introduced individual support and offered electronic methods of letterbox to support some participants to engage via email. This has encouraged a high uptake of participants.

Future developments of the adoption service

Over the next year the service intends to strengthen the adoption service by developing the following:

1. A focussed recruitment drive for adopters who may consider assessment for brothers and sisters as opposed to one child.
2. Further recruitment of new Fostering and Adoption Panel Members as required.
3. Increase opportunities of support groups to adoptive families and their children.
4. Develop work with birth families by offering direct support to all birth parents and birth family members including birth brothers and sisters who have been affected by the loss of a child through adoption.
5. Develop extended family member's participation in the adoption assessment process.
6. Highlight the importance of maintaining links through adoption during Adoption Week Scotland.
7. Development of joint work and training opportunities with neighbouring local authorities to share expertise.
8. Review and develop the criteria, process and procedures for adoption support needs assessment, adoption support plans and reviews.

Conclusion

This report has highlighted the work of the Fostering, Adoption and Supported Carers Services and the work of the Fostering and Adoption Panel during August 2021-July 2022. The activity of the Fostering and Adoption Panel reflects the number of children unable to live with their birth families within Renfrewshire.

The Report highlights recovery measures that were in place using a hybrid model of both electronic platforms and direct work with foster carers and adopters, to ensure that children's plans were being progressed by the Fostering and Adoption Panel and that children's needs were been met. The Panel has now returned to being fully face to face.

The Fostering, Adoption and Supported Carers Services are committed to safeguarding children's lives in Renfrewshire and to continual improvement.

As the Registered Manager for the Fostering and Adoption Service, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our panel members for their commitment to Renfrewshire's most vulnerable children.

Foster Carers dedication to the children in their care means that we can ensure the best outcomes for them to a consistently high standard. We look forward to the coming year and to progressing our work with all partner agencies to continue to improve the outcomes and secure the future of Renfrewshire's most vulnerable children.

Clare Cunning
Social Work Manager
(Registered Manager of both services)

Appendix 1 Renfrewshire Council Fostering Criteria

Who Can Foster?

Renfrewshire Council accepts applications from different backgrounds as everyone has their own individual experience to offer.

Requirements to foster:

1. Are over 21 years
2. Are in good health
3. Have a spare bedroom.

You can be:

1. Single, married, cohabiting or in a civil partnership
2. Own or rent the property you live in
3. Be employed or unemployed
4. Be of any religious background or sexual orientation

Preparation Groups

Enquirers will be required to attend preparation groups before making a formal application. The purpose of these groups is to provide the opportunity to learn more about fostering, and the children who require to be in a foster placement.

If preparation groups are not available other means will be considered to provide and share information with enquirers.

Local Authority, Health, and Police Checks

All applicants will be subject to stringent local authority, health, and police checks. These will extend to any other resident in the household over 16 years of age and to anyone who will have care of the child.

Renfrewshire Council Adoption Criteria

Age

All applicants must be over 21 years of age.

Status

Applications will be considered from couples or single applicants irrespective of their sexuality.

A couple may be the same sex or unmarried. Same sex couples are not required to be in a Civil Partnership.

Joint applicants must be in an enduring family relationship.

Preparation Groups

Enquirers will be required to attend preparation groups, if groups are available, prior to making a formal application. The purpose of these groups is to provide enquiries with the opportunity to learn more about the children available for adoption, their backgrounds and the genetic factors adopters may have to consider when parenting adopted children.

If preparation groups are not available other means will be considered to provide and share information with enquiries.

Infertility

Prospective adopters should have completed infertility investigations at least 6 months prior to application.

Local Authority Health and Police Checks

All applicants will be subject to stringent local authority health and police checks. These will extend to any other resident in the household over 16 years of age and to anyone who will have care of the child.



Renfrewshire
Council

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
FOSTERING AND ADOPTION PANEL

CONSTITUTION

Updated – November 2022

1. Title

The Panel shall be known as the Fostering and Adoption Panel.

2. Remit

The Panel is generic and will deal with both fostering and adoption. Whilst both may be dealt with within the same sitting of the Panel, the business will be clearly defined, and separate minutes produced.

3. Composition

The panel membership shall consist of no less than six persons and Panel members should have knowledge and experience of the community it serves. The Panel shall include a qualified Medical Practitioner, preferably a paediatrician, who will act as a Medical Adviser; and a Solicitor or Advocate who will act as Legal Adviser. Other members should, where possible, include a foster carer or adopter, a current or previous childcare manager from Children's Services, an education officer such as a head teacher, a psychologist, an independent representative from a relevant childcare agency.

4. Chair

The panel shall be chaired by a senior manager from Children's Services, or an identified independent chairperson.

5. Term of Office

Apart from the Medical and Legal Advisers and the managers of the Fostering and Adoption team, panel members shall serve for a period of three years with an option of renewing after each three years. The need to ensure continuity and stability is balanced against the need to safeguard against complacency and to provide fresh perspectives. However, if natural wastage does not provide sufficient turnover of membership the membership of the panel will be reviewed in consultation with the Agency Decision Maker.

6. Duties of Panel Members.

Panel members shall be expected to read all reports in advance of panel meetings and prepare questions they wish to have answered, with an indication of the information/evidence necessary to be sought to address this question.

Panel members are expected to give a clear view of their recommendation and their reasons.

Panel members shall have a duty of confidentiality and security towards all panel papers sent to them.

Panel members are required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure check prior to their initial term of office, and any subsequent period in office.

Panel members will be expected to attend at least 5 panel meetings in any one calendar year and to participate in training provided to assist them in carrying out their duties.

Panel members will be expected to attend bi-annual business meetings where issues arising over the previous period will be discussed, the minute of these meetings will be submitted to the Agency Decision Maker for approval.

Where the adoption agency is of the opinion that any member of the adoption and fostering panel is unsuitable or unable to remain as a member, it may terminate membership at any time by giving notice in writing with reasons.

7. Frequency of Meetings

The Panel should meet at least once per month. If necessary extra meetings will be convened as required. At least **twice** per annum the panel shall hold a business meeting to review performance and debate general issues. An annual report will be provided for the Chief Social Work Officer and the appropriate Council Policy Board.

8. Reports

All reports must be sent electronically to panel members at least five working days before the meeting date. All reports must be treated and secured confidentially.

Reports on children or young people where permanence is being considered, will be presented to the panel, providing the information required by statutory regulations. A photograph of the child may also be made available to the panel. Reports on applicants will also be presented, providing the information required by statutory regulations. A Linking Meeting minute will accompany these reports together with the original minute approving the applicants when a proposed placement is to be considered.

9. Decision Making

Every effort will be made to reach a consensus on all recommendations. In the case of unresolved differences, a decision on the recommendation may be reached by a **majority** vote. The medical adviser, legal adviser and panel adviser will not have a vote. In the event of there not being a majority vote the chair will have a casting vote. The recommendation will then be passed to the Agency Decision Maker who has four options:

- a) To accept the recommendation
- b) To reject the recommendation
- c) To vary the recommendation
- d) To defer a decision for further work to be undertaken

10. Feedback

A questionnaire will be issued to all those who attend the Panel. Feedback from questionnaires will be reported at the bi-annual business meetings.

Adoption panels

Where the panel sits as an adoption panel, the following conditions shall apply

1. Quorum

When the panel is sitting as an adoption panel, a quorum shall consist of no less than three persons, excluding the medical, legal and panel advisers.

Where the panel is considering the adoption of a child, the panel must obtain a written assessment of the child's health from the doctor who carried out a medical examination (or from the agency's medical adviser of the child).

Where the panel is considering the adoption of a child, there must be a legal adviser present at the panel when the recommendation is made or written legal advice has been provided to the panel by the legal adviser.

2. Functions

The purpose of the Panel is to carry out the functions set out in the Adoption Agencies (Scotland) Regulations 2009. The panel should ensure that the quality of assessment in relation to the case of every child being considered and the case of every prospective adopter being considered is of the highest quality. Panel will have the option to defer a case if they are of the view the paperwork provided is not sufficient to support a recommendation. Panel will provide feedback on the quality of paperwork and presentation through the Panel adviser, **who will then provide constructive feedback to the social worker.**

- (1) The adoption panel must consider–
 - (a) the case of every child.
 - (b) every proposed placement; and
 - (c) the case of each prospective adopter, referred to it by the adoption agency.

- (2) The adoption panel must make recommendations on the following matters: –
 - (a) whether adoption is in the best interests of the child.
 - (b) whether an application for a permanence order granting authority for the child to be adopted should be made.
 - (c) whether a prospective adopter is suitable or continues to be suitable to be an adoptive parent.

- (d) whether a prospective adopter would be a suitable adoptive parent for a particular child.
 - (e) whether adoption allowances or other financial assistance should be made available to adopters **at the time of placement or thereafter**.
 - (f) the circumstances of all children in respect of whom a permanence order with authority to adopt has been granted, but who have not been placed for adoption within 6 months from the making of the order.
 - (g) The review of approved adoptive carers who have not had a child placed with them 12 months after approval; and
 - (h) any other matter referred to the adoption panel which is relevant to the adoption agency's functions under the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007.
- (3) Before an adoption panel recommends that adoption is in the best interests of the child, it must consider all alternatives to adoption which will be recorded within the minute of the Panel.
- (4) The adoption panel should always consider current and proposed future **family** contact arrangements and a clear rationale recorded as to why it is or is not in the child's best interests.
- (5) Before making a recommendation whether a prospective adopter would be a suitable adoptive parent for a particular child, the adoption panel must—
- (a) at the meeting of the panel at which the recommendation is to be made, be satisfied that adoption is in the best interests of the child; or
 - (b) be satisfied that an adoption agency decision has been made that adoption is in the best interests of the child; and
 - (c) in either case—
 - (i) at the meeting of the panel at which the recommendation is to be made, recommend that the prospective adopter is suitable to be an adoptive parent; or
 - (ii) be satisfied that an adoption agency decision has been made that the prospective adopter is suitable to be an adoptive parent.
- (6) In carrying out its functions, the adoption panel must have regard to—
- (a) the duties imposed on the adoption agency by section 14 of the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007.
 - (b) all the information and reports passed to it.
 - (c) any other information which may be provided to it on request; and
 - (d) where appropriate, any legal advice in relation to each case.

3. Attendance at Panels

- (1) Where applicants are being considered as adopters or their approval as adopters is being reviewed where no placement has been made within 12 months of being approved, their Social Worker will present their application. The applicants will also be invited to participate in the discussion to provide clarification, answer questions and give their views of the process. An opportunity for applicants to ask questions will also be provided. The Social Worker and the applicants may then be asked to leave the room while panel members discuss the application.
- (2) Where adoption for a child is being considered, the presenting Social Worker for the child will attend the Panel to present the case for permanence. When a proposed adoptive placement is being considered, the Social Worker for the prospective adopter (s) will also attend the discussion. The prospective adopter(s) will also be invited to participate in the discussion to provide clarification, answer members' questions and give their view of the process. An opportunity for the prospective adopters to ask questions will also be provided. Social Workers and the prospective adopters may then be asked to leave the room while panel members discuss the application.
- (3) Children or young people may attend the panel with their social worker if this is considered by the worker and their supervisor to be beneficial to the child / young person. In such cases the child / young person will join the meeting after the initial discussion between panel members and the social worker and will leave while the panel reaches its decision on the final recommendation. In other situations, the child / young person may wish to submit their views in writing or by other means for example, meeting with the panel chair and a panel member out with the panel meeting.
- (4) Birth parents will be given the opportunity to advise the adoption panel of their views regarding the proposed application for adoption of their child. These views may be given in writing or may be given to a panel member, or members, and/ or panel adviser at a meeting before the adoption panel meeting, depending on the individual circumstances of the case.
- (5) Observers may attend the panel subject to prior agreement with the Panel Chair.

4. Minutes

A Minute taker shall be provided to take minutes of the meeting which will be typed and forwarded to the chair within five working days. The chair will return the minutes with any

amendments within four working days in order that the agency decision maker can consider the panel recommendations, decide, and appropriate notifications can be sent out within the required time scales. The Agency Decision Maker must decide within fourteen days of the panel recommendation; and must give notification of that decision within seven days to the individuals specified in the Adoption Agencies (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

5. Review

Where a prospective adopter has, within 28 days of receiving the decision from the Agency Decision Maker, requested a review of the decision, the matter must be referred to the adoption panel for a recommendation.

- (1) The referral must be made to a differently constituted adoption panel.
- (2) Where a referral for a review is made the adoption panel must be provided with—
 - (a) a copy of the original decision and reasons for it;
 - (b) The report provided to the adoption panel who made the initial recommendation
 - (c) any representations received by the adoption agency from the prospective adopter; and
 - (d) any other relevant information.
- (3) The adoption panel must consider the case referred to it and make a fresh recommendation to the adoption agency as to whether the prospective adopter is suitable to be an adoptive parent.
- (4) The adoption agency must—
 - (a) decide (the “reviewed decision”) within 14 days of the date the fresh recommendation was made: and
 - (b) notify the prospective adopter of its reviewed decision within 7 days of making the reviewed decision.
- (5) Where the reviewed decision is that the prospective adopter is not suitable to be an adoptive parent the notification must—
 - (a) state the reasons for the reviewed decision; and
 - (b) where the adoption panel's fresh recommendation was that the prospective adopter was suitable to be an adoptive parent, include a copy of the adoption panel's fresh recommendation.
- (6) for the avoidance of doubt, a review panel may be a panel from another local authority

Fostering

Where the panel sits as a fostering panel, the following conditions will apply; -

1. Quorum

In relation to fostering a quorum shall consist of three people, excluding the legal, medical and panel advisers

Where the panel is considering a permanence order for a child, it is recommended that a legal adviser be present at the meeting where the recommendation is made, or that written legal advice is provided to the fostering panel.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the panel is to carry out the functions set out in the Looked after Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

The fostering panel must make recommendations on the following matters: –

- (a) whether a prospective foster carer is suitable to be a foster carer.
- (b) whether a foster carer continues to be suitable to be a foster carer. Such reviews should be carried out at a frequency no less than that provided for in the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009

On such a review of the approval of the foster carer the local authority may–

- (i) vary the terms of the approval.
- (ii) terminate the approval; or
- (iii) confirm the decision to approve a person as a foster carer.
- (c) whether a prospective foster carer would be a suitable foster carer for–
 - (i) a particular child or children.
 - (ii) any child.
- (d) the maximum number of children a particular foster carer may have in their care at any one time
- (e) whether an application for a permanence order should be made in respect of a particular child
- (f) whether a particular child should be linked with a particular foster carer or carers for the purposes of permanent fostering
- (g) whether a particular person is suitable to be a foster carer providing a continuing care placement
- (h) whether a particular person is suitable to be a supported carer.

- (i) whether a particular person is suitable to be a supported carer for a particular young person or persons.
- (j) any other matter on which it is asked to give a recommendation

In carrying out its functions the fostering panel must have regard to—

- (a) The duties imposed on the local authority by section 17(1) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.
- (b) all the information and reports passed to it.

3. Attendance

- (a) Where applicants are being considered as foster carers or supported carers, or where the registration of existing foster carers or supported carers is being reviewed, their Social Worker will present their applications. The applicants will also be invited to participate in the discussion to provide clarification, answer questions and give their views of the process. An opportunity for applicants to ask questions will also be provided. The Social Worker and the applicants may then be asked to leave the room while panel members discuss the application.
- (b) Where a permanence order for a child is being considered, the presenting Social Worker for the child shall attend the Panel to present the case for permanence. When it is proposed that a child be linked with foster carers, for the purposes of permanent fostering, the Social Worker for the foster carers will also attend the discussion. The foster carers will also be invited to participate in the discussion to provide clarification, answer members' questions and give their view of the process. An opportunity for the foster carers to ask questions will also be provided. Social Workers and the foster carers may then be asked to leave the room while panel members discuss the application.
- (c) Where the panel is considering de-registering foster carers, the foster carers will receive a copy of the social worker's written report at least two weeks before the hearing. They will have the opportunity to provide their own written submissions, which should be received by the panel chair at least one week before the hearing. The format of the hearing will be agreed beforehand by the chair and panel members. The foster carers will have the opportunity to be present to hear the report of the social worker and will then present their own case to the panel. The procedure will ensure that all parties have a fair hearing and that the process is seen to be transparent and fair to all parties.

- (d) Children or young people may attend the panel with their social worker if this is considered by the worker and their supervisor to be beneficial to the child / young person. In such cases the child / young person will join the meeting after the initial discussion between panel members and the social worker and will leave while the panel reaches its decision on the final recommendation. In other situations, the child / young person may wish to submit their views in writing or by other means for example, meeting with the panel chair and a panel member out with the panel meeting.
- (e) Birth parents will be given the opportunity to advise the fostering panel of their views regarding the proposed application for adoption of their child. These views may be given in writing or may be given to a panel member, or members, and/ or panel adviser at a meeting before the adoption panel meeting, depending on the individual circumstances of the case.
- (f) Observers may attend the panel subject to prior agreement with the Panel Chair.

4. Minutes

A minute taker shall be provided to take minutes of the meeting which will be typed and forwarded to the chair within five working days. The chair will return the minutes with any amendments within four working days in order that the agency decision maker can consider the panel recommendations, decide, and appropriate notification can be sent out within the required time scales. The agency decision maker must decide within fourteen days of the panel recommendations

5. Review

- (1) Where a local authority decides–
 - (a) not to approve a person as a foster carer or supported carer.
 - (b) to vary the terms of approval of a foster carer or supported carer; or
 - (c) to terminate the approval of a foster carer or supported carer,that person may request a review of the decision in terms of the Looked after Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009
- (2) A request for a review must be made within 28 days of receiving the decision of the agency decision maker.
- (3) Where the local authority receives a request for a review, the matter must be referred to a differently constituted panel.

- (4) Where a review is requested, the local authority must provide the differently constituted fostering panel with–
 - (a) a copy of the original decision and reasons made.
 - (b) the information provided to the fostering panel who made the original recommendation.
 - (c) any further representations received by the local authority from the foster carer, supported carer, prospective foster carer, or prospective supported carer; and
 - (d) any other relevant information.

- (5) The fostering panel shall consider the case referred to it and make a fresh recommendation to the local authority.

- (6) In making a recommendation, the panel may recommend that the local authority–
 - (a) vary the terms of the approval.
 - (b) terminate the approval; or
 - (c) approve a person as a foster carer.
 - (d) approve a person as a supported carer

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

Renfrewshire Council
Children’s Services
Renfrewshire House
Cotton Street
Paisley

(HEREINAFTER KNOWN AS “THE COUNCIL”)

AND

..... (NAME OF FOSTER CARER)

..... (NAME OF FOSTER CARER)

..... (FOSTER CARER’S ADDRESS)

.....

.....

.....

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This agreement describes the respective responsibilities and obligations placed upon the Council and upon its registered foster carers for children. This agreement is in respect of foster carers for children aged under eighteen years of age

The sharing of responsibility between Renfrewshire Council and foster carers aims to safeguard and promote the welfare of looked after children. It is a serious undertaking and involves certain essential responsibilities some of which are prescribed by law.

Renfrewshire Council supports partnership with carers in sharing the care of children.

Carers enter into this Partnership Agreement on a self-employed basis as is required by law.

1.1 This agreement has been produced in line with the requirements of:

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011

- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009
- UK National Standards for Foster Care
- National Care Standards – foster care and family placement services

2.0 AGREEMENT

- 2.1 In signing this Agreement the foster carers and the Council agree to abide by the conditions as outlined in this document; and foster carers agree to adhere to the fostering task as contained in the foster carers handbook and to comply with Renfrewshire Council policies and procedures as they relate to the fostering task.

3.0 AIMS OF RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

- 3.1 Renfrewshire Council is committed to best value quality and professional standards of care for all people receiving services from it whether provided directly or indirectly. Renfrewshire Council aims to ensure that every child and young person in Renfrewshire is safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. Renfrewshire Council has corporate parenting responsibilities for children who require to be looked after in terms of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and related legislation. In line with these statutory duties Renfrewshire Council aims to provide and develop services which will safeguard and promote the welfare of looked after children. The welfare of looked after children shall be the paramount concern.

4.0 FOSTER CARER'S DUTIES

- 4.1 Foster carers have a responsibility to provide foster care for children incorporating the core skills, tasks and abilities as set out in the Foster Carers Handbook. At all times foster carers are expected to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. Foster carers are expected to work in partnership with the Council in progressing the child's care plan and implementing the Foster Placement Agreement.
- 4.2 Foster carers must be members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups scheme in connection with working with children, in terms of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007. They will not be approved as foster carers until they have become members of the scheme. A scheme record update will be sought periodically in respect of each foster carer but no less frequently than every three years.
- 4.3 Foster carers must have good health to care for children. A full medical will be undertaken during the assessment process and recorded by their GP on Form AH1. Thereafter year one and four an AH2 should be completed by GP. Year 7 should again be a full medical and AH1 and then the process repeats. In the intervening years carers should complete a medical self-assessment form. If

there are any health concerns a full medical assessment can be undertaken out with the above timescales.

- 4.4 Foster carers must attend training. It is a condition of this agreement that foster carers attend training in First Aid; Safer Care and Fire Safety, every 3 years. In addition, further training must be undertaken as detailed in section 8. The Foster Carers Training Record will be considered at their Foster Care review

5.0 CONTACT BETWEEN THE FOSTER CARER AND THE COUNCIL

- 5.1 For the purpose of this Agreement your contact with the Council will be your supervising social worker.

Name:

Designation: Supervising Social Worker

Address: Renfrewshire Council Social Work

.....
.....
.....
.....

Tel. No.

- 5.2 The Council will inform you should your supervising social worker change.

6.0 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 The Council will provide the foster carers with a copy of the Council's Foster Carers Handbook, UK National Standards for Foster Care and National Care Standards Foster Care and Family Placement Services. The handbook will be updated periodically, and foster carers should read the handbook and familiarise themselves with its contents and procedures.

- 6.2 The Council will ensure that all relevant information it has concerning the child will be made available to the foster carers.

- 6.3 Each placement of a child made with foster carers will be negotiated by your supervising social worker or, if unavailable, a representative of the Fostering Service. Where a child is placed with foster carers on a planned basis, or

where the child is already accommodated by the Council, foster carers will be provided with a copy of the child's plan and the placement alert form.

These documents will provide details of the child's personal history, religious, cultural, and linguistic background and racial origin, details of the child's health need, name of doctor, educational needs, any arrangements re delegation of parental consent in relation to medical treatment, and contact arrangements. All children will be provided with a health assessment according to the Looked After Children protocols. The fostering service will advise foster carers of any known health risks at or prior to placement.

- 6.4 Where a child is placed with foster carers on an emergency basis, these documents will be provided as soon as reasonably practicable. Foster carers will be provided with such information as is known to the Council by the Fostering Team at the point of placement.
- 6.5 The foster carers must contact the child's social worker and their own supervising social worker to seek advice, guidance, and permission in relation to any matter relating to the child's health and wellbeing. This can include, but is not limited to; -
- the matters referred to in paragraph 11.1 of this agreement
 - any intended planned absence of the child from the foster carers' home that involves an overnight stay with any person not already vetted by the Council.
 - any person they intend to use to babysit or childmind.
 - any intention for the child to travel out with the United Kingdom.
 - any intended holiday within the United Kingdom.
 - any plans to undertake any activity that requires to be carried out with a properly licensed organisation with trained staff and adequate levels of supervision.

The handbook will provide further guidance in this area and on all other matters that require advice and guidance.

- 6.6 The foster carers must notify the Council of any changes in their circumstances as soon as they become aware of them. This can include, but is not limited to:
- change of address.
 - changes in the composition of the household.
 - change or loss of employment.
 - changes in the health of any member of the foster carers' household.
 - the foster carer or any member of the foster carer's household being charged with or convicted of a criminal offence.
 - a referral has been made to the Reporter to the Children's Hearing, or grounds have been established in respect of such a referral, in connection with actions or omissions by the foster carer or any member of the foster carers' household.
 - the outcome of any previous application by the foster carers or any other member of the household to foster or adopt children under the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007; the Looked After Children (Scotland)

Regulations 2009 or any equivalent legislation in any other part of the United Kingdom.

- the foster carer or any member of the foster carers' household becoming disqualified from working with children in terms of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007.
 - any other significant change in circumstances which would affect the placement.
- 6.7. Children should not be taken out of school to go on holiday with fosters carers except in exceptional family circumstances and this must be approved by a Senior Social Work Manager in advance.
- 6.8 Foster carers must discuss any request for children in their care to have short breaks in advance of booking a holiday.
- 6.9 Carers are expected to keep individual records on the progress of each child they care for, and may be asked to provide a written summary of the child's progress for the child's social worker
- 6.10 Carers are expected to keep a record of activities and events in the child's life including photographs which can move with the child, and which will provide a history for the child of their time with the carer.
- 6.11 The foster carers must seek the written agreement of the Council if they intend to offer accommodation to a third party / non-family member in the foster home, whether for rent or reward.
- 6.12 The foster carers shall not also operate as registered child minders.
- 6.13 Renfrewshire Council's 'Smoke Free Care Placements, Policy for Renfrewshire Council's Looked After and Accommodated Children and Young People' sets out the position as regards to foster carers who smoke. The Council will not place children under five with foster carers who smoke. Renfrewshire Council expects that at no time will foster carers smoke in front of the children they are caring for. Foster carers are expected to refrain from smoking within their own homes and cars at all times. The fostering team can arrange the appropriate support for carers who wish to stop smoking and sign post them to agencies who can support this. A copy of the policy is available on request.

Renfrewshire Council have a non-smoking policy for all its employees. We would therefore ask carers to refrain from smoking during visits by social work staff.

7.0 SUPPORT

- 7.1 Each carer will have a supervising social worker appointed at the time of approval as foster carer. This worker will meet the foster carers once a month to provide supervision. A written record of these meetings will be provided to the foster carers. In addition, the supervising social worker or alternative

worker from the fostering service may have further meetings with the foster carers to discuss support for the carers in respect of individual children for whom they are caring. The statutory requirements for each individual child's care and protection will be met by the locality team.

- 7.2 The support from the fostering service will be on an individual basis. In addition, the team will consult with carers about what other types of support may be of benefit to them and their families.
- 7.3 Foster carers will be asked to nominate an appropriate friend or relative, to be approved as a support carer, to care for the child for short periods. The support carer will receive the fostering payment in respect of the period they are caring for the child, as detailed in appendix 1
- 7.4 In exceptional circumstances, where the placement requires support, additional breaks may be afforded to the carers. This will be discussed between the carers and their supporting social worker.
- 7.5 The Council will pay an individual subscription for Fostering Network for all foster carers.
- 7.6 Out of hours support will be provided by Glasgow and Partners Emergency Social Work Service who have access to the senior management team in Renfrewshire Council. The Emergency Service can be accessed by contacting: 0300 343 1505.
- 7.7 A foster carers handbook containing information on other resources and supports will be provided, and foster carers are expected to familiarise themselves with its contents. Foster carers should discuss with their supervising social worker anything they do not understand, or about which they are unclear.

8.0 TRAINING

- 8.1 The supervising social worker will discuss with the foster carers their training and development needs. These will be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting as detailed in 7.1. Each foster carer will have a training record noted on the SWIFT system.

9.0 FOSTER CARE REVIEW

- 9.1 In terms of the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009, foster carers will have their approval reviewed by the fostering panel within twelve months of their original approval and every three years thereafter. The fostering panel will make a recommendation to the agency decision maker, as to whether the foster carer continues to be a suitable person, and on the terms of their approval as foster carers. The agency decision maker will decide on these matters.

- 9.2 In addition, foster carers will undergo periodic internal reviews. These reviews will be chaired by a senior social work manager. If foster carers disagree with the decision of the internal review, they may request that the matter be considered by the fostering panel.
- 9.3 The fostering service may seek an early review at any time of the foster carers' approval at the fostering panel if the service deems it appropriate.

10.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 10.1 The foster carers shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that all information concerning looked after children is treated as confidential and kept in a secure place. When a child moves on, any documents relating to the child should be returned to the Council.
- 10.2 The foster carers shall under no circumstances give any information concerning a child they are looking after or have previously looked after to the press or any media organisation or their representative. The foster carers must take all reasonable steps to prevent children being photographed by journalists or other such third parties or being featured in a publication without the permission of the parents or, where the Council holds parental responsibility, the Director of Children's Services.
- 10.3 The foster carers must immediately refer any enquiries from the media or other third parties to the Director of Children's Services via the child's social worker or their supervising social worker.
- 10.4 Foster carers will not post on social media any information relating to any child they are caring for including photographs or any other information.

11.0 MEDICAL OR OTHER EMERGENCIES

- 11.1 The foster carers must inform the social worker for the child and the fostering service or, if after regular office hours, the Glasgow, and Partners Emergency Service in cases of emergency: this can include, but is not limited to; -
- where the child is missing, is seriously ill, or other injury, or serious occurrence affects them.
 - where the police are involved.
 - should any situation arise which threatens the child's wellbeing.
 - upon the death of any child in their care.

Glasgow Partners Emergency Service can be contacted by telephoning: 0300 343 1505.

12.0 INSURANCE

- 12.1 The foster carers will carry adequate household building and contents insurance and will inform their insurance company of their intention to seek approval to foster and request a written acknowledgment from the company to that effect. The contents insurance will be set at a sufficient level to cover the belongings of all children / young people in their care at any given time.
- 12.2 The foster carers must ensure that all health and safety requirements and standards in their home and garden and transport arrangements are met. This includes provision of working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detector. A health and safety check will be completed annually.
- 12.3 Foster carers must have comprehensive car insurance and be insured for business purposes. They should advise their motor insurers that they are foster carers. Appropriate properly fitted restraints / child car seats must be provided for children, and the family car must not be used over capacity at any time.

13. RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS BY FOSTER CARERS

- 13.1 This section deals with the resolution of complaints by foster carers about matters which cannot be dealt with by the fostering panel and agency decision maker, in terms of the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009.
- 13.2 Complaints by foster carers relating to the support services they receive from the council should be made within six months of the event they wish to complain about, or within six months of their becoming aware of their reason to complain. In exceptional circumstances a complaint may be considered after that time limit.
- 13.3 Complaints by foster carers relating to the support services they receive from the council will be handled through a two-stage process in line with the process for any other complaints against the council, as outlined below.

13.4 STAGE ONE - FRONTLINE RESOLUTION

If the foster carer is not satisfied with any aspect of the fostering service, they should discuss with their Supervising Social Worker who will try and resolve the issue with the foster carer. If the foster carer has a complaint about their Supervising Social Worker, the foster carer should raise this issue with the senior social worker in the fostering service. If the foster carer's complaint is about the fostering service as a whole, the foster carer should raise the issue with the Service Manager of the fostering service.

The council aims to resolve complaints at the first point of contact within five working days. In exceptional circumstances, where there are clear and justifiable reasons for doing so, an extension of no more than ten working days may be agreed. This will only happen when an extension will make it more likely that the complaint will be resolved at the frontline resolution stage.

If the council cannot resolve the foster carer's complaint at this stage, the council will explain the reasons for this to the foster carer and will advise the foster carer of the next step(s). The Council may suggest that the complaint be taken to Stage Two.

13.5 STAGE TWO - INVESTIGATION

There are two types of Stage Two complaints; those which have not been resolved at Stage One and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

The Council will acknowledge receipt of a stage two complaint within three working days of receiving this. An investigation will be carried out by the appropriate senior social work manager. As part of the investigation, the senior social work manager will discuss the complaint with the foster carer. A written response will be given by the senior social work manager to the foster carer within twenty working days of the complaint being received. If the investigation will take longer than twenty days, the council will advise the foster carer of this and will agree revised time scales with the foster carer.

13.6 SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN

After the Council has fully investigated the matter, and if the foster carer remains dissatisfied, the foster carer may refer the matter to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), who may investigate the matter

The SPSO will not normally consider –

- a complaint that has not been through the complaints process as detailed above.
- a complaint surrounding events that occurred, or that the carer became aware of, more than twelve months previously
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

The contact details for the SPSO are as follows.

SPSO
4 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7NS

Their freepost address is:

FREEPOST SPSO

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Online contact: www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us

Website: www.spsso.org.uk

14.0 COMPLAINT BY A CHILD / YOUNG PERSON

- 14.1 Children should be advised that, if required, the foster carers and / or their social worker will assist them in making a complaint.
- 14.2 Children wishing to make a complaint about the foster home, their supervising social worker or any other aspect of their care should be encouraged to use the Council's Customer Complaints Procedures and given assistance where required by the foster carers or social worker as appropriate. "Who Cares Scotland?" can provide independent advice and support: 0141 226 4441.
- 14.3 Children in foster care will be provided with an opportunity for feedback through the Looked After Children's Review, and the Foster Carer Review systems.

15.0 REVIEW OF THE AGREEMENT

- 15.1 The Council shall monitor and review the Agreement, its operation and effectiveness throughout its duration, but no less frequently than once every three years. The agreement may only be varied with the written consent of both parties.

16.0 TERMINATION OF THIS AGREEMENT

- 16.1 The foster carers will notify the Council immediately if they are temporarily unable to meet the conditions of this agreement. This will not necessarily affect the continuation of this agreement and the Council may be able to assist the foster carers in continuing the service to the children / young people.
- 16.2 The foster carers will give the Council at least 28 days' notice in writing of their intention to resign as foster carers. A fostering panel will be convened to give advice to the Agency Decision Maker on the foster carers wish to resign as such.
- 16.3 Where foster carers intimate their wish to resign as foster carers, payment to the foster carers from the Council will cease in respect of each child in the foster carers' household, on the removal of that child from the fostering household.

- 16.4 For the avoidance of doubt, where foster carers ask the Council to remove foster children in their care, no payment will be made in respect of that child or children, and no retainer will be paid.
- 16.5 The Council may terminate this agreement by giving 28 days' notice in writing to the foster carers.

17.0 CHILD PROTECTION MATTERS

- 17.1 Notwithstanding the terms of 16.5, the Council may remove children from the care of the foster carers without notice where there are child protection concerns. Where there is a Child Protection Investigation, a retainer of 50% of the weekly rate in respect of each child, will be paid for a period not exceeding three months.
- 17.2 At the conclusion of the child protection investigation, a fostering panel will be convened to make a recommendation to the agency decision maker regarding the foster carer's registration. This fostering panel will be convened as soon as reasonably practicable, following the conclusion of the child protection investigation.
- 17.3 When the Council is advised that a foster carer is being considered for listing as barred from working with children by Disclosure Scotland, the Council may remove any looked after children in the care of the foster carers without notice. In these circumstances, a retainer of 50% of the weekly rate in respect of each child will be paid until the investigation is concluded. A fostering panel will be convened as soon as reasonably practicable following the conclusion of the investigation to make a recommendation to the agency decision maker on the carers' future registration.
- 17.4 If the Council is advised by Disclosure Scotland that a foster carer has been listed as barred from working with children, the Council will remove any looked after children in the care of the foster carers without notice. No further payment will be made in respect of these children. A fostering panel will be convened as soon as reasonably practicable to make a recommendation to the agency decision maker on the carer's future registration.
- 17.5 Where the agency decision maker makes the decision to de-register foster carers, the foster carers may seek a review of this decision, in terms of the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

Appendix 1

Renfrewshire Council

Financial Arrangement Scheme

Foster Care Service

Implement Date is the 24th October 2022

INTRODUCTIONS

All active registered foster carers will receive financial support from the Council based on the scheme set out below. These payments will cease in respect of each child, on that child's eighteenth birthday. The Basic Allowance will be payable to all active carers and will provide both a fee component and a maintenance allowance covering all the child's requirements. The payment is an all-inclusive amount. It is an averaging over the year of typical peaks of expenditure such as festive occasions, birthdays, holiday periods etc. The foster carer will be expected to manage this sum in such a way that the child's best interests are promoted, and that the child experiences a typical family lifestyle. Foster carers are self-employed and must register as such for tax and National Insurance purposes. Foster carers are advised to make provision for a pension.

1. BASIC ALLOWANCE

- 1.1 Carers will receive a weekly payment of £395.46 per week. This payment is made up of two elements, a fee of £269.60 and an allowance per child of £125.86, regardless of the child's age or the carers' level of experience. Payments will be made fortnightly in advance. Where the child is with their carer less than a whole week, payments will be made pro rata per day i.e., £56.49 per day. All payments will be reviewed annually.
- 1.2 Where the carers take breaks without the children they are caring for, full payment will be made in respect of each child, up to a maximum of fourteen days in any calendar year. Where carers take breaks without the children they are caring for, over and above fourteen days in any calendar year, no payment will be made in respect of those periods to the foster carers.
- 1.3 Where daytime baby-sitting is being provided by a carer, payment will be made at a rate of £5 per hour per child up to 8 hours. Any longer than this would attract the 24-hour payment.
- 1.4 Where interim or permanent carers have had no children in placement for four weeks, a retainer of 50% per registered usable place will be paid for up to of 4 weeks per episode. A "useable place" is where it is agreed that there is an

available placement, but the council does not have a child that is a suitable match for the carers. 1.5 For newly registered carers an appropriate start up grant of up to 4 weeks basic allowance per registered placement may be given to buy any equipment etc. required to foster. This may include purchase of essential health and safety equipment as well as baby equipment and essential furnishings. Thereafter carers will be expected to pay for any further equipment required.

- 1.5 For short break carers moving to interim or permanent status, an additional grant for essential equipment may be provided.

2. Other payments

2.1 A start up clothing grant will be provided for every child being accommodated from the community. With an additional payment made for children of school age where school uniform is required.

2.2 Mileage incurred in any one return journey to be paid at the casual users' rate for journeys such as the following:

- i. Medical and dental appointments that are above a routine level. I.e., where a child has a medical issue that requires additional medical appointments.
- ii. Attendance at child protection planning meetings, looked after meetings, children's hearings, and other meetings.
- iii. Attendance at foster carer training.
- iv. Travel during the period of introduction to a child, or where carers are involved in moving children to a new home,
- v. Assisting with family time.
- vi. Travel to and from nursery or school if the school is out with the carer's catchment area.

3. DISCRETIONARY PAYMENTS

3.1 Foster carers will be expected to provide for all the children's day to day expenses from within their basic allowance. This will include furnishing their room, providing play, and learning equipment, leisure activities, family holidays and outings. However, there may be unusual or unexpected costs involved from time to time and therefore further discretionary payments may be made by exception. These might include, but are not limited to;

- School trips away from home overnight which cost more than £50 and are deemed to be of educational, social, or developmental benefit to the child.
- Where the Care Plan identifies a need for a therapeutic input for the child. For example, additional activities out with normal leisure activities, counselling support, or short break provision, the Council may fund this.
- In exceptional circumstances, special family holidays for the child may attract a supplementary payment where the cost for the child is more than £500. In such circumstances the carer will be expected to pay the first £500. The

Council will consider contributing to the cost of the holiday, up to a maximum of £500 in respect of any individual child in any calendar year.

- Exceptional payment for specialist items of equipment required.
- Where assistance is required to purchase suitable transport to enable carers to safely care for children they are caring for, in addition to their own children, a grant of up to £5000 may be made to a fostering household. To be eligible for this grant, at least one of the undernoted criteria must apply;
 - I. more than 5 people need transported on a regular basis
 - II. there are two or more foster children in placement
 - III. The child cared for by the foster carers, or the foster carer has a disability and requires specialised transport

Carers will sign a contract agreeing to repay this grant if the criteria making them eligible for the grant ceases to apply, or if the carers cease fostering within three years of receiving the grant.

3.2 The list above is not exhaustive and further payments may be made under exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the appropriate Head of Service. The scale of payment will be reviewed on a regular basis.

3.3 Additional payments for birthdays, Christmas or after school care will **not** be made.

3.4 All payments will be routinely reviewed by The Head of Service and changes made if required.

4. EXPECTATIONS OF CARERS BY RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL:

4.1 Carers are expected to provide for all the physical, social and leisure needs of the child they care for that a parent would normally be expected to provide. This will include the equivalent of an annual holiday, pocket money, provision of a range of activities and interests specific to the needs and wishes of the child, involvement in all the day to day activities of the child including taking the child to school or nursery or contact visits. Where a foster carer has several different children in the household who need to be taken to different schools / nurseries, or to different contact meetings, there may be discussions and negotiations on a case-by-case basis.

4.2 Carers will be expected to evidence that they are using their allowance in the child's best interests.

5.0 CARERS AVAILABILITY FOR CARING FOR CHILDREN

5.1 It is expected that one carer from each carer household will be available to care for the child e.g. during periods of absence from school due to sickness or suspension or after school / nursery and during school holidays.

5.2 Costs of after school care will not be covered by the Council.

Appendix 2

FOSTER CARERS – DETAILS OF APPROVAL

Name of Foster Carers:

Address:
.....
.....

Approved at Fostering Panel of:

Category(ies) Approved for:.....

Maximum number of children / young persons to be accommodated

At any one time In words

Please specify details of age and gender mix

Child One

Child Two

Child Three

Child Four

Any other relevant information:

Signed:

Name in Block Capitals

Designation:

Date:



To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 19 January 2023

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Inspections of registered children's residential houses by the Care Inspectorate

1. Summary

- 1.1. Residential childcare refers to the service provided within our children's houses and is a form of accommodation for children who require to be cared for out with a family setting. Residential care is provided by Renfrewshire Council when the specific needs of children and young people means that they cannot remain living with their parents or in an alternative family setting such as kinship or foster care.
- 1.2. Social work and social care services are subject to a range of audit and scrutiny activities to ensure that they are undertaking all statutory duties and providing appropriate care and support to vulnerable individuals and groups. A number of social work and social care services including residential children's houses are required to register with the Care Inspectorate. Registered services are subject to regular inspection by the Care Inspectorate and the outcomes of the inspections are published on the Care Inspectorate website.
- 1.3. Generally, residential children's houses are inspected once each year by the Care Inspectorate. The inspections are made on an unannounced basis. The frequency of inspections was reduced during the last two years as a result of the COVID pandemic. It is expected that the programme of annual inspections will recommence.
- 1.4. Renfrewshire has 4 residential children's houses. At the present time there are 22 children and young people living in our houses. This report summarises the outcomes from the inspections of our residential Children's Houses during the past two years. Two of the houses received positive inspections, one had a grade of adequate and one graded as weak.

- 1.5. Where a children's house receives a grade of weak or adequate a formal support plan is put in place to address the areas identified as requiring improvement. The improvement activity for the relevant children's houses is included in this report.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Elected members are asked to note:
- a) the findings from the inspections of Renfrewshire's children's houses undertaken in 2021 and 2022; and
 - b) areas for service development and associated improvement actions.
-

3. Background

- 3.1. Care services in Scotland require to register with the Care Inspectorate. Our four children's houses are registered with the Care Inspectorate as providers of residential care and are consequently generally subject to at least annual inspection by the regulator. The annual inspection arrangements were disrupted during the COVID pandemic but are now back in place.
- 3.2. The Care Inspectorate uses a proportionate risk model of inspection. Services graded as 'Good' or above in previous inspections are subject to low-intensity inspections. Services are assessed on up to four quality themes:
- Quality of Care and Support
 - Quality of Environment
 - Quality of Staffing
 - Quality of Management and Leadership.
- 3.3. The scrutiny process applies 5 key questions about the difference a care service makes to people's wellbeing, and the quality of the elements that contribute to that. These include:
1. How well do we support people's wellbeing?
 2. How good is our leadership
 3. How good is our staff team?
 4. How good is our setting?
 5. How well is our care and support planned?
- 3.4. The Care Inspectorate utilises the following gradings across each of the areas considered during each inspection:
1. Unsatisfactory
 2. Weak
 3. Adequate
 4. Good
 5. Very good
 6. Excellent

- 3.5. The Care Inspectorate publishes the inspection reports on its website. In addition to awarding grades in each of the themes inspected, the Care Inspectorate can make a recommendation or put in place a requirement. A recommendation will set out an action that would improve or develop the quality of the service, but failure to meet a recommendation would not result in enforcement by the Care Inspectorate. Requirements are legally enforceable and set out what is required by a care service to comply with the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 or with the conditions of registration.
- 3.6. The Care Inspectorate changed the way they report the outcome of inspections in the past year. As a result of the change two of the houses do not have grades for each area inspected, rather an overall grading is awarded on the following statement: "How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?"

Recent inspection activity in Children's Services

- 3.7. Renfrewshire children's services provides 4 residential children's houses. At the present time there are 22 children and young people living in our children's houses.
- 3.8. All Four of Renfrewshire's residential children's houses for children and young people were inspected between February 2021 & October 2022. Our residential children's houses are known as:
- Brediland
 - Beech Avenue
 - Arkleston
 - Barochan Road
- 3.9. Brediland was inspected on 16th February 2021 and a subsequent report published (appendix 1). The inspectorate reported that they saw that children and young people at Brediland Road benefitted from meaningful relationships with staff who provided consistent and compassionate care. They received strong feedback from external professionals and made comment that they witnessed solid evidence of one-to-one work with young people. From the 5 key areas scrutinised, the inspectors graded 4 areas Very Good (Grade 5) & one area Good (Grade 4).
- 3.10. Beech Avenue was inspected on 14th October 2021 and a subsequent report was published (appendix 2) detailing significant strengths in the delivery of care alongside some recommendations for improvement. From the 4 key areas scrutinised the inspectors awarded 2 areas as Good and 2 areas as adequate. This inspection highlights a strength in the relationships and interactions with young people in response to their needs and the staff perseverance in doing so.
- 3.11. The areas of improvement focussed on the impact of staff and management absence. Beech Avenue was inspected at the height of the pandemic when they had experienced significant and sustained staff absence. Whilst cover arrangements were made, the temporary nature of these did impact on the consistency of approach in supporting the young people and the overall evidence of leadership. All areas of improvement identified by the Care Inspectorate have been addressed in full.

- 3.12. Arkleston was inspected on 3rd August 2022 and the report published shortly thereafter (appendix 3). The inspectors recorded an overall grade of 5 (Very Good) in respect of Arkleston. The new grading and reporting process by the Care inspectorate means that the individual grades on the areas identified in paragraph 3.2 were not provided. The inspectors made comment on the staff team having excellent understanding of trauma informed practice. They highlighted that young people were supported & included in their plans to achieve their goals & that good relationships were evidenced, and support was given where required. The inspectors further reported evidence of young people being supported to access mental health services appropriately & a good understanding of how best to support the young people to keep safe. They noted that good relationships with young people who had moved on from the house were evident. There were no recommendations for improvement in relation to Arkleston.
- 3.13. Barochan was inspected in September 2022 with the inspectors providing a grade of 2 (Weak) (appendix 4) . During the inspection a letter of serious concern was issued by the Care Inspectorate which the service responded to immediately. The inspection reported areas of good practice but also highlighted areas of concern and made several requirements. At the time of inspection there was no dedicated manager to Barochan although interim arrangements were in place during the recruitment process. The inspectors concluded that leadership within the house had been a concern for some time and the temporary arrangement made during the recruitment process had exacerbated the issue instead of resolving it. The absence of effective leadership had led to inconsistencies in practice.
- 3.14. The recruitment process was unsuccessful and as such the service has identified a permanent replacement manager by moving an existing manager. The service is confident that the new manager has the appropriate skills and experience to address the concerns noted and work in partnership with the care inspectorate on a journey of improvement.
- 3.15. The inspection focussed on the young people's safety. They highlighted that staff responding to the challenges of one young person meant that the needs of others were not always met satisfactorily. Risk assessments and child plans have been reviewed in response to the concerns highlighted and additional strategies put in place to manage these issues.
- 3.16. Bullying was highlighted as an area in this inspection and the previous inspection. Although it was recognised that measures had been put in place to try to address this, the inspectors did not believe these measures were effective. The complexity of the group mean that this issue requires constant monitoring and intervention which is already being led by the new manager. This will be evidenced in ongoing partnership work with our link inspector.
- 3.17. The use of "safe holds" was highlighted as an area of concern and the need for refresher training. The delivery of this refresher training had been impacted upon by the Covid 19 pandemic and a plan was already in place for staff to receive this, but the inspectors believed this should have taken place sooner.
- 3.18. The inspectors also highlighted the need for sufficient staffing levels to be in place. Resourcing our children's houses has been extremely challenging due to the Covid 19 pandemic and the service experiencing significant recruitment and retention challenges. The challenges we face in Renfrewshire regarding

the retention and recruitment of social care staff are unfortunately in keeping with challenges across the whole social care sector in Scotland. Staffing levels are being monitored monthly with reports provided to the Children's Manger and the Head of Service.

- 3.19. A robust action plan has been developed to address the finding of the inspection at Barochan and to meet the requirements imposed. The Care Inspectorate have agreed to re-inspect within the next 6 months rather than waiting the full year so that we can evidence the improvements we are confident will be made quickly.

Implications of this report

- 1. Financial**
None.

- 2. HR and Organisational Development**
The service faces challenges in recruiting staff to the residential sector. There is a national challenge at this time across social work and social care in terms of recruitment.

- 3. Community/Council Planning**
None

- 4. Legal**
None.

- 5. Property/Assets**
None.

- 6. Information Technology**
None.

- 7. Equality and Human Rights**

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.

- 8. Health and Safety**
None.

- 9. Procurement**
None.

- 10. Risk**
None.

- 11. Privacy Impact**
None.

12. Cosla Policy Position

None.

13. Climate Risk

None.

List of Background Papers

(a) None

Children's Services

KS 30/11/22

Author: Kevin Smith, Acting Children's Services Manager, tel 0141 618 4575

35 Brediland Road Care Home Service

35 Brediland Road
Linwood
Paisley
PA3 3RA

Telephone: 01416 185 960

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
16 February 2021

Service provided by:
Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003388

Service no:
CS2018371531

About the service

35 Brediland Road is a newly registered service for up to four children and young people aged between eight and 20 years old. The service is provided by Renfrewshire Council and situated in the Linwood area. The house is a new-build modern bungalow, purpose designed to support the needs of children and young people referred to in the service.

Accommodation provides a lounge with an open plan dining area, large kitchen, utility room, games room and relaxation/quiet room. There are two communal WC's, one with a bath. There are four bedrooms for children and young people, each with en suite bathrooms. 35 Brediland Road also has its own large garden area.

Some of the stated aims and objectives of 35 Brediland Road are:

- To provide young people with an environment where young people will feel safe, cared for and where staff will promote their skills and strengths.
- To engage with families of the young people acknowledging and adapting to individual circumstance.
- To work in partnership with social workers and other professional in a collaborative way to ensure that young people feel in both involved in their care plans.
- To identify community opportunities and activities for young people in order to promote community involvement and improve confidence.

At the time of our inspection, there were four young people residing at the service. Due to the ongoing safety restrictions in place due to COVID-19, our inspection was completed remotely.

What people told us

We spoke with two young people as part of our inspection. Feedback was positive about their experiences at Brediland Road. One young person told us they liked their room and that they were able to personalise this to their tastes. They told us they liked the staff, and we could see they were comfortable in their environment. We received brief, but positive, feedback from another young person about their experiences at Brediland Road. They liked the house, the staff and reported no issues with the support they received.

We spoke with one parent, who provided very positive feedback about 35 Brediland Road. She spoke of the progress their child had made and the support she had received from the team. She was particularly happy with the structure and routines which had been implemented at the house.

How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

For this key question, we made an evaluation of very good. We concluded Brediland Road offered major strengths which were impacting positively on people's experiences and outcomes. As a newly registered service, there had been difficulties in terms of getting the right match and mix of young people and

developing a newly formed staff team. We were confident the team had learned from this process and were currently supporting children and young people towards very good outcomes.

We saw that children and young people at Brediland Road benefitted from meaningful relationships with staff who provided consistent and compassionate care. We received strong feedback from external professionals and we reviewed solid evidence of one-to-one work through 'our chats' and 'time spent together' recording templates for staff. Although the inspection was completed virtually, we were fortunate to have one young person show us around the house whilst they interacted with staff.

We thought young people's views were central to planning and decision making. This was evidenced through a children's rights approach at the service, where the team advocated strongly for young people's views. This was particularly the case where family contact was being considered during lockdown restrictions. A range of systems supported the gathering of young people's views around activities, mealtimes and their goals through care planning.

Young people benefitted from a high degree of choice and, where appropriate, autonomy to make decisions at 35 Brediland Road. A diverse group of young people resided at the service and we liked how plans were highly personal to young people's needs and interests. A key strength was how young people were supported to connect with family and friends and to the local community.

Although restricted due to the pandemic, we concluded that young people were able to make the most of their time through planned activities and spontaneous free time. We reviewed lots of photos of holidays and activities where young people were clearly out having fun. We were particularly impressed by the young person who caught, prepared and cooked a fish for his dinner. It was clear the staff group supported young people to engage in a wide range of activities.

We saw education plans which reflected young people's unique needs and it was pleasing to see all young people were involved in learning which was right for their development. We heard the staff team were on hand to offer support to ensure that attendance and attainment for young people were supported.

Young people presented with a range of complex needs and required detailed risk plans which were in place to keep them safe. Following national guidance and best practice, we saw the team were proactive responding to child protection concerns and working with lead professionals to ensure young people were protected.

We concluded young people received nurturing support from a knowledgeable staff team, informed about the impact of trauma. It was pleasing to see a number of interventions were employed to support young people develop positive coping strategies and regulate their emotions.

During the first year following registration, the service experienced a high number of incidents and safe holds. The frequency and duration of safe holds during this period was of concern. However, this has significantly reduced throughout 2020 and the service, at present, provides a stable environment for young people. It was pleasing to see debriefs taking place to allow staff to reflect on practice and consider lessons learned following incidents. Risk assessments were updated and consultation with psychological services enabled the team to develop a deeper understanding of young people's needs.

Young people's health needs were met through a range of proactive approaches and, where necessary, referrals to specialist services. We received some feedback that the availability of external mental health resources could be more accessible. The registered manager advised a vacancy in LAAC nursing was being

filled and a consulting psychologist was being made available to all the children's houses in Renfrewshire to ensure specialist input was available when required.

During our inspection, we found a staff team motivated and committed to providing positive role models for young people at Brediland Road. We concluded this was a key strength in supporting young people through a difficult lockdown period.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

For this key question, we made an evaluation of very good. As a relatively new service, Brediland Road has experienced ongoing improvement since opening in February 2019 and we found the service was now providing a high standard of care. The manager had brought a strong children's rights ethos to the service and, based on feedback, was inspiring those around him to raise standards and practice through a culture of improvement. All staff told us they felt involved in a learning culture where they could contribute to the development of the service.

We saw comprehensive evaluations of young people's experiences through a range of quality assurance methods. These included audits of care plans and outcomes, team meetings, feedback from young people and social workers, and contact from external management. When areas for improvement were identified through quality assurance, it was pleasing to see improvements were put in place. Supervision of staff ensured staff felt supported and able to reflect on practice and discuss their own development needs.

We liked the dynamic improvement plan with input from staff and young people. This was produced in graphical format providing a visual focus for 35 Brediland Road's improvement journey. We were impressed to see the service had completed a self-evaluation based on best practice and national standards.

It was pleasing to see children and young people were confident to offer views which were used to support improvement. Information was provided to young people on their rights from a range of sources including staff, admissions handbook and advocacy workers. We could see one young person had raised a complaint which was addressed appropriately and respectfully in accordance with the provider's policy.

We could see external managers had an overview of the service providing support to the manager and staff, particularly during challenging periods.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

For this key question, we made an evaluation of very good. We concluded effective processes were in place to ensure staff were working well together to support children and young people. We saw that during early crises periods, the team had pulled together flexibly to support each other to work as a team to benefit children and young people. This appeared to have galvanised the team, who reported good morale and a strong commitment to their work.

We were impressed by the staff team who valued their role at Brediland Road and enjoyed spending time with young people. Based on our interactions with staff, we got a sense all staff knew the detail of each young person's care plan and the goals they had for themselves. This helped to ensure consistency across shifts and we considered this a key strength of the staff team.

Through high quality training in approaches, such as social pedagogy, attachment and trauma and suicide first aid, the team were well-placed to create a therapeutic environment to support young people's well-

being. Training was fully embedded across the team who offered a wide range of experience and skills to support a range of young people.

Physical and mental health were supported in a number of ways through one-to-one emotional support, activities and referrals to specialist agencies where necessary. Staff turnover was low at Brediland Road, which provided consistency in relationships for young people and helped embed some of the key training undertaken by the team.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

For this key question, we made an evaluation of very good. Based in Linwood, the setting allows the young people easy access to the wider Renfrewshire community. This allows children and young people to stay connected with family and friends, and retain links with education, health and social resources.

This house is newly built and modern, with access to Wi-Fi and computers for young people. We saw that social media and phone use had been a risk factor for some young people. This had been proactively addressed through training for staff and young people, with detailed safe plans in place to help keep young people safe and promote health interactions with others.

The house has ample space to allow children and young people to have visitors to the house and spend time with friends and family. We spoke with one parent who had visited the house and reported a warm welcoming atmosphere. The space around the house allows children and young people to relax and spend time in the fresh air.

We had some feedback that the proximity of bedrooms impacted on young people's experiences. We concluded this had been the case for some young people during the first year of registration. At the time of our inspection, with an improved dynamic between young people and the staff team continuing to develop, this appeared less of an issue.

The team is keen to develop some of the outside area and make the environment as homely and welcoming as it can be.

How well is our care and support planned?

4 - Good

For this key question, we made an evaluation of good where strengths clearly outweigh areas for improvement. We thought practice around personal planning was strong and had a significant positive benefit on young people's experiences and outcomes. We found that young people admitted to 35 Brediland Road without matching assessments did not consistently experience positive outcomes. However, the provider was developing a matching assessment for all young people being considered for admission. This was not yet implemented so we were unable to measure its impact. We will consider this area at the next inspection.

We thought young people were benefiting from comprehensive personal plans which made use of in-house and specialist resources. 35 Brediland Road has a clear set of aims and objectives based around young people's needs and it was pleasing to see this vision being implemented through proactive and aspirational care planning.

We could see young people involved in planning through a number of methods such as graphical visual plans and external advocacy when required. Records were of a high standard with young people's views

recorded in a range of ways. We saw that approaches such as social pedagogy and consultations with specialised services informing care plans which were regularly reviewed as circumstances changed.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Children and young people experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 Children and young people get the most out of life	5 - Very Good
1.3 Children and young people's health benefits from their care and support they experience	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing levels are right and meet children and young people's needs, with staff working well together	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Children and young people can be connected with and involved in the wider community	5 - Very Good
How well is our care planned?	4 - Good
5.1 Assessment and care planning reflects children and young people's needs and wishes	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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Beech Avenue Childrens Home Care Home Service

1-3 Beech Avenue
Hunterhill
Paisley
PA2 6XN

Telephone: 01418 897 375

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 October 2021

Service provided by:
Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003388

Service no:
CS2003001245

About the service

Beech Avenue children's care home is registered to care for a maximum of six young people, up to and including age 20 years. The service is managed by Renfrewshire Council and provides care and accommodation on a short or long term basis for young people from the Renfrewshire area.

The house is within a residential area, close to local amenities and has a full time manager, two senior practitioners and a team of residential childcare workers.

The aims and objectives of the service include:

- Promoting an environment where young people feel safe and cared for
- To support children and young people to maintain contact with family
- To encourage young people to achieve educational potential through working in partnership with other agencies
- To support young people for independent living

It should be noted that this inspection took place during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and therefore followed a revised procedure for conducting inspections in these circumstances.

What people told us

At the time of our inspection, there were three young people residing at Beech Avenue. We spoke to one young person, and another on an informal basis. We also had contact with one parent and a variety of external professionals who regularly worked alongside the service.

These are some of the comments regarding the service:

Staff genuinely care for the young people and their priority is always the safety and wellbeing of the young people

You get a real sense that this is a home and not just a placement

The support and help staff give is superb, couldn't fault it, absolutely fantastic.

Staff provide a high level of emotional and practical support. Good awareness of trauma, mental health and child development.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
How well is our care planned?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing?

4 - Good

Young people were engaging with Beech Avenue to varying degrees, so not all had developed meaningful relationships with staff, but staff and managers persevered in their commitment to build strong connections with young people. We witnessed staff having a compassionate approach to care when one young person became upset and at other times, we heard young people seeking staff members for support and assistance. The service tried to ensure continuity of staffing, but at times this had been extremely difficult due to absences, affecting the consistency of approach towards young people.

The young people received respect from the staff and manager, and staff also discussed the young people in their care in a respectful manner. Each young person had their own private bedroom which they had been given the opportunity to individualise. Young people also had the chance to mix with others in the house or use the spacious communal areas to relax. Beech Avenue was undergoing home improvements which will further enhance the quality of the environment for the young people.

Although external advocacy was available to the young people, in the main, they had chosen not to take up this service on a regular basis. We spoke to Who Cares? Scotland who noted that staff regularly refer to advocacy and strongly encourage involvement. External professionals spoke of being impressed by the willingness of the staff to advocate on behalf of the young people.

Staff provided young people with continuing care placements and had put supports in place to ensure outcomes were met and that appropriate transitions were considered.

There were examples of staff having 1:1 time with young people to discuss matters important to them, with young people's views being sought prior to multiagency meetings and the opportunity for them to be present at most meetings. The service had engaged young people in improving the house and responding to their request for a 'chill' room and additions to the garden. The service could benefit from establishing more varied methods to ensure that young people are given opportunities to voice opinions.

The young people at Beech Avenue could advise how they wished to spend their time, however again this was mixed, with some young people making decisions independently of staff and spending significant periods of time outwith the house. This impacted on their routine, sense of belonging to the service and engagement in their care and support was not consistently being achieved. In contrast, staff had a strong understanding of other young people in terms of their strengths and preferences and had a significant awareness of how outcomes could be improved through access to specialist services and support.

Young people were not actively involved in activities within the local community, however this related to their own wishes rather than staff not being encouraging. They did have access to the local authority leisure centre and had recently had the opportunity to plan and go on holiday with staff.

Attempts were made by staff to encourage independence and life skills. Some young people were doing their own laundry, maintaining their rooms and could prepare food for themselves. As part of continuing care, this was promoted, however greater emphasis could be given to enhancing and encouraging these skills.

The young people took significant risks at times and were at risk of harm. We found the service was working with the young people and other agencies to promote safety and positive decision making. Staff had good awareness of the risks for each young person, and were committed to protecting them emotionally and physically, and responded appropriately to indicators of concern. This was also highlighted by external professionals who stressed the commitment and determination of staff.

We found the manager and staff had a good understanding of trauma, and this was emphasised by the external professionals we spoke to. Although not all young people were actively engaging with the service, they were provided with nurturing and therapeutic care and support as required.

Staff had successfully managed to deescalate distressed behaviour, and physical intervention by staff was not commonplace. There were risk management strategies in place for the young people, identifying triggers and early warning signals.

The young people were registered with local health services and there were referrals and involvement from substance misuse services as required. Other specialist services included mental health agencies, with Beech Avenue staff demonstrating that they were proactive in identifying unmet health needs and advocating on behalf of young people for appropriate and timely assessment and care. The staff team demonstrated their ability to support young people with significant mental health difficulties and have confidently and appropriately taken advice from specialist services.

The inspection considered the medication policy and process. For one of the young people, it was unclear how much medication should be given and daily recordings needed to be more explicit (see Area for Improvement 1).

A previous inspection suggested that the service should develop a policy in relation to the management of young people under the influence of substances whilst at Beech Avenue. There was a clear need for this to be established, which would incorporate room and bag searches, along with appropriate disposal of any drugs found on the premises. (see Area for Improvement 2)

Beech Avenue benefitted from a housekeeper and there was a variety of healthy food options available with the opportunity to socialise with staff and other young people at meal times. At the time of inspection, we heard that young people were not involved in menu planning, although staff were aware of the likes and dislikes of the young people and menu planned accordingly. Young people were encouraged to assist with the food shopping and cooking.

In conclusion, we considered that the service demonstrated a number of important strengths in supporting young people's wellbeing. This has informed the grading of this key question as good.

Areas for improvement

1. The service is to review the approach to the recording of medication to ensure daily clarity, and ensure it is clear to all staff how much medication should be issued.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed (HSCS 4.23)

2. Develop a policy and procedure for staff relating to the management of young people under the influence of substances whilst at Beech Avenue, incorporating procedures for searches and disposal of drugs on the premises.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed (HSCS 4.23)

I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities (HSCS 3.20)

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

There was a complaints procedure in place at Beech Avenue and this has been embedded in the admission process. We found that the service had responded positively to young people's requests regarding the improvement of the service and for additional resources.

We did not identify a clear effective system of evaluation and quality assurance. Seniors have responsibility for oversight of care plans which are reviewed as part of the staff supervision process, however the service did acknowledge that the quality assurance process and external scrutiny required attention. There were plans for this process to be standardised across the local authority to ensure young people can receive the best possible care and support. (see Area for Improvement 1)

There was a development plan in place, which could be strengthened by being more specific, with greater detail in terms of identifying desired outcomes, how these will be achieved, by when and how the service will measure progress and achievement. This should also ensure the views of young people, families and stakeholders are considered to further develop Beech Avenue. (see Area for Improvement 2)

In terms of management, the absence of the service manager for periods of time has undoubtedly affected the service, however staff stressed that other managers were always accessible, and the external manager was hands on, approachable and advocating for the young people. Professionals commented on the strong leadership and guidance provided by the service manager.

The service had recently changed to a new rota and planned to have a new peripatetic team in place. This was to provide standardisation across the local authority houses and ensure that there was increased staffing capacity to provide continuity of care. This followed recognition by management that staffing levels was an area for improvement. Some staff were understandably apprehensive regarding this change and considered that the communication regarding the new rota and the peripatetic team had not been sufficient.

Beech Avenue's statement of purpose stated that careful matching will be prioritised, with the preferred option being to facilitate a planned admission, and during the last inspection, it was identified that the service was reviewing the assessment and matching of admissions. We found that since the last inspection there had been several new admissions, generally at short notice, with the service itself having minimal input into this process. This contributed to, at times, negative experiences and outcomes for some young people. It was positive to hear during inspection that there were no plans to introduce other young people to Beech Avenue to help promote stability after a period of change. However, we are aware that this has not happened and there was a new admission despite concerns about the impact on the young people. Subsequent discussions with the service provided information which highlighted that staff within Beech Avenue had become involved in the recent admission process, and the service has also expressed their commitment to ensuring that all options are explored for young people, including placements not provided by the local authority when this would be beneficial. This is welcomed and should continue moving forward. (see Area for Improvement 3).

We were able to identify some strengths for this quality indicator but these just outweigh weaknesses. The absence of quality assurance, and the concerns about the admissions process has implications for the service in terms of sustainable quality care to young people. These factors place good outcomes at risk, with the potential for young people's experiences to be negatively affected. The service has expressed their commitment to develop these areas and this key question has been graded as adequate with three areas for improvement.

Areas for improvement

1. Quality assurance and monitoring systems are to be developed to evaluate children and young people's outcomes and experiences to ensure they receive the best possible care and support.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes (HSCS 4.19)

2. Review the service development plan to ensure this has specific outcomes, how these will be achieved and how progress will be measured. This should take into account the views of young people, families and stakeholders.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed (HSCS 4.23)

I am actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service I use, in the spirit of genuine partnership (HSCS 4.7)

3. It is essential that the service has a robust and rigorous assessment and matching process for admissions to ensure the best interests of all children and young people, taking into account the CI guidance - Matching Looked After Children and Young People: Admissions Guidance for Residential Services. This should include staff from the service taking an active role in this process.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed (HSCS 4.23)

I am in the right place to experience the care and support I need and want (HSCS 1.19)

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

The staff team had formed a strong bond, they were flexible and communicated well to get the best outcomes for the young people. This had taken time given changes to the team and staff absence issues. The service acknowledged this was work in progress and will evolve as the new peripatetic team comes on board.

Feedback from other professionals noted that staff were genuinely committed to the young people and positive relationships were formed and sustained. Staff showed skill in resolving conflict situations and had good awareness of policies and procedures. To meet learning needs and to provide quality care and support to young people, we saw an emphasis on training and staff development.

Staff spoke of regular formal supervision taking place which included discussions regarding the young people and personal development. They also noted the opportunity to have informal discussions with managers and colleagues as a way of improving practice and reflecting. The service had recognised the demanding nature of the work recently and provided staff with a relevant external support.

The service did not have a robust assessment of staffing needs to determine the experience, qualifications and skill mix of staff for the young people in the service. This would consider the complexity of individual needs and risks of the young people. (Area for Improvement 1)

The service demonstrated a number of important strengths regarding staff competence, with a focus on learning and development to support young people's wellbeing. This has informed the grading of this key question as good, with one area for improvement.

Areas for improvement

1. The service should ensure that there is a process to determine the number, experience, qualifications and skill mix of staff for each shift. This will take into account the specific needs of individual young people. This process will also benefit from the manager having a system in place that identifies individual training needs and achievements. Consideration should be given to the document: Guidance for providers on the assessment of staffing levels.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

My care and support meets my needs and is right for me (HSCS 1.19)

My care and support is provided in a planned way, including if there is an emergency or unexpected event (HSCS 4.14)

How well is our care and support planned?

3 - Adequate

The service had varying success in terms of trying to encourage young people to take an active part in their care plans. The care plans were reviewed by the key team but attempts to motivate the young people in participating in their plan was not always effective and young people lacked structure to their day at times.

The service had started a process of reviewing the care plans and associated paperwork to make this consistent across the local authority. New risk assessments and behaviour management plans had been developed which were clear, reflected the complexities of the young people and included strategies to support the young people across a variety of scenarios.

The service had good evidence of multi agency working and social workers and other professionals spoke of the strong working relationship and high level of communication with staff from Beech Avenue. We saw clear examples of the service taking the lead on planning, arranging meetings, reviews and seeking specialist support.

The young people had care plans which were consistent with the SHANARRI principles, however these were not Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Based (SMART) or outcome focussed. This made it difficult to identify specific goals, how these would be achieved or measured or how progress was being recorded. Additionally, there was no clear way of gathering the young people's views, so their voices were not represented in the care plans and risk assessments. (see Area for Improvement 1)

We looked at the incident report forms as part of the inspection. These forms were lengthy and not specifically designed for a residential care home. The service should consider streamlining this process as part of the current paperwork review so that managerial comments are routinely shared with staff and to ensure that formal debriefing is consistently undertaken with staff and young people.

We look forward to seeing the progress regarding the standardisation of paperwork in all areas as this is an area the service had identified as requiring improvement.

Assessment and planning by the service demonstrated some strengths, but key areas of care planning and gathering young people's views require further development to promote positive experiences and outcomes for young people. As a result, we have graded this key question as adequate with one area for improvement.

Areas for improvement

1. Care plans to be reviewed to ensure they comply with SMART principles. The service should take effective steps to engage young people in their care plan, and record actions to be taken to achieve positive outcomes, how they will be measured, how achievable they are and within what timeframe.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

I am fully involved in assessing my emotional, psychological, social and physical needs at an early stage, regularly and when my needs change (HSCS 1.12)

My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices (HSCS 1.15)

I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is always available to me (HSCS 2.17)

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing?	4 - Good
1.1 Children and young people experience compassion, dignity and respect	4 - Good
1.2 Children and young people get the most out of life	4 - Good
1.3 Children and young people's health benefits from their care and support they experience	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
3.2 Staff have the right values, skills and knowledge to care for children and young people	4 - Good
How well is our care planned?	3 - Adequate
5.1 Assessment and care planning reflects children and young people's needs and wishes	3 - Adequate

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137 Arkleston Road Care Home Service

137 Arkleston Road
Paisley
PA3 4TH

Telephone: 01416 185 090

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 August 2022

Service provided by:
Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003388

Service no:
CS2003001248

About the service

The service provides care for up to six young people, close to the local town. The house was beautifully decorated, with many living area spaces for young people to relax and their bedrooms had en suite facilities. There is also a lovely garden which was well utilised with sports equipment, and garden furniture. The house was close to local transport routes.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 3 August 2022. The inspection was carried out by inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we: • spoke with [number] people using the service and [number] of their [family/friends/representatives - delete/insert as appropriate] • spoke with [number] staff and management • observed practice and daily life • reviewed documents • spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- The team had an excellent understanding of trauma informed practice.
- Young people were supported to be included in their plans and achieve their goals.
- There was good relationships and support given to families.
- The service had maintained good relationships with young people who had moved onto their own tenancy.
- Young people were well supported to help access mental health services and education.
- There was a good understanding of risk and how best to support the young people to be safe.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for young people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

We found the service to have an excellent understanding of trauma informed practice. This was implemented within the environment, the approach to the young people, care plans and between staff members. Staff were able to tell us "it is important to help the young people speak about their worries." They were able to confidently tell us how they supported young people when they were upset or distressed. This had led to there being very few incidents, and staff reflected how this had been a positive change in practice. This supported young people to build trusting relationships, and help them to grow and develop.

The team were highly motivated, and recognised the importance of building positive relationships. We observed staff taking young people out fishing, playing basketball and also offering these activities to young people who had moved on from the service to their own tenancy. These opportunities supported young people to grow in confidence and promote a healthy lifestyle. For those who no longer lived in the house, it allowed them to feel included and promote positive lifelong relationships, in line with "The Promise."

The service built good relationships with families. We were able to read about the support they had received and how this had helped to develop their relationship with their child. One family member told us "the team go over and above." The staff recognised the importance of working alongside families, and encouraging them to come to the house for meals or to visit. The service had also been creative in supporting sibling relationships to help support family time together. This allowed the young people to feel their family is included in their care and help build life long relationships.

Young people were at the centre of the care they received, we were able to read how they had been involved in setting goals and working towards gaining new skills to support them in the future. Some young people had pathway plans in place where it was appropriate. These were reflective of their needs and support which the service provided them. The service had a good balance of providing nurture to the young people whilst also helping them develop new skills. This allowed young people to feel included, and reflect on the positive achievements they had made.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	5 - Very Good

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20 Barochan Road Care Home Service

Barochan Road
Johnstone
PA5 8FE

Telephone: 01416 185 080

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
7 October 2022

Service provided by:
Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003388

Service no:
CS2003001265

About the service

20 Barochan Road is a residential children's house owned and managed by Renfrewshire Council. The house can accommodate up to six young people but at the time of inspection there was only four young people living in the house.

The house is a purpose-built property located on the outskirts of Johnstone. It has a large garden and grounds, with local amenities in close proximity.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 and 21 September 2022. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with two people using the service
- spoke with three of their family/friends/representatives
- spoke with eight staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Following the inspection a serious letter of concern was issued to the service.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	2 - Weak
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?

2 - Weak

We made an evaluation of weak for this key question. Whilst some strengths could be identified, these were compromised by significant weaknesses. As these weaknesses concerned the welfare and safety of children and young people, we made several requirements for improvement and issued a serious letter of concern.

Whilst inspecting the house there was no dedicated manager to Barochan. We found that, historically, there had been a lack of leadership and this had led to inconsistencies in practice within the house. Practice was reactive and did not consider the needs of the young people, which impacted on the outcomes for young people. Staff told us how this impacts on the consistency of care provided and the responses from young people to this. The staff had also not been supported with regular debriefs, supervision, or training to help them progress and develop their knowledge. Since the inspection we have been pleased to hear an experienced manager has been appointed and is open to working with the Care Inspectorate to make improvements (**see requirement 1**). This requirement has a short timescale as it was issued in the letter of serious concern 26 September 2022.

During inspection, we found, at times, young people living in the house were not kept safe. We heard from staff that they were unable to respond to the needs of young people, at times, due to the high demands within the service and the lack of staff to support this (**see requirement 2**). This led to, at times, young people's safety and health being placed at risk and some concerns going unnoticed. The risk assessments in place to support some of the serious risks were not informative of proactive strategies or secondary strategies should the young person need support (**see requirement 3**). Both of these requirements have a short timescale as they were issued in the letter of serious concern 26 September 2022.

At the previous inspection there had been concerns raised about bullying. Whilst reviewing documents we found this was still a concern. Young people had experienced physical and emotional bullying of a period of months. Although there had been attempts to resolve this, the matter was still ongoing and the impact on the young person was detrimental to their health. Therefore, we reinstated this matter as a requirement (**see requirement 4**).

We found, at times, some incidents had involved staff restraining young people. We heard from staff that they had not had refresher training to support this. This led to anxiety at implementing the restraint and, at times, this not being conducted with enough people. Within the young people's individual care plans there was no assessment of restraint to be used to support the young person's safety or how to implement this. This led to young people being at risk of harm. We were reassured to hear that training had been organised in the upcoming weeks and senior management were already reviewing incidents and the risk assessments to support young people following us raising our concerns to them (**see requirement 5**). This requirement has a short timescale as it was issued in the letter of serious concern 26 September 2022.

Following the letter of serious concern being issued to the provider, we were reassured to have a prompt response from them to look at the improvements needed. The provider has been working alongside the Care Inspectorate to ensure improvements are made and young people are kept safe.

Requirements

1. By 31 October 2022, the provider must ensure that all staff have structure and support, to develop a consistent approach to the care provided. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) Ensure there is a clear leader within the service to implement structure and a clear approach to support the young people in the service.
- b) Ensure that staff are debriefed following an incident and receive regular supervision to help them reflect on their practice and best support the young people.
- c) Ensure that staff are supported to access trauma and care planning training to help them develop their skills and knowledge to best support young people.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/ 210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice, and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

2. By 1 October 2022, the provider must ensure that there is enough staff to support the young people in their care and support their needs. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) Ensure the emotional and mental health needs of the young people are taken into account when completing the staffing assessment. This is to ensure there is sufficient support to meet their needs and keep them safe.
- b) Ensure there is the right number of staff on shift to support all young people in the service.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/ 210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19); and 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15).

3. By 10 October 2022, the provider must ensure that the risks young people present within the service are assessed. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) Ensure that the risks young people present are recorded accurately and include proactive strategies, along with primary and secondary strategies to support the young people.
- b) Ensure that young people are supported and kept safe from the risks other young people may present to them in the service.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement

Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/ 210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'If I might harm myself or others, I know that people have a duty to protect me and others, which may involve contacting relevant agencies' (HSCS 3.24).

4. By 31 October 2022, the provider must ensure that any bullying which arises within the service is monitored and responded to appropriately. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure that:

- a) Risk assessments are updated to reflect the concerns and supports put in place.
- b) Monitor each incident and review whether further action needs to be implemented.
- c) Ensure that if the bullying continues, the young person is able to be kept safe and if not ensure action is taken.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/ 210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying, and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

5. By 31 October 2022, the provider must ensure that all staff have had the relevant training in restraint and there is a review of incidents looking at more proactive ways to respond when young people are distressed. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure that:

- a) All staff have the relevant training in relation to restraint.
- b) There is a review of incidents and more proactive responses are considered.
- c) Staff are given a debrief after any incidents.
- d) If restraint is identified as a method which may be needed to keep a young person safe, the details of this are specific and recorded within their risk assessment.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/ 210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice, and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

We found that some young people were experiencing forms of bullying by other young people living at the service. Although the service was very aware and alert to this behaviour, the impact on those affected was consistently negative over a period of some months. We advised that the current situation was not sustainable and asked that decisive action be taken to protect those affected from further instances of intimidation and physical harm as a result of others' behaviours.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying, and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

This area for improvement was made on 23 March 2019.

Action taken since then

Reinstated as a requirement.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	2 - Weak
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	2 - Weak

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