

## **Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in Midlothian**

### **Report by Mary Smith, Director, Education, Communities and Economy**

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

This report advises Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee of the outcome of a Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in Midlothian.

#### **2 Background**

- 2.1** The inspection took place between April and August 2013. The inspection looked at all services provided to children and young people, whether they are provided by or on behalf of Midlothian Council, NHS Lothian, Police Scotland or by one of the many voluntary and third sector organisations.
- 2.2** The inspection team included staff from the Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland and Healthcare Improvement Scotland, and they collaborated with Audit Scotland. There were also 2 young inspectors on the team.
- 2.3** There was no standard format self-assessment required. The inspection team requested a variety of evidence including 9 position statements on key topics and 3 best practice examples. The inspectors conducted a staff survey, read 97 case files and held 75 meetings and focus groups with over 200 staff, parents, carers and young people.
- 2.4** The final report was published on the Care Inspectorate website on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2014. It is provided at Appendix A. The report recognises the quality of services provided for children and young people across the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership. Particular strengths identified include:
- Meaningful involvement of children and young people to shape policies and services.
  - Creative approaches to encourage physical, social and emotional wellbeing.
  - Highly effective and helpful support to improve parenting.
- 2.5** The report notes that “Leaders have made significant improvements to services for children, young people and families who are vulnerable and whose wellbeing is at risk” and “Children who are in need of protection from abuse are kept safe and experience positive outcomes as a result of the help they receive”.

- 2.6** The Inspectors evaluated local services against nine quality indicators from the draft framework 'How well are we improving the lives of children, young people using quality indicators,' published by the Care Inspectorate in October 2012, as follows:

<b>How well are the lives of children and young people improving?</b>	
<i>Providing help and support at an early stage</i>	Good
<i>Impact on children and young people</i>	Good
<i>Impact on families</i>	Good
<i>Assessing and responding to risks and needs</i>	Adequate
<i>Planning for individual children</i>	Adequate
<b>How well are services working together to improve the lives of children, young people and families?</b>	
<i>Planning and improving services</i>	Adequate
<i>Participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders</i>	Very Good
<b>How good is the leadership and direction of services for children and young people?</b>	
<i>Leadership of improvement and change</i>	Adequate
<i>Improving the well-being of children and young people</i>	Adequate

- 2.7** The report states that inspectors are confident that services will be able to make the necessary improvements in the light of the inspection findings. There are 4 recommendations outlined in the report, which notes that the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership and the Getting it Right for Every Midlothian Child Board should take account of the need to:
1. Provide readily available support for all children, young people and families to ensure they get the help they need at the right time;
  2. Continue to improve the quality of assessment and planning for all children and young people;
  3. Implement a comprehensive and effective joint commissioning strategy for services for children and young people; and
  4. Maintain strong leadership and clear direction for integration and continuous improvement in order to realise the vision and aspirations for children and young people

An action plan to respond to these recommendations is in development aligned with the Single Midlothian Plan.

### **3 Report Implications**

#### **3.1 Resource**

Resource implications will be considered as part of the action plan development.

### 3.2 Risk

The inspection report identifies 4 areas of improvement (see section 2.7) to be addressed in an action plan, which will be monitored by the Care Inspectorate and other bodies taking part in the inspection.

### 3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

### 3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The action plan will be developed to align with the Single Midlothian Plan, in support of the outcomes sought for children and young people in Midlothian.

### 3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Inspectors were provided with evidence of preventative approaches, e.g. the Family Resilience Project.

### 3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The inspection process involved 75 meetings with over 200 staff, parents, carers, children and young people.

### 3.7 Ensuring Equalities

There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. The action plan will be developed to align with the Single Midlothian Plan, and equalities implications would be considered as part of the latter.

### 3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report. The action plan will be developed to align with the Single Midlothian Plan, and sustainability implications would be considered as part of the latter.

## 4 Recommendations

Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- i. Note the Report of the Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in Midlothian (Appendix A); and
- ii. Note the areas for improvement in section 2.7

13<sup>th</sup> January 2014

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#### Background Papers:

**Appendix A:** Report of a Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People in Midlothian

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*I confirm that I have undertaken the following actions before submitting this report to the Council Secretariat (Check boxes to confirm):-*

- ☒ *All resource implications have been addressed. Any financial and HR implications have been approved by the Head of Finance and Human Resources.*
- ☒ *All risk implications have been addressed.*
- ☒ *All other report implications have been addressed.*
- ☒ *My Director has endorsed the report for submission to the Council Secretariat.*

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