

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Director of Community Health & Care Partnership

Community Health and Care Partnership Committee: 20th November 2013

Subject: Care Inspectorate Report for West Dunbartonshire Council's Fostering Service.

1 Purpose

- 1.1** To provide Members with information regarding the most recent inspection report for the Council's own Fostering Service.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1** The Committee is asked to note the content of this report and the work undertaken to ensure grades awarded reflect the quality levels expected by the Council.

3 Background

- 3.1** Care Inspectorate inspections focus on any combination of four thematic areas. These themes are; quality of care and support, environment, staffing and management & leadership.
- 3.2** The CHCP service covered in this Committee report is:
- The Fostering Service
- 3.3** Copies of inspection reports for all services can be accessed on the Care Inspectorate web-site; www.scswis.com

4 Main Issues

The Fostering Service

- 4.1** The Fostering Service was inspected on 27th June 2013 and the report published on 20th September 2013. The following grades were awarded.
- For the theme of *Care and Support* – Grade 3/Adequate.
 - For *Staffing* – Grade 3/Adequate.
 - For *Management and Leadership* – Grade 2/Weak.
- 4.2** The inspection report detailed the following six requirements to be addressed:
- Ensure that Foster Placement Agreements are completed for all children and young people placed with Foster Carers. This was to be completed

within three months of receipt of the inspection report. This requirement will be completed within the timescale given.

- Ensure that health and home safety checks, medical reviews of carers and updated Disclosure Scotland / PVG checks are undertaken in keeping with the foster carer agreement are met. This was to be completed within three months of receipt of the inspection report. This has been completed in advance of the timescale: all Disclosure/PVG and home safety checks have been completed. In respect of medical reviews, this is dependent on foster carers making appointments with their own GP; and if they fail to do so, the service will bring these carers back to the Fostering Panel for formal review.
- Ensure that unannounced visits to foster carer homes are conducted annually or more often if deemed necessary. This was to be completed within three months of receipt of the inspection report. This has been put in place in advance of the timescale and will continue.
- Ensure that reviews of all current foster carers meet with statutory requirements. This was to be completed within six months of receipt of the inspection report. This requirement will be completed by December 2013, in advance of the timescale.
- Ensure that carers operate within the category of their registration approval and that appropriate steps are taken when circumstances result in a carer operating out with their category of registration. This relates to six cases where foster carers had additional children placed beyond the number they were originally approved to care for. This was to be completed within six months of receipt of the inspection report. This requirement has been completed in advance of the timescale.
- Ensure that complaints made to the service are investigated promptly, action taken as required and that the process meets with the Council's complaints procedure. This was to be completed within three months of receipt of the inspection report. This requirement has been completed in advance of the timescale, with a robust process implemented and associated training and support now in place.

4.3 The table below sets out the movement in grades for the service over the last two inspections:

Home	Previous Grades						Current Grades					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
	18 November 2011						27 June 2013					
WDC Fostering Service												
• Care & support					✓				✓			
• Environment				✓					✓			
• Staff							✓					
• Management & Leadership												

4.4 As is apparent in the table above, there has been a disappointing drop in the grades awarded from the previous inspection undertaken in 2010. Critical reflection by the service in the wake of the inspection report has identified that this had been primarily due to the service not keeping up-to-date with

administrative checks and required recording processes. While the focus of the service had been on recruiting and assessing foster carers and adopters, insufficient attention had been paid to necessary administrative activities. For example, in a small number of cases the foster carer file did not contain up-to-date Disclosure and PVG details; and at the time of the most recent inspection, there had been no process in place to keep this continually under review or to notify staff that checks were due.

- 4.5** The majority of issues that have led to the above requirements related to a small number of cases; and an improvement action plan was put in place immediately following the inspection. Whilst the Fostering Service are acknowledged as being dedicated and competent, such shortfalls in routine administrative processes are nonetheless unacceptable - hence why remedial action has been expedited.

5 People Implications

- 5.1** There are no people implications.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1** There are no financial implications.

7 Risk Analysis

- 7.1** For any service inspected, failure to meet requirements within the time-scales set out in their inspection report could result in a reduction in grading or enforcement action. This may have an impact on our ability to continue to deliver the service.

8 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** Not required for this report.

9 Consultation

- 9.1** Not required for this report.

10 Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** The Council's Strategic Plan 2012-17 identifies "improve life chances for children and young people" as one of the authority's five strategic priorities.



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Date: 5th November 2013

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: The information provided in Care Inspectorate Inspection
Reports Web-site address: -
http://www.scswis.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=7909&Itemid=727

Wards Affected: All