



Annual Report 2019-20

(covering period 1.8.19 – 31.7.20)

and Priorities 2019-20

(covering period 1.8.20– 31.7.21)

February 2021

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Foreword

The South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee (CPC) annual report for 2019-20 sets out the work of the Committee over the past year. It is an opportunity to celebrate success, recognise challenge and encourage and embrace change and improvement.

With the impact of the Pandemic services and the support to protecting children and young people have had to adapt and respond to the challenges this presented.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication of colleagues across the organisations, from the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), South Ayrshire Council, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Police Scotland and the voluntary and third sector. The collective commitment to "getting it right" is tangible and I have seen and heard brilliant examples of staff going that extra mile to ensure our children and young people are safe and protected. In particular seeking supportive and creative solutions to connecting with children and their families. The sensitive use of information technology and recognising the impact of the additional stresses coping with the pandemic has created is a credit to colleagues across the organisations. It must be recognised that this impacts on our communities and our staff and I am grateful for the understanding shown.

Since taking over the role of Independent Chair of Child Protection and Adult Protection for South Ayrshire in May 2018, I have focused the work of the CPC on ensuring robust governance arrangements. That focuses on the delivery of quality standards and comprehensive approaches to practice. This last year has meant the focus on effective governance has been all the more important.

It is vital that we have a baseline against which we can measure how well we are doing and that we challenge and improve that baseline as we move forward. This has meant us redeveloping our approach to performance management, how we respond to concerns, and how we ensure our colleagues have the support to do their jobs. This has been reinforced by the appointment of a CSWO role, with a focus on the wider Public Protection agenda as well as the centrality of standards of social work practice. However, we continue to be challenged to ensure that colleagues, children and young people are supported by robust and up to date policies and procedures. This must be a focus in the coming year.

We have also adopted the national minimum core data set and this has significantly improved the performance reporting to CPC on a quarterly basis.

With my fellow Ayrshire Independent Chairs, child protection lead officers and, with the support of the Chief Officers Group, we have endeavoured where possible to take



an Ayrshire approach to the development of policies, strategies and actions that fall within the responsibility of CPC. This will help to reduce the risk of confusion, promote interagency working and recognises that in many ways child protection challenges, consequences and risk do not respect geographical and organisational boundaries.

Keeping children and young people safe, preventing them from harm and protecting them when harm exists, is at the heart of the governance responsibilities of the CPC. It is essential therefore, that we know ourselves, how we are doing and what needs to improve. On this basis the CPC has been working towards a 3-year rolling Improvement Plan that was signed off during 2019-20.

There remains much to be done and the impact of the pandemic will continue for some time to come. I have no doubt that new challenges will emerge that will impact on the wider wellbeing of our children and young people, their families and wider communities. This will present in different ways over time. We need therefore to anticipate and plan ahead. This will be the challenge for CPC going forward. That said there are some fantastic opportunities to shape what we do and how we do it. The publication of the Independent Care Review and the Promise sit at the heart of this. The review of how we conduct learning reviews and the national review of the Child Protection Framework to be published from the spring of 2021 will shape this plan.

This report gives a flavour of the priorities for the CPC over the coming year. It identifies improvement actions that have been taken and recognises success.

I hope you find the report of interest and if you have any questions, observations, ideas for improvement in what we do, and how we do it, I would be happy to receive these.

Professor Paul Martin CBE

Independent Chair for CPC and APC

South Ayrshire

1. The Work of the South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee

Background

The South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee (CPC) is the local strategic planning partnership which is responsible for delivering continuous improvement in protecting children in South Ayrshire. Its work includes the design, development, dissemination and evaluation of inter-agency child protection policies and procedures. It has a responsibility to promote awareness of child protection to the local public and promote good practice within and across agencies, as well as leading on training and development.

As described in the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland \(2014\)](#) the functions of the Child Protection Committee are continuous improvement, strategic planning, public information and communication. The work of the South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee is reflected in local practice and aims to meet local and national needs in keeping children safe.

Vision, Mission, Values and Aims

The following vision, mission, values and aims guide the work of the CPC and have been designed to have a positive impact on the quality of child protection work, the outcomes delivered for children and their families and provide an effective framework for service delivery.

Vision Statement

The South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee is committed to working together to protect South Ayrshire's children from abuse and neglect.

Mission Statement

It's everyone's job to make sure that children in South Ayrshire are safe from abuse and neglect. We will strive to ensure that the protection of children is a responsibility that is shared by all our staff and with the community.

Values

- Respect
- Equity
- Child-centred
- Collaboration

Aims of South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee

The aims of the Child Protection Committee are:

- Children are protected by timely and effective action.
- Children are listened to and respected.
- Children understand what to do if they are concerned about their own or others safety and protection from abuse and neglect.
- Our staff are confident and competent in protecting children from abuse and neglect.
- Agencies, individually and collectively, demonstrate leadership and accountability for their work and its effectiveness in keeping children safe from abuse and neglect.
- The public understand what to do if they are concerned about the safety and protection of children from abuse and neglect.
- Collaboratively we ensure continuous improvement by evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of our services.
- We provide an integrated approach to identifying, intervening and providing ongoing support to protect children at risk of harm from abuse and neglect.

Leadership, Governance and Accountability

Local Governance Arrangements

The CPC is one of several partnerships which have responsibility for public protection. The others include:

- South Ayrshire Adult Protection Committee.
- South Ayrshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership.
- South Ayrshire Violence against Women Partnership.
- Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements.

Chief Officers Group

The CPC reports to the Chief Officers Group for Public Protection (COG). The COG comprises the Chief Executives of South Ayrshire Council and NHS Ayrshire and Arran and the Commander for Police Scotland. The COG also comprises the Executive Group for reporting purposes to the Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

Supported by the CPC Chair and its members, the COG drives forward an extensive work plan and routinely evaluates its work to ensure there is a clear focus on continuous improvement and accountability. Members of the COG and the CPC

support the GIRFEC approach seeking to ensure children, young people and their families get the help they need when they need it.

South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership

The South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) which comprises community based health and social care services for adults and children, is governed by the Integration Joint Board (IJB). The IJB Chief Officer is also the Director of the Health and Social Care Partnership. The Chief Social Work Officer provides professional advice on all Social Work services and practice to the IJB, South Ayrshire Council, the Chief Officers Group and the Child Protection Committee. The IJB is supported by a Performance and Audit Committee and by a Health and Care Governance Committee.

CPC Sub Committees

The governance and subgroup structure for the Child Protection and Adult Protection Committees has been reviewed by the Independent Chair over the past year. A paper setting out the reviewed integrated approach was agreed by both committees and by the Chief Officers Group Public Protection. The focus of the subgroups is to support the improvement approach of CPC and APC.

Public Protection Planning arrangements were made more robust by introducing subgroups which serve both the Child Protection and Adult Protection Committees. The sub-groups are:

- Communication and Engagement;
- Learning and Education; and
- Policy, Practice and Improvement.

In 2015, the CPC entered into collaboration with South Ayrshire Adult Support and Protection Committee (APC) and the Violence Against Women Partnership (VAWP) to ensure we have a cohesive and consistent approach across services in respect of dealing with sexual exploitation. Specific work has been taken forward through the Sexual Exploitation Joint Action Group.

The CPC is directly linked to the South Ayrshire Children's Services Planning Group through regular meetings of the respective chairs and the Chair of the Children's Services Planning Group is a member of the Child Protection Committee.

The Work of the Child Protection Committee

The CPC has a key role to play in the continuous improvement of child protection policy and practice.

Following the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), the CPC works to improve outcomes and the wellbeing of children and young people by ensuring they get the support they need at the right time.

The CPC is responsible for delivering continuous improvement in protecting children in South Ayrshire. Its work includes the design, development, dissemination and evaluation of inter-agency child protection policy, procedures and practice. It has a responsibility to promote awareness of child protection to the local public and promote good practice within and across agencies, as well as leading on training and development. As part of this work, the CPC is responsible for identifying its priority areas for the following year.

As outlined in the guidance released by the Scottish Government in February 2019, *Protecting Children and Young People, Child Protection Committees and Chief Officer Responsibilities*, all CPC's are required to have and report on their business plan. The South Ayrshire CPC Business Plan reports on the progress made by the sub-groups as well as the identified actions from Initial Case Reviews (ICR's) and Significant Case Reviews (SCR's).

2. Response to COVID-19

On the 11th March 2020 the World Health Organisation confirmed that Coronavirus (COVID-19) was characterised as a global pandemic. Since this time and as a result of the subsequent introduction of subsequent 'lockdowns', partners of the CPC have sought to continue to protect and support the most vulnerable children and their families.

Keeping services safe is a legislative requirement that should direct everyday practice. However, the present circumstances require particular attention to be paid to the health and wellbeing of both children, families and practitioners. In response to COVID-19 daily practice across Social Work, Education, the Voluntary Sector, Health, Scottish Children's Reporters Administration, Police and Housing Services has required to be varied, often at short notice. In such circumstances the overarching aim is the safety of our service users and practitioners.

In order to do this, multi-agency partners have utilised and assimilated the advice and guidance issued by the Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate and Health Protection Scotland amongst others and incorporated this in their practice guidance which has been updated as necessary.

The Partnership has, in response to these documents, produced a range of Practice Guidance. Thus far the following Practice Guidance has been produced:

- Child Protection Guidance for use during COVID-19 (this was updated in response to the National Guidance update on 16.04.2020).
- Assurance Data document – which is updated weekly
- Home visiting guidance
- Guidance on Looked After Reviews during COVID-19
- Weekly updates from CPC Scotland (which continue to be disseminated)
- Guidance issued from CPC Scotland and CELCIS

Child Protection visits throughout South Ayrshire continued to take place on, at least, a weekly basis. Although some visits have been via video calls, the majority of visits have been undertaken directly. In line with guidance and prior to any visit taking place, workers will call ahead to establish if anyone in the household is displaying symptoms of COVID-19, or if they are self-isolating. Appropriate PPE is worn as per the guidance.

Due to public health measures social work staff have been creative in their approach to visiting children who are on the Child Protection Register and have found ways to engage with them within their gardens or on the doorstep. Families have been receptive to calls and visits and some have participated in focused work sessions via video link.

In addition, vulnerable families, who have been identified by agencies have continued to be supported, whether it be by direct visiting or via telephone and video calls. The level of contact has been determined by the needs of the family and usually takes place weekly.

Joint working particularly between Social Work, Health, Education, Police Scotland colleagues and the third sector has been critical to ensure children and families received the support they needed during this difficult period.

In response to public health measures, all services have had to adapt how they deliver services. Police Scotland continued to undertake Joint Investigative Interviews. These were conducted in an environment where social distancing could be observed. However, each situation would be assessed on its own merits and health and safety would be observed whilst ensuring a child-centred approach.

The Child Protection Health Team continued to prioritise Child Protection. Interagency Referral Discussions (IRDs) and Referrals for Child Protection Medical Assessments took place as normal.

Whilst education facilities were closed, education hubs have been established and remain open to support the most vulnerable children. Additionally, Education staff continued to make calls to vulnerable children on a weekly basis.

South Ayrshire Champions for Change Champions Board continued to contact young people by virtually, continued to operate their groups online and offered one-to-one support. The Champions Board were also involved in advocating for and supporting children and young people, who have Looked After and Accommodated Reviews or are on the Child Protection Register to ensure they have their voices heard within the forum of these meetings.

Housing services remained accessible and operated remotely. The service continued to assist and support tenants and provide services for the homeless.

The Scottish Children's Reporters Administration updated their procedures with Children's Hearings moving online.

Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA) in partnership with Health and Social Care and Third Sector Colleagues adapted their services by establishing critical services to support the community. They operated seven days a week and have set up a Helpline, shopping service, prescription pick up and telephone befriending service.

3. Communication and Engagement

The CPC listens to children, young people, families, communities and employees to routinely produce and disseminate public information about protecting children and young people. All local information and links to national publications are published on the [CPC website](#).

A feature of the work of the CPC is ensuring that information is up-to-date, relevant and easily accessible to meet the needs of partners and communities. This work is supported by the Communication and Engagement Sub-Group. The CPC also ensures the public are aware of Child Protection issues within South Ayrshire which was of particular importance during the COVID-19 pandemic when children and young people were not able to engage with services in their usual way.

Engagement with Families

During the COVID-19 pandemic, referrals continued to be received in relation to child welfare concerns. Initial Child Protection Case Conferences, Review Child Protection Case Conferences and Pre-Birth Case Conferences continued to take place 'virtually' with the participation of the parents and/or child encouraged. The Chair of the meeting contacted the families directly to gain their views and ask if they wish to join the call. Parents were receptive to this and spoke with the Chair prior to the meetings to provide them with their thoughts and views. Some parents have also joined the call. Feedback thus far has been positive and the Chairs have reported that the parents have appeared more relaxed and contributed well.

Engagement with the Public

In order to keep members of the public up-to-date with child protection arrangements, South Ayrshire's COVID-19 website was updated with the latest information. Specifically, the website provided contact details and links to relevant services and support.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, partners of the Child Protection Committee ran a social media campaign to ensure there is public awareness of vulnerable children. Twitter and Facebook messages focusing on child protection have been promoted on a regular basis. The message mirrors that of Child Protection Committee Scotland and utilises the hashtag **#KeepingKidsSafeC-19**. Additionally, the Health and Social Care Partnership produced posters for display in the windows of closed buildings to further raise awareness.

Engagement with the public was considered an area of focus for the sub-group. Consideration was given to including questions in the South Ayrshire 1000 Citizens' Panel Survey to gain a better understanding of what needs to be done around

engagement with the public. It was decided that two questions would be included in the survey:

1. If you are concerned about the wellbeing of a child or young person would you know what to do or how, where or who to report it to?
2. If you are concerned about the wellbeing of a vulnerable adult would you know what to do or how, where or who to report it to?

In response to question 1, 71% of respondents (from a total of 544) said they would know what to do, or how, where and who to report it concerns of the wellbeing of a child or young person.

In response to question 2, 68% of respondents (from a total of 547) said they would know what to do, or how, where and who to report it concerns of the wellbeing of a vulnerable adult.

Learning will be identified to inform the work of the Communication and Engagement sub-group in engaging the public.

In order to increase the reach of Child Protection messages to the public, radio broadcasts took place on 100 occasions via local radio stations during October 2019. The reach (i.e. the number of people listening to the radio station) of the broadcasts was 169,417.

Engagement with Partners

The CPC continued to work with South Ayrshire Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) to ensure that children affected by parental and other substance use are appropriately supported. The South Ayrshire Alcohol and Drug Strategy 2018-21 recognise the impact substance use can have on children, families and carers, and the significant number of child protection cases related to substance use. The ADP and CPC work together to ensure services identify and respond to children, including unborn babies, who are at risk of harm due to parental or carers' substance use. Improvement work is taken forward through the work of the ADP's Children Young People and Families Sub Group.

The CPC continued to strengthen its joint work with South Ayrshire Violence Against Women Partnership thus ensuring that there is a clear focus on supporting children affected by domestic abuse and improving the response to sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and stalking. Examples of the work are listed below:

- ✓ The VAWP continues to support the Sexual Exploitation Joint Action Group and the Action Plan; and
- ✓ The VAWP circulates widely (via SAC Communications Team) information on relevant topics e.g. 16 Days of Action (25th November – 10th December); Safer Internet Day (5th February 2020) and National CSE Day (March 2020)

The CPC continued to develop opportunities for collaborative working on an Ayrshire basis which facilitated the sharing of expertise and best use of collective resources. Examples of this are demonstrated below:

- ✓ South, North and East Ayrshire CPC's have agreed to focus on the Initial Referral Discussion (IRD) process and Ayrshire protocols relating to Child Sexual Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Persons.
- ✓ East and South Ayrshire CPC's progressed with a joint response on consultation on the learning review.
- ✓ A Pan-Ayrshire Human Trafficking Booklet has been developed with the CPC's in North and East Ayrshire.

Engagement with Staff

The CPC continue to encourage regular observers from across services to CPC meetings. This will allow staff to see the work of the CPC at first hand and consider the contribution from their service.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, sharing information with staff was of critical importance. In the Health and Social Care Partnership, staff newsletters were issued on a daily basis providing key public health guidance and updates on service delivery for all practitioners. Senior Managers from the Children's Health, Care and Justice Service did weekly video logs for staff offering support and thanking staff for their ongoing commitment in these difficult times.

The Chief Social Work Officer and Health and Social Care Partnership Learning Officer provided weekly practice support sessions online for all social work staff. The sessions provided a supportive forum for social work staff to raise issues and share ideas.

4. Learning and Development

A key function of the South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee is to prepare and deliver an extensive programme of multi-agency child protection learning and development opportunities. This is the remit of the Learning and Development sub-group. The aim of the sub-group is to develop an overarching strategy, which covers a 3-year period, of learning and development to protect children. This will be achieved by developing a programme supported by:

- Online learning
- Train the Trainers sessions
- Multi-agency training

Training delivered 2019-20

The current training is available to all agencies both statutory and non-statutory that support children, young people and families. The CPC delivered a range of core and specialist child protection training. Employees working in South Ayrshire are able to participate in the inter-agency continuing professional development programme (CPD) designed to reflect best practice and needs. The range of courses enables a focused and targeted approach that leaves practitioners more confident and competent when carrying out work in more specialised areas of child protection. CPD courses delivered in 2019-20 are summarised in the table below

Table 1 - Courses delivered over the past year.

Training delivered from 1 st Aug 2019 – 31 st July 2020		
Course	Number of attendees	No of Courses
Child Protection/ Looked After Children – 3-day course	10	1
Difficult, Dangerous and Evasive Families	25	3
Interagency – Neglect Toolkit	21	1
Disability Awareness in Child Protection	5	1
Child Mental Health	7	2
Perinatal Mental Health and Impact on Child	9	1
Impact of Child Poverty	7	1

Neglect Toolkit

Neglect is extremely damaging to children in the short and long term, it affects all aspects of a child's development. The Neglect Toolkit is a validated tool and is used within training to support an increased and shared understanding of neglect. Staff across Social Work, Health, Education and Housing attended the training. Senior Managers across a range of services attended a briefing session following the training and committed to supporting their staff to attend training to adopt the validated Neglect Toolkit as the main risk assessment in the assessment of neglect within South Ayrshire.

The aim of the training is to achieve a shared understanding on what constitutes unacceptable living standards and care, and how these situations should be responded to timeously, proportionately and within the various child care and legal processes across agencies. Since the introduction of the Neglect Toolkit in September 2018, there has been nine training sessions delivered. There is now 180 inter-agency staff, including the Train the Trainers, who have completed the training. An evaluation was completed in October and November 2019 to measure the impact of the tool.

Respondents were asked how beneficial has the Neglect Toolkit been to your practice. The majority of respondents (87%) felt that the Toolkit has been beneficial to their practice with almost a quarter (24%) stating the Toolkit has been very beneficial. Only 12% of respondents felt that the Toolkit has not been of any benefit.

In the main, respondents stated the Toolkit supported them to:

- assess risk;
- focus on outcomes;
- have a better understanding of neglect;
- evidence decision making; and
- be more confident in addressing issues relating to neglect.

Predominantly, the Toolkit has been used in direct work with parents or carers (32%). Other ways the Toolkit has been used is in supervision to discuss specific families (26%), at Team Around the Child meetings (16%) and to raise concerns (10%).

Respondents were asked to identify outcomes which were achieved by using the Toolkit. Positive outcomes were identified by the respondents and these include:

Diversion from
statutory measures

Improvement in home
conditions

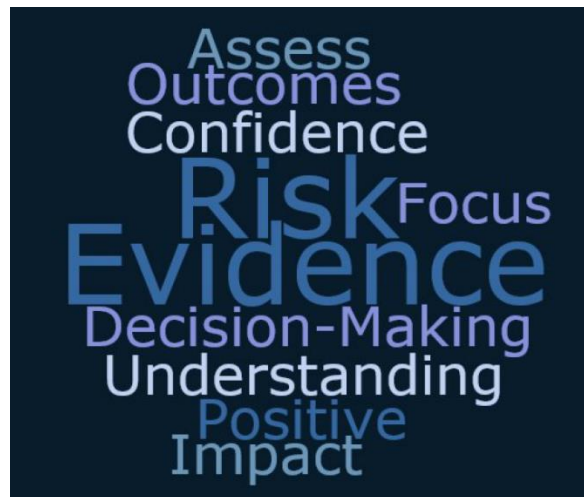
Improvement in school
attendance

Overall, half of families found the Toolkit to be beneficial with 14% finding it very beneficial. Half of families therefore found the Toolkit to be of no benefit.

Specific examples of families finding the Toolkit to be of no benefit are shown below:

- Families did not like the terminology and the word 'neglect';
- Some parents refused to engage with the Toolkit; and
- Some parents were less able to address the actions identified by the Toolkit.

Respondents were asked to describe how the Toolkit has impacted on their practice. Overall, the responses were positive.



Learning will be taken from the evaluation to inform the use of the Toolkit going forward. Issues that will need to be considered include the language and terminology used which some families may find off-putting and further evaluation is required within and across services regarding how the toolkit is being used and what impact it is making to the outcomes for children and young people.

5. Policy, Practice and Improvement

Significant Case Review

A Significant Case Review was commissioned by the Chief Officers Group (Public Protection) via the Child Protection Committee in April 2019. The Review is nearing completion and will be published following appropriate governance procedures. An action plan for improvement will be identified.

Signs of Safety

Signs of Safety draws on solution-focused therapy and the direct experience of effective practice by child protection social workers and the experiences of families within the child protection system. The Signs of Safety approach empowers and enables families to make the necessary behavioural changes to live together safely. It is a strengths-based approach and works with family's assets to support change, reducing the need for more significant intervention from statutory agencies to remove children from families.

The Signs of Safety approach has been adopted as part of the transformation proposals set out by Children's Health, Care and Justice services.

The Health and Social Care Partnership has engaged a licenced Signs of Safety Trainer and Consultant, who has worked with a number of other Local Authorities to implement the approach to significant success.

The dynamic nature of implementation is reflected in the Signs of Safety implementation framework. The initial preparation phase is about purpose, commitment and planning:

- Work with leadership to articulate the purpose and goals of implementing Signs of Safety and corresponding measures.
- Establish steering committee and key governance arrangements.
- Develop the implementation plan.
- Introduce Signs of Safety practice through briefings for targeted staff, and undertake the first basic training in Signs of Safety for a substantial group of key practice leadership positions.
- Preliminary casework with consultation on selected learning cases.
- Commence communicating the clear and focused organisational commitment to Signs of Safety.

Practice Guidance on the Interface between Child and Adult Protection

Protecting individuals who may be at risk of harm is a priority for Children and Families and Adult services. In most cases the child or adult at risk will be identified and

protected through Child Protection or Adult Support and Protection processes. However, there are occasions - such as situations where both children and adults are at risk, or where a child is in transition to adulthood - that the interface between Child Protection and Adult Protection processes need to be clear to all those involved.

Practice Guidance was developed which sets out how best to manage the identification, assessment and available support for protection and safety needs of young people 16 years of age or older, taking into account current policies, procedures and legislation. There are clear planning processes already in place both in Child Protection and Adult Protection and more general service provision which identifies the care and support needs of individuals. These give guidance on the consideration and/or assessment of their circumstances and, where appropriate, the identification of a plan to meet their needs and, if necessary, protect them. The aim is to maximise the safety and welfare of children and at-risk adults while minimising the impact of the investigation on those involved.

It is necessary to ensure that there are appropriate operational links between adult and children's services to address protection issues. The shift of responsibility for meeting individuals' safety and protection needs, from Children and Families Social Work and Health services to Adult services can in itself present a degree of risk, even if that shift is well planned and managed. Young people at this stage can drop out of services altogether, losing their safety net of support. The risk may be exacerbated by the fact that different agencies and legislation have different criteria for defining when someone becomes an adult, or can access particular services. The importance of ensuring appropriate planning to support these transitions is therefore vital.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran Guidance for Primary Care Contribution to Child Protection Procedures

General Medical Council guidance 'Protecting children and young people: The responsibilities for all Doctors' (2012) states that all doctors have a professional responsibility to take part in child protection procedures. In addition to this, learning from significant case reviews both locally and nationally have recommended that GP records provide an accurate and comprehensive source of medical history and can be vital when assessing risk and making decisions to keep children safe from harm.

The guidance intends to assist GP's and Primary Care teams to participate in and share relevant information for Child Protection procedures.

Audit Activity

A multiagency group consisting of the Health and Social Care Partnership, Police Scotland and Health colleagues established a rolling programme of Interagency Referral Discussions (IRD's) Audits for South Ayrshire.

The first meeting took place on the 9th July 2020. The group consensus being that the 6 IRD's considered were on the whole of a good standard. The main issues arising were administrative. A report is collated following each IRD Audit Group.

Going forward the IRD Audit Group will meet monthly and will evaluate a random sample of a minimum of 6 IRD's using the audit tool which is based on the Care Inspectorate indicators. A monthly report will be compiled on the findings and reported to the Child Protections Committee's, Learning and Development subgroup. The quarterly findings will be included within the CPC quarterly performance report.

This same process will be rolled out to consider children for whom CP concerns were raised, but did not progress to an IRD or a CP Investigation. The audit activity will test the competence of the decision-making process, the alternative Child's Plan and whether further CP concerns were raised within a twelve-month period.

Policies and Procedures

South's Ayrshire Child Protection procedures are all online to ensure that staff can access the latest versions easily. All social work staff have shortcut links to the policies and procedures on their desktops. A short-life working group has been established to review and update the policies and procedures as and when required.

Sexual Exploitation Strategy 2020-2025

In August 2017, South Ayrshire's Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Strategy 2017-2022 was approved. The long term objectives are to see reduced levels of sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure that high quality support is provided to victims. To help ensure a cohesive and consistent approach across services, a Sexual Exploitation Joint Action Group was established, reporting to South Ayrshire Multi-Agency Partnership (Violence against women and children) (MAP), Adult Protection Committee (APC) and Child Protection Committee (CPC).

The group worked on refreshing South Ayrshire's Sexual Exploitation Strategy which was presented to the Child Protection Committee and Adult Protection Committees in August 2020.

6. Child Protection Committee Priorities for 2020-21

The Child Protection Committee is in the process of establishing a 3yr rolling improvement plan that will form the basis for priorities in coming years. This approach will enable more effective use of resources and provide focus for improvement activities. The Improvement Plan was agreed at the November 2019 CPC meeting. By definition it will be an evolving exercise and allow scope for learning as evidence is gathered and feedback on services is offered. Improvement is also about celebrating success and the CPC Improvement Plan will encourage this approach.

An area of focus for the CPC going forward is the changes to the law with the removal of 'reasonable chastisement' (from 7 November 2020) introduced in the [Children \(Equal Protection from Assault\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#). This means that all forms of physical punishment of children will be against the law in Scotland, and children will have with the same legal protection from assault as adults.

Priorities for 2020/2021

Policy, Practice and Improvement

- To confirm the status and robustness of the CP policies for South Ayrshire and establish governance arrangements for these.
- To encourage an Ayrshire-wide approach where possible and appropriate to policy development in areas such as sexual exploitation, missing persons, poverty and neglect.
- To further develop the depth of performance monitoring, analysis and action.
- To conduct an interagency, multi professional audit of all children and young people on the CP register and establish a common approach across Ayrshire.

Learning and Development

- To build a suite of child protection learning opportunities across organisations
- To map the interconnections between defined competences, learning and impact for child protection practice
- To establish clarity on the learning and development resources available and to encourage resource efficiency under the broader guise of Public Protection and Safeguarding
- To explore learning opportunities required or encouraged by local and national reviews such as Initial and Significant Case Reviews.

Communication and Engagement

- To maximise the child protection message, sharing opportunities by effective use of the 'event' calendar.

- To establish a clear pathway for the engagement, involvement and understanding of staff in the work of the CPC.
- To establish a clear pathway for the engagement, involvement and understanding of children, young people and families in the work of the CPC.

Appendix 1 - Child Protection Committee Members 2019-2020

Member	Designation
Professor Paul Martin	Independent Chair (appointed May 2018)
Jim Lyon	Interim Chief Social Work Officer, South Ayrshire Council
Scott Hunter	Chief Social Work Officer, South Ayrshire Council
Douglas Hutchison	Director of People and Depute Chief Executive, South Ayrshire Council
Mark Inglis	Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Jackie Hamilton	Senior Manager, Children's and Justice Localities Services, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Jayne Miller	Senior Manager, Children's Health, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Rosemary Robertson	Associate Nurse Director, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Mark Taylor	Acting Adult Support and Protection Co-ordinator
Sara Burdon	Co-ordinator – Public Affairs, People Directorate
Jim Hendrie	Child Protection Officer, Educational Services
Marina McLaughlin	Nurse Consultant Child Protection, NHS Ayrshire and Arran
Attica Wheeler	Associate Nurse Director, Women's and Children's Services
Alexa Foster	CMM Integrated Care and Perinatal Mental Health Lead
Kenny Armstrong	Detective Superintendent, Police Scotland
Jim Kerr	Detective Superintendent, Police Scotland
Amanda McHarg	DCI Public Protection, Police Scotland
Alan Mulrooney	Locality Reporter Manager, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Catriona Caves	Head of Regulatory Services, Chief Executive's Office
Natasha MacPherson	Lead Officer, South Ayrshire CPC

South Ayrshire CPC: Annual Report 2019 – 20 and Priorities 2020-21

Bill Gray	Senior Manager, Planning & Performance, South Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership
Gary Hoey	Senior Manager, Children's Services, South Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership
Susan Milloy	Detective Inspector, Public Protection Unit, Police Scotland
Liz Christison	Team Leader, Children & Families, South Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership
Heather Irving	Strategic Inspector, Care Inspectorate
Elaine Mullin	CPC Lead Officer (Interim)
Linda Warwick	Linda Warwick, Co-ordinator (Community Engagement)
Catherine Robertson	SCM, Safeguarding Team

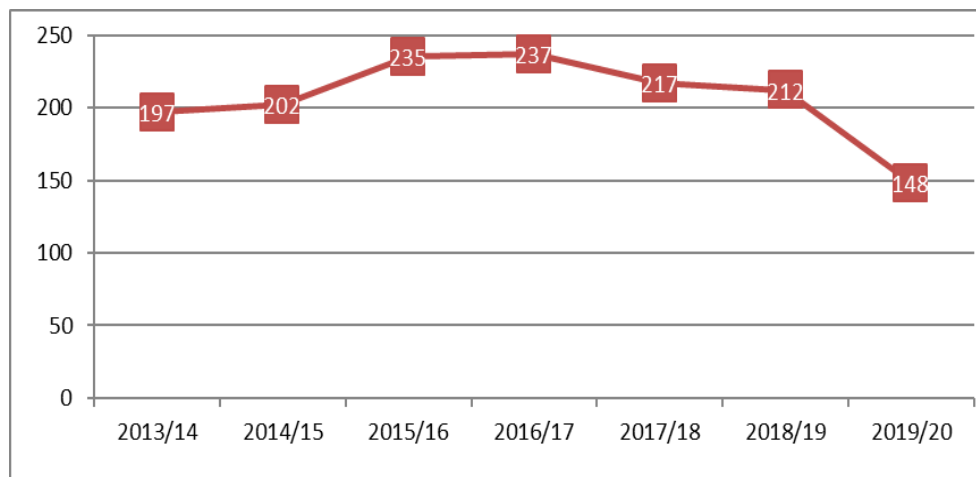
Appendix 2 - Child Protection Committee Performance 2019-20

The CPC continues to monitor performance information through the Minimum Dataset for Child Protection Committees. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a weekly child protection dataset has been submitted to Scottish Government.

Child Protection Alerts

A child protection 'alert' is raised when the decision is made to investigate under the auspice of child protection. It ensures core agencies (Health, Education and Police) and out of hours social work services are aware a child is subject to active investigation in relation to a child protection concern and can respond accordingly.

Figure 1: Annual Child Protection Alerts (New) 2013/14-2019/20



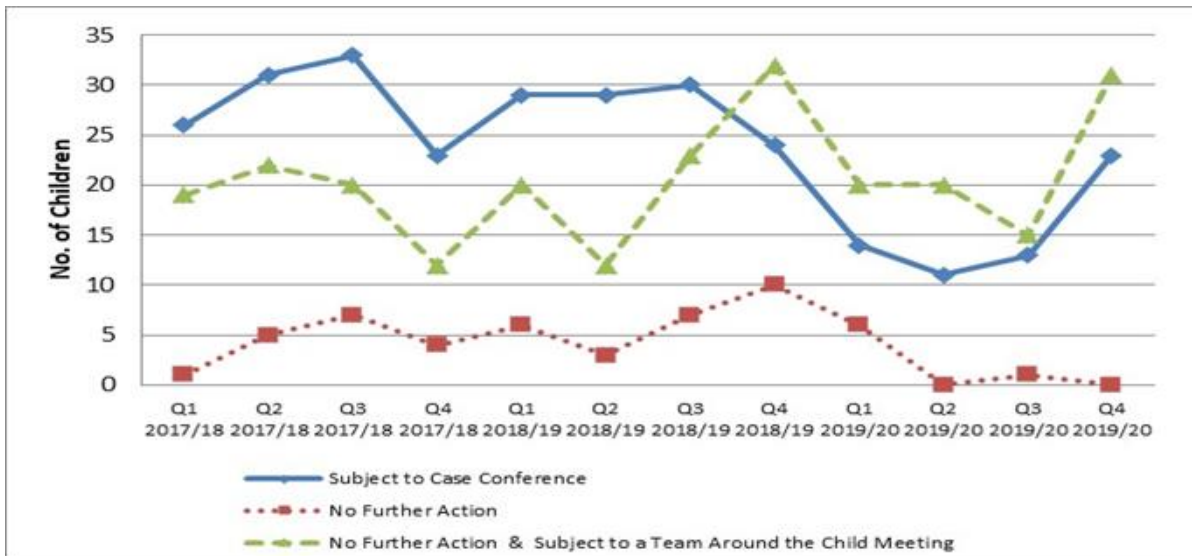
Annual Child Protection Referrals have decreased from 212 in 2018/19 to 148 in 2019/20.

Child Protection Investigations (CP1's)

If child protection procedures are initiated, a CP1 is completed for the family to assess the level of risk posed to each child involved in the referral.

The following data identifies whether a child protection investigation has resulted in a child protection case conference, a child being allocated a social worker or no further action by the social work department.

Figure 2: Outcome of Child Protection Investigations

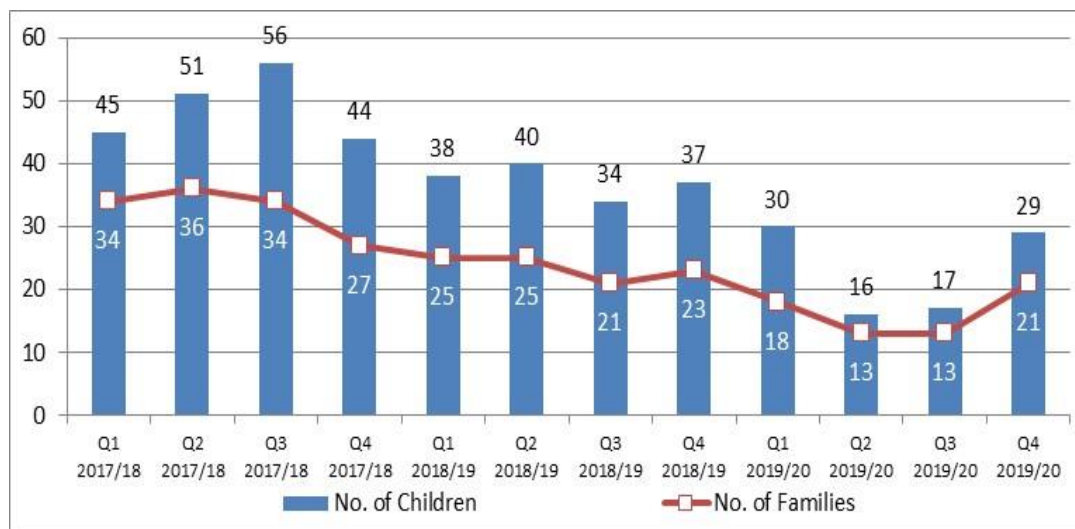


43% of Child Protection Investigations resulted in a Case Conference being convened in Q4 of 2019/2020, which equates to 23 case conferences out of 54 Child Protection Investigations. None resulted in no further action and 57% (n=31) resulted in no further action and a team around the child meeting.

Child Protection Register

On 31st July 2020, in South Ayrshire, there were a total of 29 children from 21 family groups on the Child Protection Register. This is a decrease from 31st July 2019 when 37 children were on the Child Protection Register from 23 family groups.

Figure 3: Quarterly number of children on the child protection register



Children are placed on the Child Protection Register when there are significant concerns for their safety. Children on the register will be the subject of close monitoring

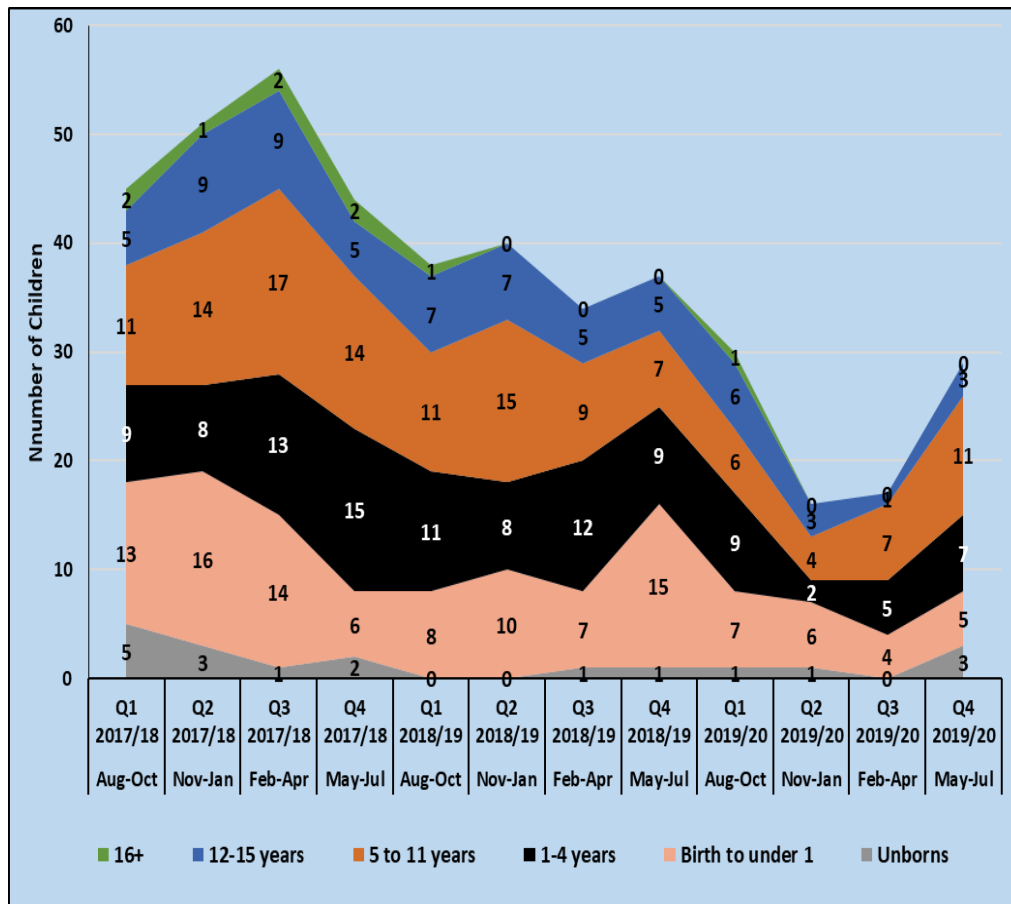
and support with a multi-agency plan to effect changes to reduce risk. If the risks to a child cannot be managed with their remaining at home, alternative care arrangements are considered. Once it is assessed that the level of risk has reduced sufficiently, the child’s name will be removed from the Register.

The chart below shows the South Ayrshire rate of children on the Child Protection Register as at the 31st July for 2017 and 2018 compared to the family group partnerships for benchmarking.

Age profile of children on Register

The graph below shows the age profile of children on the Child Protection Register from October 2017 to July 2020.

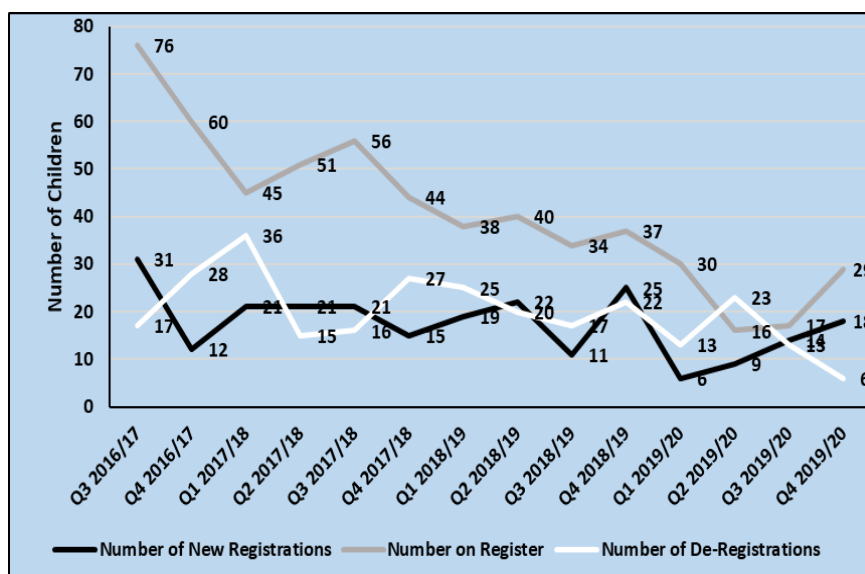
Figure 4: Age profile of children on the register as at end of quarter



At 31 July 2020, the age range with the highest number of children on the child protection register was ‘5-11 years.’

Registration activity

Figure 5: No. of New Registrations, De-registrations and number on the Register.



Of note, there have been no re-registrations of any child who was previously on the register up to 12 months ago.

Areas of concern (risk factors) – significant prevalence

At 31 July 2020, the main area of concern was Emotional Abuse followed by, Parental Drug Misuse and then Parental Mental Health Problems

Table 2: Concerns recorded at Registration

	Oct 19	Jan 20	Apr 20	Jul 20
Child Placing Themselves at Risk	3%	0%	2%	3%
CSE	0%	0%	0%	0%
Domestic Abuse	71%	24%	12%	35%
Emotional Abuse	13%	12%	14%	48%
Neglect	71%	41%	14%	24%
Non-Engaging Family	16%	18%	14%	34%
Parental Alcohol Misuse	19%	35%	6%	31%
Parental Drug Misuse	36%	65%	20%	41%
Parental Mental Health Problems	61%	59%	14%	38%
Physical Abuse	42%	0%	6%	21%

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Sexual Abuse	3%	6%	0%	0%
Other	10%	18%	2%	3%
Total <u>Number</u> of Registrations	31	16	17	29

Please note: A child can have more than one main area of concern recorded therefore the % in figure above will not total 100%.