
Report To:	Health & Social Care Committee	Date:	10 January 2019
Report By:	Louise Long Corporate Director, (Chief Officer) Inverclyde HSCP	Report No:	SW/10/2019/SMcA
Contact Officer:	Sharon McAlees Head of Children Services and Criminal Justice	Contact No:	01475 715365
Subject:	INSPECTION OF ADOPTION SERVICES		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Health and Social Care Committee of the outcome of the announced (short notice) inspection carried out by the Care Inspectorate in respect of the Adoption Service completed on 31st August 2018.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Inverclyde Adoption Service is subject to regular inspections by the Care Inspectorate. The Care Inspectorate is an independent scrutiny and improvement body which regulates care services across Scotland ensuring that service users receive a high level of care and support.
- 2.2 A full public report of the inspection and grades is available on the Care Inspectorate website.
- 2.3 The service was graded on how they performed against two quality standards. The summary of the grades awarded were as follows
- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Care and Support | 5 Very Good |
| 2. Management and Leadership | 6 Excellent |

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Health and Social Care Committee is asked to note the outcome of the inspection.

Louise Long
Corporate Director (Chief Officer)
Inverclyde HSCP

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Inverclyde Adoption Service is registered with the Care Inspectorate and is inspected on a regular basis. An announced (short notice) inspection of the Adoption Service was completed on 31st August 2018.
- 4.2 The inspection focused on two quality standards:-
- Quality of Care and Support
 - Quality of Management and Leadership
- 4.3 Following discussions with adopters, birth parents, managers and Panel members, including a review of written evidence, the service was graded as very good for care and support and performing at a sector leading level of excellence for management and leadership.
- 4.4 The Care Inspectorate noted that care and support were of a very high standard with some areas of excellence. They noted that learning and development of adopters was of a high level and highlighted the support offered through the Birth Ties Support Project improving the provision offered to birth family members affected by adoption.
- 4.5 There is a strong improvement focus within the agency and they noted that the quality of staff was outstanding and noted the passion and drive to provide the best possible service from a nurture perspective.
- 4.6 They noted the positive and enhanced care and support provided to young people affected by adoption through the introduction of child appreciation days. The development in support offered to those seeking information regarding their birth family was also recognised.
- 4.7 The Adoption Service has recently rebranded which has enhanced ongoing recruitment campaigns and incorporated the voice of adopters sharing their experience.
- 4.8 There were no recommendations or requirement issued. It was noted that the service could strengthen the involvement of young people and their views through the service and adoption panels; this is an area within the Adoption Service's continuous improvement plan. Other areas the service continue to develop include later life letters and life story information, transition for children and young people into permanent placements and support for the friends and family of adoptive parents.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The Adoption Service will continue to build on the positive feedback of the inspection and continue to ensure the service develops.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 6.1 No implications.

Financial Implications:

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

6.2 No implications

Human Resources

6.3 No implications

Equalities

6.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
	NO - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Repopulation

6.5 No implications

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 None

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Care Inspectorate Report

Inverclyde Council Adoption Service Adoption Service

Inverclyde HSCP
Hector McNeil House
7 - 8 Clyde Square
Greenock
PA15 1NB

Telephone: 01475 715365

Type of inspection:

Announced (short notice)

Completed on:

31 August 2018

Service provided by:

Inverclyde Council

Service provider number:

SP2003000212

Service no:

CS2005087048

About the service

Inverclyde Council's Adoption Service has been registered since 12 December 2005, and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011. They provide a service for children and young people aged from birth to 18 years and their families. The service recruits and supports adoptive parents to provide families for children who cannot live with their birth parents or extended family members, and whose needs have been assessed.

Since the last inspection, the service have approved two adopter households with a further five potential adoptive households undergoing assessment. The service also provides formal post adoption support for two families.

Inverclyde Council Fostering Service was inspected at the same time and a separate report is available.

The service is part of Inverclyde's Health and Social Care Partnership, that brings together community health services and social work services.

As the findings of this inspection are based on a sample of children and young people, inspectors cannot assure the quality of experience for every service user.

What people told us

During this inspection, we spoke to the Manager and the two full time members of staff. We spoke to two adopters during home visits and a further six during a focus group.

Staff informed us that they felt highly supported and involved by the service and were receiving high levels of support to develop their own skills and in turn the service as a whole.

Staff told us:

"The Manager is very pro-active and we have regular team meetings and development days to review the progress of the service and to consider new ways of improving things".

Adopters told us:

"Our social worker made the assessment process as easy as she could. We were kept fully informed at all times and nothing came as a surprise during the assessment".

"After the intensity of the assessment and the panel we felt a bit in limbo. We were told to expect this and we are not sure what else the service could have done to support us at this time".

"The spotlight training sessions and support groups are great ways to meet with other adopters and to learn more information in which helps us care for our young people".

"The service always has someone there for you to speak to if needed".

Birth parents told us:

"The social workers helped me share information about my life with my children who had been adopted and supported to write a letter for them".

"The service has helped me come to terms with the decision made for my children to be adopted and I hope that I have been able to give something back to my children with their help".

One adoptee told us:

"The social worker went above and beyond to help me find out about and locate my birth mum. We have not met but we do send emails and I feel I have been helped to get answers about some parts of my life"

Self assessment

A self-assessment was not requested for this inspection year, however, we looked at the last self-assessment completed in 2016 and spoke with the manager who provided an adoption service development plan and evidence of recent work and practice highlights.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	6 - Excellent

What the service does well

Care and support was of a very high standard with some areas of excellence and systems of multi-disciplinary matching prior to placements indicated the strong improvement focus within the agency.

Learning and development for carers was supported through Spotlight sessions and support to adopters was of a high level during the assessment process and post adoption.

The service is at the early stages of the delivery of appreciation days for young people. The evidence seen of those which have recently taken place were positive and enhanced the care and support provided to young people.

The quality of staffing was outstanding and the approach to learning and development evidenced a passion and a drive to provide the best possible service from a nurture perspective. All staff had regular supervision and were encouraged to be reflective and keep up to date with research and best practice. Staff felt very well-supported by managers and had opportunities to develop leadership skills by contributing to improvement activities.

The manager of the service was improvement focused and had used person centred planning to review the plan for the team. The manager was recognised at a national level for her outstanding commitments to supporting vulnerable people in Inverclyde at the Scottish Social Services Awards.

The service has developed its Birth Ties Support Project, improving provision offered to birth parents to give more support to those going through the process. This service also assists in ascertaining views for children's futures and assisting with writing of later life letters. This project was a finalist in the making research & evidence real

category at the Scottish Social Services Awards. It evidenced joint working with Celcis and sharing of knowledge at a Celcis practice exchange workshop and the Adoption and Fostering Alliance conference and there have been other Local authorities seeking advice in relation to taking such a service forward in their area.

The service has rebranded and enhanced its recruitment campaigns through the use of an online interactive journey using the voice of adopters.

The service is developing its Origins counselling provision to support those looking for their birth families.

We looked at child protection procedures and practice and were satisfied that there were procedures and practice in place to ensure service users are protected.

What the service could do better

We found that the service could strengthen the involvement of young people and their views throughout the service and in the adoption panels.

Whilst the service has made efforts to increase the provision of Later life letters, they are aware that this is an areas which still requires further development. The Birth Ties Support project has the potential to improve this feature of the service.

As was identified at the last inspection, transitions remain a key element through all discussions with adopters and the service should work to increase the understanding and planning for transitions. The service already have a group of staff focusing on this. Some adopters were of the view that post adoption support for friends and family could be improved to ensure a continued understanding of the processes and in turn the support they offer to the adoptive family.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
12 Aug 2016	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
8 Jan 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
14 Mar 2014	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good 4 - Good
14 Feb 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
24 Mar 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
31 Mar 2009	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good 5 - Very good

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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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