

JOINT INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Notification of the Argyll and Bute joint inspection of children's services was received on 20th June 2018. The Care Inspectorate and its partner agencies Health Improvement Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and Education Scotland are inspecting the services for children, young people and families that are delivered across Argyll and Bute by our community planning partnership. This includes the work of health, social work, education, police and the third sector who work with children, young people and their families. Argyll and Bute is the first partnership in Scotland to be inspected to the revised quality improvement framework (QIF) published in August 2018.
- 1.2 The inspection report will be published in March 2019, the inspection report will set out what works well and what could improve. The community planning partnership will be expected to take action on any recommendations the inspectors make for improvements
- 1.3 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee
- a) Note the preparation and activity that has taken place across the Argyll and Bute in support of the Joint Inspection of Children's Services.
 - b) Request a detailed report on the inspection findings and associated improvement plan be brought to the June 2019 meeting of Community Services Committee.

JOINT INSPECTION OF CHILDRENS SERVICES

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Care Inspectorate and its partner agencies Health Improvement Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and Education Scotland are inspecting the services for children, young people and families that are delivered across Argyll and Bute by our community planning partnership. This includes the work of health, social work, education, police and the third sector who work with children, young people and their families
- 2.2 Argyll and Bute is the first partnership in Scotland to be inspected to the revised quality improvement framework (QIF), published in August 2018. The new framework has been refreshed to orientate it towards outcomes for the most vulnerable children and to ensure it was relevant for the current context in which services for children and young people are delivered.
- 2.3 The inspection on-site activity began on 10th September 2018 and the outcome is anticipated in March 2019. Activity is on-going across the partnership to prepare and support the inspection.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee

- a) Note the preparation and activity that has taken place across the Argyll and Bute in support of the Joint Inspection of Children's Services.
- b) Request a detailed report on the inspection findings and associated improvement plan be brought to the June 2019 meeting of Community Services Committee.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 Notification of the Argyll and Bute joint inspection of children's services was received on 20th June 2018 from the Care Inspectorate to allow for the appointment of co-coordinators, planning and preparation to take place.

- 4.2 The Joint Inspection of Children's Services looks closely at the support that is provide to children and young people who are currently, or have previously been, 'looked after', including those living with parents, having short periods of respite care, in kinship care, in residential care (including schools and secure care) and, in foster care. The inspectors will also review how services work together to protect children where concerns have been raised about their welfare or safety, including children who are currently, or have previously been, on the child protection register.
- 4.3 The inspection focuses on 5 key questions
1. How good is the partnership at recognising and responding when children and young people need protection?
 2. How good is the partnership at helping children and young people who have experienced abuse and neglect stay safe, healthy and well and recover from their experiences?
 3. How good is the partnership at maximising the wellbeing of children and young people who are looked after?
 4. How good is the partnership at enabling care experienced young people to succeed in their transition to adulthood?
 5. How good is collaborative leadership?
- 4.4 The inspection comprises of the following elements
- a) The pre-inspection return, with information for the case analysis sample, organisation governance charts and significant and initial case review information. Argyll and Bute's return was submitted on 3rd August 2018.
 - b) The self-evaluation report answered the three reflective questions set out in the QIF and addressed the 5 inspection questions. 200 pieces of supporting documentation accompanied the comprehensive self-evaluation reports prepared by the partnership and was submitted on 13 August 2018.
 - c) A sample of 88 case files were requested from social work, education, police and Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA). The inspectors reviewed these files during their first onsite week, w/c 10th September 2018.
 - d) The inspectors met with children, young people, parents, carers and staff from across a range of agencies, including the third sector during the second half of onsite week 1. These participation and engagement sessions took place on islands and some of the more remote communities, as well as the larger towns.
 - e) 58 separate focus groups and one to one sessions took place with practitioners, managers, chief officers, partner agencies, children and young people, parents and carers from across Argyll and Bute during the second onsite week commencing 22nd October.
 - f) Inspectors met with the partnership on 5 occasions to provide feedback on progress, key high level findings and to discuss areas of uncertainty.

- 4.5 The staff survey was completed by 693 employees from Health and Social Care, Education, Police, SCRA and the third sector. The children and young people survey was completed by 21 children and young people. The parents and carers survey was completed by 13 parents and carers.
- 4.6 The team of 11 inspectors, including two young volunteer inspectors have spent two weeks in Argyll and Bute meeting staff, children and young people, parents and carers from across the authority. The inspectors have put a greater emphasis than previously on the voices of children and young people in this inspection methodology.
- 4.7 We will be informed of the outcome of the inspection in March 2019 and the Care Inspectorate will publish a report answering the partnerships response to the five inspection questions in para 4.3 above. The inspection report will set out what works well and what could improve. The community planning partnership will be expected to take action on any recommendations the inspectors make for improvements.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The inspection preparation and activity has been helpful in supporting our continued improvement of the services we provide to children and young people. The inspectors have shared a detailed analysis of file reading and surveys. Staff have been trained in file reading providing a valuable resource to the partnership moving forward.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 6.1 | Policy | None at this time. |
| 6.2 | Financial | None at this time. |
| 6.3 | Legal | Under section 115 of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, the Care Inspectorate are leading a joint inspection of the provision of services to children and young people in the Argyll and Bute community planning partnership area. |
| 6.4 | HR | None at this time. |
| 6.5 | Equalities | Issues of equality were considered throughout the inspection process and forefront to the planning for the two onsite weeks. |
| 6.6 | Risk | The outcome of the inspection will have reputational risk for all organisations being inspected. |

6.7 Customer Service The voice of children and young people has been central to the Care Inspectorate revised methodology.

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