

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 21 May 2013

Inspection of Children's Services in Edinburgh

Item number	7.1
Report number	
Wards	All

Links

Coalition pledges	P1
Council outcomes	CO1 - CO6 , CO10 - CO15
Single Outcome Agreement	SO2 , SO3 , SO4

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Executive summary

Inspection of Children's Services in Edinburgh

Summary

- 1 To advise Members of the outcome of a comprehensive inspection of services for children in Edinburgh. The inspection examined how well services in Edinburgh work together to improve outcomes for children, especially children in need.
- 2 The inspection was a multi-agency inspection on behalf of Scottish Ministers led by the Care Inspectorate. The Care Inspectorate plans to inspect services for children across all 32 local authority areas by the end of March 2017.
- 3 In addition to the Care Inspectorate the scrutiny bodies involved were Education Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Audit Scotland.
- 4 The inspection report was published on 29 April. The inspectors found that services are working well together and that they are having a positive impact on outcomes for children in Edinburgh.
- 5 The inspection found child protection services, the commitment of staff, engagement with children and families, partnership working and leadership to be particular strengths. The report provides a valuable agenda for continued improvement.

Recommendations

To recommend that the Education, Children and Families Committee:

- 1 Welcomes the findings of the inspection of children's services in Edinburgh;
- 2 Notes the commitment of the Children's Partnership to deliver continued improvements in services for children in need and to report progress to this Committee through the Policy Development and Review sub-committee on an annual basis.

Measures of success

The inspection was an evaluative inspection based on an established EFQM quality framework. The inspection report covers a wide range of quality indicators and presents evaluations on a six point scale.

Financial impact

No financial implications.

Equalities impact

There is no equalities impact as a result of this report.

Sustainability impact

There are no adverse environmental impacts arising from this report.

Consultation and engagement

The inspection activity included extensive engagement with staff and service users.

Background reading / external references

[‘Services for Children and Young People in the City of Edinburgh’](#) – Inspection Report. Care Inspectorate, April 2013

[Report to Education Children and Families Committee 5 March 2013](#)

[‘How well are we improving the lives of children, young people and families?’](#) A guide to evaluating services for children and young people using quality indicators. Care Inspectorate, October 2012

Inspection of Children's Services in Edinburgh

1. Background

1.1 Scottish Ministers asked the Care Inspectorate to develop a new model for the scrutiny of and improvement of services for children and young people designed around:

- Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)
- a strong focus on children and young people
- joining up scrutiny.

The Care Inspectorate developed a model for inspecting services for children which aims to:

- improve outcomes for all children and young people;
- provide independent assurance about the effectiveness of services for children and particularly the most vulnerable children and young people, including child protection;
- build capacity for improvement.

1.2 The Care Inspectorate plans to inspect services for children across all 32 local authority areas by the end of March 2017.

1.3 The Care Inspectorate chose Edinburgh and Orkney as pilot sites. The reports were published on 29 April 2013.

2. Main report

2.1 Inspection activity in Edinburgh began on 12 November 2012 and completed on 30 January 2013.

2.2 In addition to the Care Inspectorate, the scrutiny bodies involved were Education Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Audit Scotland. The team also included a young inspector.

2.3 The inspection team collected evidence by examining background information, reading 114 case files, holding focus groups and meetings and engaging with children, young people, parents and staff from all relevant agencies.

- 2.4 The inspection focussed on services for children in need including child protection, family support services, services for children with disabilities and children who are Looked After. They also scrutinized services for children affected by parental substance misuse and domestic abuse and examined the performance for services for young people with offending behaviour including those who presented a risk of harm to others.
- 2.5 The inspection reports on how well services work together to improve outcomes for children and young people. This included progress on child protection, implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child and the Corporate Parenting of Looked After Children.
- 2.6 The inspection found the following key strengths
- the high motivation and strong commitment of staff to improving the life chances of vulnerable children, young people and families;
 - the actions taken to keep children and young people at risk of abuse and harm safe;
 - the very wide range of measures to consult and seek the views of children, young people, families and other stakeholders;
 - a strong culture and ethos of positive partnership working for the benefit of children, young people and families at all levels;
 - the visionary leadership and direction of the Edinburgh Children's Partnership and commitment to prevention and early intervention.
- 2.7. The report identifies four key areas for improvement for the Partnership.
- improve and extend help and support at an early stage for children, young people and families so they get the help they need before difficulties get worse;
 - improve planning to meet needs so that children and young people experience long-lasting improvements;
 - implement more systematic and joint approaches to quality assurance and self-evaluation to improve outcomes for children and young people; and,
 - continue to reduce outcome gaps for children and young people whose life chances are at risk and place a stronger focus on achieving speedier improvement for the most vulnerable.
- 2.8 The areas for improvement identified in the report are consistent with the current priorities of the Council and the Children's Partnership – for example increasing support for vulnerable children to prevent the need for them to come into care, achieving earlier intervention and improving outcomes for children in need.
- 2.9 Improvement actions that result from the inspection will be built into the Partnership's improvement plans and progress will reported to the Policy Development and Review sub-committee of this committee. In addition, the Care Inspectorate plans to work with the Children's Partnership to develop new approaches to joint self-evaluation.

2.10. The report concludes that in the light of the inspection, inspectors are very confident that services will be able to achieve these improvements.

3. Recommendations

To recommend that the Education, Children and Families Committee:

- 3.1 Welcomes the findings of the inspection of children's services in Edinburgh;
- 3.2 Notes the commitment of the Children's Partnership to deliver continued improvements in children's services and to report progress to this Committee through the Policy Development and Review sub-committee on an annual basis.

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Director of Children and Families

Links

Coalition pledges	P1 Increase support for vulnerable children, including help for families so that fewer go into care
Council outcomes	CO1. Our children have the best start in life, are able to make and sustain relationships and are ready to succeed CO2. Our children and young people are successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens making a positive contribution to their communities CO3. Our children and young people at risk, or with a disability, have improved life chances CO4. Our children and young people are physically and emotionally healthy CO5. Our children and young people are safe from harm or fear of harm, and do not harm others within their communities CO6. Our children and young people's outcomes are not undermined by poverty and inequality CO10. Improved health and reduced inequalities CO11. Preventative and personalised support in place CO12. Edinburgh's carers are supported CO13. People are supported to live at home CO14. Communities have the capacity to help support people

Single Outcome Agreement	<p>CO15. The public is protected</p> <p>SO2. Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health</p> <p>SO3. Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential</p> <p>SO4 Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric</p>
Appendices	None