

<b>Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership</b>	<b>Performance &amp; Audit Committee</b>
<b>Held on:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> May 2024</b>
<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Unannounced Inspection of Cunningham Place Children’s House – Improvements Update</b>
<b>Summary:</b>	
<p>This report is to inform South Ayrshire Performance and Audit Committee what actions have been taken following the unannounced inspection by the Care Inspectorate on Cunningham Place, one of South Ayrshire’s Children’s houses, and subsequent report. This inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate with in-person visits taking place with feedback provided on 9 June 2023.</p>	
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Mark Inglis, Head of Service for Childrens Health Care and Justice</b>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	
<p>It is recommended that the Performance &amp; Audit Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. reflect upon the key messages from the Inspection Report</li> <li>ii. acknowledge the Health and Social Care Partnership Improvement plan and be assured of the resulting improvement work and ongoing monitoring.</li> </ul>	
<b>Route to meeting:</b>	
<b>Implications:</b>	
Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>
HR	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equalities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
ICT	<input type="checkbox"/>

## UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF CUNNINGHAM PLACE CHILDREN'S HOUSE

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to update South Ayrshire Performance and Audit Committee on the improvement work which has been undertaken in response to an unannounced inspection by the Care Inspectorate on Cunningham Place, one of South Ayrshire's Children's Houses, and the Improvement Actions detailed in their report. This inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate with in-person visits taking place with feedback provided on 9 June 2023. Full report detailed in Appendix 1.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

**It is recommended that the Performance & Audit Committee;**

- i. **Reflect upon the key messages from the Inspection Report**
- ii. **Acknowledge the Health and Social Care Partnership Improvement plan and be assured of the resulting improvement work and ongoing monitoring.**

### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Care Inspectorate undertook an unannounced Inspection of Cunningham Place Children's House in June 2023. They spoke with five young people using the service and one family member; they also spoke with staff, management, and the senior management team and representatives from Social Work Locality Services and advocacy services.
- 3.2 To inform the inspection further, the inspector reviewed survey responses received from staff and external professionals, observed practice and daily life in the House through being present within the house and reviewed key documents.

The overall inspection assessed the house against the quality indicator; ***"How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?"*** The House's care against this indicator was ***Adequate***.

### 4. REPORT

- 4.1 As a reminder, the Care Inspectorate specifically noted key messages;
- Young people had individualised support, including access to activities.
  - Young people were supported with their rights, having access to advocacy services.
  - Staff were good at developing meaningful relationships with young people.
  - Admissions and matching processes were not in place and required improvement.
  - Care plans and risk assessments should be in place for all young people. They should clearly detail the young person's needs, how they will be met, and use up-to-date knowledge, theory, and research.

- Staff training and formal support, including supervision and debriefs, required improvement.
- The management team and staff showed commitment to the welfare of young people.

#### 4.2 Overall the Inspectors said;

- Young people were supported with their rights, and their advocacy worker was a regular visitor to the service. Young people's identity was supported, including religious, cultural, and dietary needs. We heard that the young people enjoyed the food cooked by the chef and had the opportunity to make specific requests.
- Young people received individually tailored support to maximise attainment, this included school and work experience placements.
- Young people's physical health was supported, with young people having access to gym memberships, and mental health, with one young person being supported to keep their pet dog.
- New experiences were also prioritised, including facilitating trips to Blackpool.
- Connections to people important to young people were prioritised, where possible, to promote young people's sense of identity.
- Prior to young people moving to Cunningham Place, 'consideration meetings' were held, however there were no formal admission or matching processes in place. This meant there was limited planning around young people moving, staffing ratios, staff training, young people's views, how care would be delivered and how risks would be managed (see area for improvement 1).
- Risk assessments and care plans for young people who had recently moved to Cunningham Place were not in place (see area for improvement 2).
- Where risk assessments were in place, the strategies to support the young people were unclear, for example when to use restrictive practices. Care planning documents should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound), reflect young people's needs, and how staff will support these needs to be met, by using up-to-date knowledge, theory, and research.
- The inspectors were pleased to hear that the service plans to improve the quality of risk assessments, care plans and strategies used to support young people, and look forward to seeing the impact of this at future inspections.
- Staff spoke highly of the level of support they received. We heard that there were daily handover processes in place, including weekly team meetings, development days, some peer support and that management were available and supportive.
- The Inspectors heard that though staffing at times was difficult due to absences, minimum staffing requirements remained in place to mitigate the impact of the quality of care to young people. They heard that absences had impacted on formal supervision and debriefs taking place and that the service is closely monitoring staffing levels and plans to improve the staffing needs assessment as part of their service action plan.

- Inspectors heard that formal supervision and debriefs would increase in frequency, but that knowledge and understanding of child protection varied across the team. Access to specialist training including trauma and adult safeguarding also required some improving.
- But that there was a refresher mandatory child protection training programme was underway for all staff, and that a training plan would be developed to identify specialist training required.
- The inspectors saw staff build caring relationships with young people and they heard about some staff keeping in touch with young people after they had moved on and the importance of long-term meaningful relationships. There was an emphasis on continuing care, with one young person moving to live in the adjoining flat.
- Family and stakeholders felt that there had been improvements in communication, and that staff genuinely cared for the young people.

#### 4.3 Areas for Improvement;

4.3.1 In order to ensure young people have the service that is right for them, the provider should ensure that decisions about admissions are fully informed by a robust, clearly evidenced assessment and matching process.

4.3.2 It is worth noting that the central concern from the Care Inspectorate which led to this recommendation centred on one young person who was placed at Cunningham Place. This occurred as a result of him being discharged from Secure Care and, despite thorough and exhaustive searches, no viable alternative placement being found for him other than Cunningham Place. The legal responsibility as well as the ethical responsibility lay with the HSCP to suitably house and care for this young person. However, as a result of the recommendation, a practice around matching and consideration was reviewed and a commitment to both House Managers attending all consideration meetings was reaffirmed and has been consistently the case since the CI report was delivered. This process is part of support and supervision discussions both between the Senior Manager and Service Manager and the Service Manager and House Managers.

4.3.3 In order that young people have the best possible outcomes and experiences, the provider should ensure that the service develops high-quality, effective plans and risk assessments.

4.3.4 In response to this Improvement Action, every young person in our Children's Houses now has a plan and risk assessment in line with a new, agreed format which was discussed with the CI. All plans and risk assessments have been audited by the House Manager and a development session was held in late March to ensure quality and consistency. This will remain a development point in the year ahead with regular audits being undertaken.

## 5. IMPLICATIONS

### 5.1 **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications from this report.

### 5.2 **Human Resource Implications**

There are no Human Resource implications from this report.

### 5.3 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### 5.4 Equalities implications

The proposals in this report allow scrutiny of performance. The report does not involve proposals for policies, strategies, procedures, processes, financial decisions and activities (including service delivery), both new and at review, that affect the Council's communities and employees, therefore an equality impact assessment is not required.

### 5.5 Sustainability implications

#### 5.5.1 **Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

### 5.6 Strategic Link

5.6.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Priority 2 & 3 of the Children Services Plan 2020-23 ***“Tackling inequalities”*** and ***“Love and support for our Care Experienced young People and Young Carers”***. As well as ***“Health and care systems that meet people’s needs”*** and ***“Improving outcomes for care experienced children and care leavers.”***

## 6. CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

6.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.

## 7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 Rejecting the recommendations will have a negative impact on the achievement of the following strategic outcomes within the Service and Improvement Plan for the Health and Social Care Partnership namely; ***“Improving outcomes for care experienced children and care leavers”*** and ***“building communities in which people feel safe and are safe”*** and ***“being evidence-informed and driven by continuous performance improvement”***.

7.1.2 In terms of the IJB Risk Management Strategy, it would be high if not accepted. If the recommendations above are approved, the Head of Service for Children's Health Care and Justice will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within timescales.

## REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT

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## BACKGROUND PAPERS

*Appendix 1 - Full Cunningham Place Inspection Report. (9 June 2023) – available as separate document*