

Management Board Meeting

Development and Improvement Groups (DIGs): Highlights and Issues Report

FOR INFORMATION ONLY	x
FOR DECISION	

Name of DIG	Nurtured
Date of report	18/1/23
Name and email of lead contact	Laura Mason Chief Education Officer

1	Highlights of activity and progress since last meeting
<p>Inspection of Children at Risk of Harm Update:</p> <p>A range of NDIG partners have participated in follow up WDC sessions to the Care Inspectorate sessions which took place through November and December. In addition staff from Social Work, Health, Police and Education undertook a case file audit to support our understanding of progress made and next steps in our improvement journey. At time of writing, a detailed report of these outcomes is being produced. All of these activities supported staff understanding of standards and expectations and dialogue in planning next steps in our joint work to keep children safe. The Action Plan is being progressed, led by a range of Officers and an updated Position Statement will be submitted to the Care Inspectorate with associated evidence to demonstrate progress and improvement.</p> <p>UNCRC</p> <p>To support the development and focus on ensuring implementation of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Reach Advocacy Scotland have delivered a series of professional learning sessions to key identified staff from all educational establishments and some partner agencies. They in turn will lead on further UNCRC professional learning and implementation at establishment and service level. Feedback from training has been very positive with almost all participants reporting increased knowledge and understanding of UNCRC and their role in ensuring these. Plans are in place to develop professional learning across the broader Community Planning Partnership and to ensure children and young people are aware of and supported in ensuring their rights are upheld.</p> <p>There are five key workstreams being progressed via the Nurtured DIG. These are led by and have representation from the range of partners. Key updates are:</p> <p>Workstreams:</p>	

The Promise

The Promise Plan is progressing well with representation from a range of Nurtured DIG partners leading key sub groups. Two hundred and fifty staff across the CPP have been trained in relation to the Principles and approaches to The Promise. Feedback was very positive and learning will inform work of the subgroups and individual service delivery. An Elected Member Briefing session was undertaken providing EM's with an opportunity to hear key messages and approaches to progressing our plan. The progress of these plans will ensure the wellbeing of our care experienced children and young people remains at the forefront of our approaches to support and planning and that their voices are reflected in decision making. The recent housing improvement board WDC action demonstrates a positive approach to corporate parenting responsibilities in supporting care leavers on low income to maintain their accommodation. They have expanded the current rent abatement available to care leavers who are living in their own council property and in full time education to include modern apprentices with WDC. This means if a care experienced young person in West Dunbartonshire takes up a post as a Modern Apprentice they will now be eligible for rent abatement. NDIG partners are confident this will improve the mental and physical health and wellbeing of our young people. This is a very good model of corporate parenting to be learnt from and built upon.

GIRFEC Refresh

The working group has had its initial meeting with representation from a range of NDIG partners. The group are currently planning multi-agency training which will reflect a range of priorities identified following publication of refreshed guidance, to ensure that staff are up to speed and that we are able to evidence compliance. This will ensure our staff are empowered to deliver services and meet the needs of children and families in joined up and consistent ways which are in keeping with national and local expectations.

Whole Family Wellbeing Fund

Work is progressing to improve and develop our approaches to providing early family help and wellbeing. An Action Plan has been developed which aims to support the development of three pilot sites across the Council using a range of staffing, resources and partners. Currently work is being undertaken on the production of a Terms of Reference which will provide clarity in the services to be offered and the staff involved. The working group includes one of our Young MSPs ensuring we provide a conduit to the needs of our Young People in our planning and delivery. This has been further informed via the results of a survey of parents, carers and young people.

We have developed a calendar of self-evaluation and quality assurance aligned to How Good is Our Family Help and undertaken two self-evaluation activities focussed on Children and Families at the Centre of Service Design and availability and access of support, which have supported our understanding of what we do well together and how we need to improve on this. This will continue quarterly on a three year cycle and all NDIG partners will be encouraged to participate. Feedback on the evaluations will report back to the NDIG and help inform next steps.

Child Poverty

Partners continue to work together to ensure families are supported with the challenges of poverty and cost of living. Partners such as Citizens Advice, third sector groups, educational services and social work supported families via referrals to access the £250,000 set aside for those facing significant issues paying for their energy provision. This enabled a wide range of our families to access an additional £200 per household.

Most schools have reflected on the Cost of the School Day Toolkit and have established a range of approaches to tackling additional costs of school such as uniform banks, provision of Christmas gifts/hampers and vouchers. Working 4 U, Educational Services and Social Work colleagues continue to work together via the Family Opportunity Hubs to support and signpost families to most appropriate help for their needs. To date 992 families have been referred to the service and 651 have taken up support offered.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Champions Board have secured funding to develop and deliver a short-term project on reducing stigma around mental health.

Access to Schools counselling continues to be available to all pupils aged 12 upwards. Together all the on-line help app continues to be promoted across the Council to all young people aged 12 -26. Uptake is quite poor and Officers continue to work together with the provider to develop ways of helping our community understand the value of help offered via the app.

2	Outline of any issues/risks and how these are being managed
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- The challenge of conflicting priorities faced by partners in supporting the range of Action Plans currently being undertaken e.g. the CI Action Plan, NDIG Plan, Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Child Protection Action Plan. This is being addressed by having clarity in workstreams for the NDIG and representatives from services leading and developing these.
- The Integrated Children's Services Plan 2023-2026 which is due for submission in March'23 is an opportunity to ensure the focus of the NDIG is revised, relevant and clearly articulated by all partners in our new plan.
- All partners identify the current financial position will create challenges in resource availability. This is an opportunity for partners to capitalise on joint working approaches, minimising duplication and resource allocation.

3	Outline of the main outputs expected before next meeting
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- Contributions to Inspection update report and evidence gathering due Feb'23
- Self-Evaluation activity – Whole System Approaches

- Whole Family Wellbeing – appoint involvement and engagement support; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child(UNCRC), Terms of Reference and Pilot Project Action Plan prepared and started
- GIRFEC Refresh Professional Learning Programme produced and started
- The Promise – Continue to deliver programme of professional learning to the range of Council staff and partners
- MHW- Delivery of stigma reduction programme for Care Experienced young people.
- UNCRC training programme for new employees/Senior Managers/pupils developed.

4 | What are your requirements of partners in the Community Planning Management Board to achieve the outcomes of the DIG?

- Note progress made;
- Support expectations that all NDIG partners participate in self-evaluation activities leading to improvement in service delivery and outcomes for children, young people and families;
- Support expectations that all NDIG partners participate in ICSP '21-'23 reporting and ICSP '23-'26 planning.

5 | Please outline any good news story you wish to share

1. Blairvadach Children's House has received an outstanding Inspection from the Care Inspection where they received top marks. Feedback received highlighted the efforts of staff to support and value children and young people's family time, treating family as partners within the plans and supporting children and young people to go home. Some of the stand-out activities identified include Equine Therapy, building their own pizza oven, embedding relationship based practice and staff being trained in Dyadic Development Physiotherapy which is a parenting approach and model of practice that uses what we know about attachment and trauma to help children and young people. This training was funded via the Care Experienced Children's Fund and will be continued this session with a range of NDIG colleagues. Whilst the written report is expected soon, in verbal feedback the Inspectors commented that they had seen "The Promise in action". Well done to all the staff, children and young people in Blairvadach!
2. A cohort of 22 staff members completed Level 1-4 Makaton training. Makaton is a communication tool with speech and symbols which enables people with disabilities or learning disabilities to communicate. Feedback from staff who attended the workshops was extremely positive. This cohort are now using and practising their skills in their own settings, working with pupils, sharing their knowledge with their peers and providing access to materials. A second cohort of staff will now undertake training this session.