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| Report To: | Social Work & Social Care Scrutiny Panel | Date: | 29 October 2024 |
| Report By: | Kate Rocks Chief Officer Inverclyde HSCP | Report No: | SWSCSP/31/2024/JH |
| Contact Officer: | Jonathan Hinds Head of Children, Families & Justice Chief Social Work Officer Inverclyde HSCP | Contact No: | 01475 715365 |
| Subject: | Inspection of Inverclyde Fostering, Adoption and Continuing Care Services | | |

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 For Decision For Information/Noting
- 1.2 This report advises the Social Work and Social Care Scrutiny Panel of the inspection action plans that were developed following the Care Inspectorate's recent inspection of adoption, fostering and continuing care services in Inverclyde.
- 1.3 The inspection was undertaken using the Care Inspectorate's Quality Framework for Fostering, Adoption and Adult Placement Services (May 2021) using quality indicators within the following key questions:
- Key Question 1: How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing?
 - Key Question 2: How good is our leadership?
 - Key Question 5: How well is our care and support planned?
- 1.4 The inspection reports were discussed at the Social Work Scrutiny Panel on 19th August 2024 where it was agreed that the service improvement plans would be shared at the next meeting of the Panel.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members of the Social Work and Social Care Scrutiny Panel are asked to note the content of the action plans and consider requesting a further update to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Panel.

**Kate Rocks
Chief Officer
Inverclyde HSCP**

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 As previously advised, services were inspected during May 2024, in line with the Quality Framework for Fostering, Adoption and Adult Placement Services, using the following quality indicators:
- 3.2 Key Question 1: How well do we support children, young people's wellbeing?
- Children, young people, adults and their care giver families experience compassion, dignity and respect.
 - Children, young people and adults get the most out of life.
 - Children, young people and adults' health and wellbeing benefits from the care and support they receive.
 - Children, young people, adults and their care giver families get the service that is right for them.
- 3.3 Key Question 2: How good is your leadership?
- Quality assurance and improvement is led well.
- 3.4 Key Question 5: How well is our care and support planned?
- Assessment and care planning reflects the outcomes and wishes of the children, young people and adults.
- 3.5 Services had initiated a range of improvement activity prior to the inspection and the resulting action plans from the inspection reports also incorporate these activities (Appendices 1 – 3).
- 3.6 Foster carers had different opportunities to engage with the inspection process, however in August 2024, staff undertook further consultation with carers to gather additional qualitative feedback on their experiences. This provided valuable additional context to improvement activity and included feedback that foster carers feel supported by the Family Placement Team. This provides a strong basis for how improvement activity will continue to be shaped by the views of carers, practitioners and key partners.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The improvement plans align with the requirements and areas for improvement identified by the Care Inspectorate during their inspection of services in May 2024.
- 4.2 Whilst improvement activity was underway prior to inspection, the development of action plans arising from inspection also reflect this. As such, the action plans will build on the existing strengths of the service whilst also working to fully address the areas for improvement.
- 4.3 As reported to the previous meeting of the Social Work and Social Care Scrutiny Panel, the inspection reports for the fostering and adoption services included a number of requirements which were completed within timescales and the Care Inspectorate notified of same:
- By 31 July 2024 the service must ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people through the accurate, prompt and clearly recorded, robust assessment and reassessment of carers and (where necessary) presentation to panel following the identification of any significant changes of circumstances within the caring household. **(Completed)**

- By 2 September 2024 the service must ensure that all children in need of permanent care arrangements have their assessments completed and plans carried out without unnecessary delay. (**Completed**)
- By 2 September 2024 the provider must ensure that all adoptive or potential adoptive caregivers are supported, supervised and reviewed in accordance with statutory regulations. (**Completed**)
- By 2 September 2024 the provider must ensure quality assurance systems are robust and effectively support strategic and practice overview, and improvement work. (**Completed**)

- 4.4 The improvement plans have been shared with staff and will provide the focus for a forthcoming team development day. Additionally, an engagement event for carers will include the opportunity to develop the 2025 training programme based on their feedback on their training needs.
- 4.5 Recruiting and retaining foster carers, including short break carers, remains a challenge for our service, though it is not unique to Inverclyde. In September 2024, the service commenced targeted activity with Inverclyde Council staff to explore opportunities for them to consider becoming short break carers. In addition, the service is developing a dedicated Inverclyde Fostering recruitment and retention strategy.
- 4.6 Progress against the actions within the improvement plan, including those identified from inspection, will be monitored by the HSCP Clinical and Care Governance Forum and IJB Audit Committee.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

| SUBJECT | YES | NO |
|---|-----|----|
| Financial | | x |
| Legal/Risk | | x |
| Human Resources | | x |
| Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan) | | x |
| Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing | | x |
| Environmental & Sustainability | | x |
| Data Protection | | x |

5.2 Finance

One off Costs

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading | Budget Years | Proposed Spend this Report | Virement From | Other Comments |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| N/A | | | | | |

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

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

5.3 Legal/Risk

None.

5.4 Human Resources

None.

5.5 Strategic

None.

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x | NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement. |

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x | NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant. |

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x | NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights. |

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

Summarise any environmental / climate change impacts which relate to this report.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X | NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is likely to have significant environmental effects, if implemented. |

5.8 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X | NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals. |

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Throughout the inspection process, staff, managers and carers were consulted; they will continue to be consulted as part of activity to deliver the improvement plans for each service.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

Inverclyde HSCP

Fostering Service – Improvement Plan 2024-2025

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|--|--|--|---|--|------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | | |
| The Safety and wellbeing of all children and young people through accurate and clear recordings including assessment and re-assessment of carers. | Team Leader oversight and sign-off of all assessments and reviews in relation to foster carers. | 31 July 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | Complete. To be reviewed regularly in supervision. | Green |
| We will track ongoing assessment of caregivers to ensure that these are undertaken within agreed timescales. | We will track ongoing assessment of caregivers to ensure that these are undertaken within agreed timescales. | 31 July 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | Complete: tracking system has been put in place for foster home reviews/panels. | Green |
| We will identify fostering households that require to be reviewed at panel and ensure that: | We will identify fostering households that require to be reviewed at panel and ensure that: - review paperwork is up to date. - a date is identified to be discussed at Panel before 31 July 2024. | 31 July 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | Service Manager to review. Complete. Ongoing Service Manager review. | Green |

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|---|--|--|---|--|------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | |
| Children Looked After in foster care have their own network of support. | Together with the area team we will develop an improved collaborative approach to ensure that children are seen regularly by their Social Worker. We will track the frequency of visits. | 1 October 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead C&F Service Managers. | Complete. Service Managers to monitor. | Green |
| All children in need of permanent care arrangements have their assessments completed and plans carried out without delay | Service Managers will meet 4-weekly with Senior Social Workers to track the plans of children who are looked after away from home. | 2 September 2024. | Service Managers | Complete. | Green |
| | A new process will be implemented to track the plans of Children who are Looked After away from home. The aim will be to reduce the likelihood of children experiencing delays in decisions being made about their plan. | 31 November 2024 | Service Managers | In progress | Amber |
| | A tracker will be implemented to highlight when Looked After Reviews are due. | 1 November 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | In progress | Amber |
| | Placements ending: an improved process will be implemented in place of existing disruption meetings. | 2 September 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead Service Manager | Complete | Green |

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|---|--|--|---|--|------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? Placement Ending reflection meeting guidance and associated paperwork will be implemented across the fostering, continuing care and residential services. | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? Team Lead: Residential Services. | Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? Team Lead: Residential Services. | | Green |
| Staff have the right knowledge, competence and development to support children, young people, adults and their caregiver families. | <u>Learning and Development – Foster Carers</u> All foster carers will have an agreed annual training plan A training needs analysis will be undertaken with foster carers and a co-designed learning calendar will be developed. | 1 November 2024 | Family Placement Social Workers Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | In progress | Amber |
| | <u>Learning and Development – Family Placement Team</u> A training needs analysis will be undertaken and an annual training plan will be developed across the service. We will work with colleagues in other care settings and promote joint training opportunities. | 1 November 2024 | Adoption and Fostering Team Lead Service Manager | In progress | Amber |

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|--|---|---|---|--|------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | |
| Ensure effective quality assurance systems are in place to audit quality of recording within the service, including but not restricted to carer supervision records, risk assessments and safer caring plans. | <p>A tracker will be developed to ensure that all safer caring plans and risk assessments are up to date and regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Safer carer plans and risks assessments will be regularly monitored and evaluated.</p> <p>We will involve a wider range of staff and others in our quality assurance.</p> | <p>2 September 2024</p> <p>With monitoring and evaluation every 12 weeks.</p> | <p>Family Placement Social Workers.</p> <p>Fostering and Adoption Team Lead</p> | Complete | Green |
| Staff will receive formal, regular, recorded, supervision and appraisal that clearly highlights ongoing learning and development and monitors performance. | | <p>An action plan will be in place by 1 December 2024</p> | <p>Fostering and Adoption Team Lead</p> <p>With Service Manager oversight.</p> | In progress. | Amber |
| | | <p>A calendar will be in place by 1 December 2024</p> | <p>Fostering and Adoption Team Lead</p> <p>Service Manager</p> | In progress. | Amber |
| | <u>Staff Supervision</u> | 2 September 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | Complete | Green |
| | | | Quality Assurance: Service Managers will undertake quarterly quality assurance of supervision records. | | |

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|---|---|--|--|--|------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | | |
| | <u>Foster Carer Supervision</u> Supervising Social Workers will ensure that Foster Carers formal supervision is completed regularly and within timescales. | 2 September 2024 With monitoring and evaluation every 12 weeks. | Family Placement Social Workers Quality Assurance: Fostering and Adoption Team Lead will undertake regular quality assurance of supervision records. | Complete | Green |
| To provide new placement capacity to meet the demographic and diverse needs of Looked After children in Inverclyde | We will develop a strategy to increase the number of foster carers in Inverclyde. Implementation to begin thereafter. | Strategy: 6 January 2025 Implementation to begin thereafter. | Service Manager oversight. Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | In progress. | Amber |
| To increase in-house placements, reducing the use of external placements. | Develop process to routinely undertake exit interviews with foster carers leaving the service and evaluated exit interviews. | 2 September 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | Complete | Green |

Inverclyde HSCP

Adoption Service – Improvement Plan 2024-2025

| Outcome What do we want to achieve | Actions How are we going to do it? | Timeframe When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Person responsible Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|--|---|--|--|---|------------|
| All children and their adoptive families are receiving appropriate levels of post adoption support. Post adoption plans should be SMART | We will strengthen our post adoption support plans and these will be Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic and Time-bound: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• at the point of matching.• when the adoption order is granted.• when adopters approach the family placement team after an adoption seeking specific support. | 31 November 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead Service Manager | In progress | Amber |
| The Safety and wellbeing of all children and young people through accurate and clear recordings including assessment and re- | Team Leader oversight and sign-off of all assessments and review paperwork in relation to prospective adopters. | 31 July 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | Complete. To be reviewed regularly in supervision. | Green |
| | We will identify pre-adoptive households that require to be reviewed at panel and ensure that: | 31 July 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | Complete | Green |

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? | RAG |
|---|--|---|--|---|-------------------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | |
| assessment of carers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review paperwork is up to date. - a date is identified for them to be discussed at Panel | | | Ongoing Service Manager review. | |
| All children in need of permanent care arrangements have their assessments completed and plans carried out without delay | <p>Service Managers will meet 4-weekly with Senior Social Workers to track the plans of children who are looked after away from home.</p> <p>A new process will be implemented to track the plans of Children who are Looked After away from home. The aim will be to reduce the likelihood of children experiencing delays in decisions being made about their plan.</p> <p>A tracker will be implemented to highlight when Looked after Reviews are due.</p> | 2 September 2024 31 November 2024 1 November 2024 | Service Managers Service Managers Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | In progress In progress In progress | Amber Amber Amber |
| | | | | | |

| Outcome What do we want to achieve | Actions How are we going to do it? | Timeframe When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Person responsible Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|---|---|---|---|--|-------|
| | paperwork will be implemented across fostering, continuing care and residential services. | | | | Amber |
| Children and young people to consistently benefit from caregivers who are knowledgeable and well trained | <u>Learning and Development – Adoptive Carers</u> All pre-adoptive carers will have an agreed annual training plan A training needs analysis will be undertaken with carers and a co-designed learning calendar will be developed. | 1 November 2024 | Family Placement Social Workers. Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | In progress | Amber |
| Staff have the right knowledge, competence and development to support children, young people, adults and their caregiver families. | <u>Learning and Development – Family Placement Team</u> A training needs analysis will be undertaken and an annual training plan will be developed across the service. We will work with colleagues in other care settings and promote joint training opportunities. A tracker will be developed to ensure that all safer caring plans | 1 November 2024 | Adoption and Fostering Team Lead Service Manager | In progress | Green |

| Outcome What do we want to achieve | Actions How are we going to do it? | Timeframe When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Person responsible Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|---|--|--|---|--|-------|
| | and risk assessments are up to date and regularly reviewed. | Safer carer plans and risks assessments will be regularly monitored and evaluated. | With monitoring and evaluation every 12 weeks. | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | |
| Staff will receive formal, regular, recorded, supervision and appraisal that clearly highlights ongoing learning and development and | We will implement improved processes to track key activity including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Statutory checks- Unannounced visits- Return to panel- Unplanned endings | 2 September 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead: With oversight from Service Manager | Complete | Green |
| | A quality assurance calendar will be developed which reflects quality assurance activity across all aspects of service delivery and includes key partners. | 1 December 2024 | Fostering and Adoption Team Lead Service Manager | In progress | Amber |

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? | RAG |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|---|-----------------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | |
| monitors performance. | <u>Pre-adoptive carer Supervision</u> Supervising Social Workers will ensure that formal supervision is completed regularly and within timescales. | 2 September 2024 With monitoring and evaluation every 12 weeks. | Family Placement Social Workers | Quality Assurance: Fostering and Adoption Team Lead will undertake regular quality assurance of supervision records. | Complete Green |

Inverclyde HSCP

Continuing Care Service – Improvement Plan 2024-2025

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|--|---|--|---|--|------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | | | Green |
| Ensure effective quality assurance systems are in place to audit quality of recording within the service, including but not restricted to carer supervision records, risk assessments and safer caring plans. | A tracker will be developed to ensure that all safer caring plans and risk assessments are up to date and regularly reviewed. Safer carer plans and risks assessments will be regularly monitored and evaluated. | 2 September 2024 With monitoring and evaluation every 12 weeks. | Social Workers Continuing Care Team Lead | Complete | Amber |
| Children and young people will consistently benefit from caregivers who are knowledgeable and well trained. | <u>Learning and Development – Carers</u> All carers will have an agreed annual training plan. | 1 November 2024 | Social Workers Continuing Care Team Lead | In progress | Amber |

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|---|--|--|---|--|------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | | |
| Staff have the right knowledge, competence and development to support children, young people, adults and their caregiver families. | <p>A training needs analysis will be undertaken with carers and a co-designed learning calendar will be developed.</p> <p>Carers will have access to Adult Support and Protection training.</p> <p><u>Learning and Development – Continuing Care Team</u></p> <p>A training needs analysis will be undertaken and an annual training plan will be developed across the service.</p> <p>We will work with colleagues in other care settings and promote joint training opportunities.</p> | 31 January 2025 | Continuing Care Team Lead | In progress | Amber |
| Staff will receive formal, regular, recorded, supervision and appraisal that clearly highlights ongoing learning and development and monitors performance. | <u>Staff Supervision</u> | 2 September 2024 | Continuing Care Team Lead | With monitoring and evaluation every 12 weeks. | Green |

| Outcome | Actions | Timeframe | Person responsible | Where are we now? What have we achieved, and what has prevented us from doing what we wanted? | RAG |
|--|--|--|--|--|------------|
| What do we want to achieve | How are we going to do it? | When do we want this to be completed or next reviewed? | Who is doing each action or responsible for ensuring it gets completed? | | |
| Young people in continuing care will have their plans reviewed timely | <p><u>Carer Supervision</u></p> <p>Supervising Social Workers will ensure that Carers formal supervision is completed regularly and within timescales.</p> | 2 September 2024 With monitoring and evaluation every 12 weeks. | Social Workers Quality Assurance: Team Lead will undertake regular quality assurance of supervision records. | Complete | Green |
| | <p>A tracker will be implemented to identify when continuing care reviews are due.</p> | 1 November 2024 | Continuing Care Team Lead | In progress | Amber |
| | <p>Welfare Assessments will be undertaken for all young people who are looked after as they approach their 16th birthday.</p> <p>To achieve this, the Welfare Assessment will be incorporated in to our "Going Forward" paperwork.</p> <p>Young people will be consulted to inform updated processes.</p> | 1 February 2025 | Continuing Care Team Lead Fostering and Adoption Team Lead | In progress | Amber |