

**To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board**

**On: 2 November 2023**

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**Report by: Chief Social Work Officer**

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

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. Renfrewshire children's services has 4 residential children's houses which are registered with the Care Inspectorate. The houses are registered to provide care for up to 22 children and young people. At the present time there are 21 children and young people living in our children's houses. The children's houses are subject to inspection by the Care Inspectorate on a regular basis.
  - 1.2. The Care Inspectorate utilise a quality frameworks approach to evaluate the quality of care during inspections of registered care services. After an inspection the Care Inspectorate grades the service and promotes an improvement agenda.
  - 1.3. A report on the inspection of our residential internal children's houses was presented to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board on 19 January 2023. Since that report, two of our children's houses have been subject to inspection. Beech and Barochan were both graded overall as adequate by the Care Inspectorate. The Care Inspectorate made a requirement in relation to Beech and three areas for improvement. Two areas for improvement were made in relation to Barochan.
  - 1.4. The grading of adequate means that areas of strength were identified but these just outweighed areas of weakness. The inspection reports show that both Beech and Barochan provide many elements of good care to our children and young people, are showing areas of ongoing improvement but with further progress to be made. Individual improvement action plans are in place for Beech and Barochan and the progress against these is being led by the House Managers and overseen by the Acting Children's Services Manager and the Chief Social Work Officer.
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## 2. Recommendations

2.1. The Education and Children's Services Policy Board is asked to note:

[a] the outcome of the inspections at Beech and Barochan children's houses;  
and

[b] request an update on the improvement activity for the Board on 14 March 2024.

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## 3. Background

3.1 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 are required to register with the Care Inspectorate. These registered services are subject to regular inspection by the Care Inspectorate. Typically, residential facilities will be subject to one inspection per year which will be unannounced.

3.2 Inspectors use quality frameworks to evaluate the quality of care during inspections and improvement planning. The frameworks reflect the Health and Social Care Standards and provides transparency about what is expected. The Care Inspectorate is currently focussing on "How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing".

3.3 The Care Inspectorate utilises the following gradings across each of the areas considered during each inspection:

- Unsatisfactory – major weaknesses, urgent remedial action is required.
- Weak – important weaknesses, priority action required.
- Adequate – strengths just outweigh weaknesses.
- Good – important strengths, with some areas for improvement.
- Very good – major strengths.
- Excellent – outstanding or sector leading.

3.4 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.

3.5 Each of our 4 houses have a link inspector from the Care Inspectorate, there are systems of notification in place and utilised by each house manager to notify of significant events and discuss where appropriate to do so out with the formal inspection period. Irrespective of the grade awarded by the Care Inspectorate, each of the 4 Renfrewshire children's houses has an improvement and development plan in place.

#### **4. Recent inspection activity in Children's Services**

- 4.1 Renfrewshire children's services has four residential children's houses. At the present time there are 21 children and young people living in our children's houses. The children's houses are registered with, and subject to inspection by the Care Inspectorate. Two of the four houses, Beech and Barochan, have been inspected so far in 2023.
- 4.2 Beech Avenue was inspected on 17 and 18 May 2023. The Care Inspectorate awarded a grade of Adequate to Beech and published their report which is attached at appendix 1. The Care Inspectorate noted strengths as:
- Staff had developed warm and nurturing relationships with young people.
  - The service was committed to least restrictive practice.
  - Young people enjoyed family team.
  - Young people were meaningfully involved in support planning.
- 4.3 The Care Inspectorate noted the following as weaknesses and requiring improvement:
- The service should ensure young people feel consistently safe.
  - The service should increase the opportunities for independent advocacy.
  - The service should improve the quality assurance and admissions processes.
  - The service should ensure all staff complete required training.
- 4.4 The Care Inspectorate made one requirement and three areas for improvement in relation to Beech. The requirement states the service "must ensure that young people are living in the right environment, where their needs are being effectively met, including taking account of young people's views." The service is reviewing this recommendation and has already taken action to review the needs of all of the young people in the house.
- 4.5 The three areas for improvement relate to increasing young people's access to independent advocacy, improving the quality assurance processes, and ensuring all staff complete the appropriate training and this is recorded on their records. The manager of Beech and the Acting Children's Services Manager have developed an improvement plan and will report progress against this to the Board meeting on 14 March 2024.
- 4.6 Barochan children's house was inspected on 29 and 30 June 2023 and was graded as adequate. Members will recall that Barochan was inspected in September 2022 when the inspectors graded the service as weak. The report was published in October 2022. The Care Inspectorate indicated they would revisit for a further inspection within 3 months however did not return until June 2023.
- 4.7 The most recent Care Inspectorate for Barochan is attached at appendix 2. The Care Inspectorate found that improvements had been made within Barochan since the last inspection. Other areas of strength identified within Barochan were:
- The service had developed better processes to support young people and staff.

- Young people had good relationships with staff.
  - Young people were encouraged to participate in decisions about the house.
  - Staff felt supported by management.
- 4.8 The Care Inspectorate noted the following as weaknesses and requiring improvement:
- The service needs to develop further the quality assurance systems.
  - Care plans and risk assessments need to be clearer.
  - The service needs to further improve the prevention, monitoring and responses to bullying by young people within the house.
- 4.9 The Care Inspectorate has noted two areas for improvement relating to the risk assessments and finding the appropriate placement for young people, and the improvement of the care plans for the young people in the house. A new permanent manager has been appointed to Barochan. Along with the Acting Children's Services Manager, the new manager has developed an improvement plan and will report progress against this to the Board meeting on 14 March 2024.
- 4.10 The inspection report for Barochan published in October 2022 made five requirements in relation to the service. The current inspection reports notes the service met one of the requirements and hasn't met the remaining four. This doesn't fully reflect progress made within the service. The Care Inspectorate only has two options in this area to say the requirement is met or not met. Significant progress has been made in all of the requirements and the improvement plan continues to address the issues and will be brought back to Board on 14 March 2024.
- 4.11 The Care Inspectorate expresses concern over the placing of some young people within Beech and Barochan. They express concern over the matching of the young people to the children's houses to each other. The service is on occasions not able to secure a placement for a young person and as the responsible authority has no other option but to provide the placement within one of our houses. As a service we will work to show the matching is being managed and has the right plan in place to meet the young person's needs.
- 4.12 As a service we aim to achieve the best care for our young people in the children's houses. The service is aiming for excellence in the assessment of our care services from the Care Inspectorate. The last inspection for Arkleston and Brediland graded them as very good. It is anticipated that these two houses will be the subject of further inspection in the next few months, and we anticipate the grades remaining at very good with our improvement plan to take them to excellent in the next twelve months. The improvement plans for Beech and Barochan aims to show continued improvement over the next twelve months with the aim to get to get the grades to very good.

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## Implications of this report

1. **Financial**  
None.

- 2. HR and Organisational Development**  
The service has seen improvement in the recruitment to residential workers in the residential children's houses.
- 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.

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### List of Background Papers

- (a) None