

ANGUS COUNCIL

**STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE - 3 MAY 2011
SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE - 19 MAY 2011
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE - 26 MAY 2011
EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 2 JUNE 2011**

JOINT INSPECTION OF SERVICES TO PROTECT CHILDREN IN ANGUS

**JOINT REPORT BY THE DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH
AND EDUCATION**

ABSTRACT

This report advises Elected Members of the findings of the recent Joint Inspection of Services to Protect Children in the Angus Council area carried out by HMIE during January 2011, published on 21 April 2011.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committees:-

- (i) note the outcome of the inspection of services to protect children in Angus - http://www.scswis.com/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=403&Itemid=378;
- (ii) note the key areas for improvement and that the Angus Child Protection Committee will detail how these areas will be address in its annual report that will be submitted to elected members in due course.

2 BACKGROUND

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) published a report on the joint inspection of services to protect children and young people in Angus in February 2007. Working together, services within Angus Council area prepared an inter-agency action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original HMIE inspection report - www.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=11840&type=12

HMIE Inspectors revisited the Angus Council area in October 2008 to assess the extent to which services were continuing to improve the quality of their work to protect children and young people, and to evaluate progress made in response to the main points for action highlighted in the original report.

The HMIE Follow Through Inspection Report, published in February 2009 www.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=11840&type=12 highlighted that the Angus Executive Group for Child Protection and the Angus Child Protection Committee had taken very effective action to implement the main points for action arising from the full inspection. As a result of effective performance shown by services in the Angus Council area in taking forward improvements, HMIE indicated they would make no further visits in relation to the 2007 inspection.

The second round of inspection of services to protect children in the Angus Council area was carried out in January 2011. HMIE inspectors looked at services provided by Angus Council, health, police, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and services provided by voluntary and independent organisations.

3 FINDINGS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION

The inspection rated services in Angus against six of the National Quality Indicators:

Indicator	Description	Evaluation
1.1	Improvements in performance	Good (previously not graded)
5.5	Improvement through self evaluation	Good (previously not graded)
Reference Indicators		
2.1	Children and young people are listened to, understood and respected	Very Good (previously graded good)
2.2	Children and young people benefit from strategies to minimise harm	Good (previously graded good)
2.3	Children and young people are helped by the actions taken in immediate response to concerns	Good (previously graded adequate)
2.4	Children and young peoples needs are met	Good (previously graded good)

The outcome of this inspection saw evaluations improve in 2 out of the 4 Reference Indicators from the last inspection in 2007.

Key strengths identified are:-

- Chief Officers and senior managers are strongly committed to protecting children.
- Chief Officers are committed to achieving continuous improvement through self-evaluation.
- The Child Protection Committee provides visible and effective leadership to staff working in child protection services.
- Communication with children and families, including during child protection investigations.
- Early identification of vulnerable children across services.
- Access to a wide range of services to support families.
- Commitment to partnership working across all services.
- Across services there are many examples of significant improvements to the key processes and systems used by staff.

Examples of good practice highlighted are the help and support provided to children and families affected by parental substance misuse through the Link-Up Initiative and how well services work together through the Joint Assessment Group (JAG) to share information to protect vulnerable children from adults and other young people who may pose a risk to their safety.

Overall the report noted that across services Chief Officers have a clear vision for children's services which includes keeping vulnerable children safe and that the Child Protection Committee and senior managers are supporting staff well in their work to protect children.

The following areas for improvement are noted:

- Improve plans for children and ensure their individual needs are met.
- Improve arrangements for managing and prioritising self-evaluation activities, ensuring it leads to better outcomes for children.
- The Executive Group for Child Protection and the Child Protection Committee should review and revise their vision for child protection services, provide clearer direction and improve outcomes for vulnerable children.

As a result of the effective performance shown by services in the Angus Council area in taking forward improvements, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS) will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The link inspector will however maintain contact with services to support improvements.

4 PROPOSALS

The inspection report identifies a number of areas for improvement. It is proposed that these will be addressed by the Angus Child Protection Committee and plans for addressing them will be detailed in the Child Protection Committee annual report that will be presented to elected members in due course.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly out of this report. Any financial implications arising out of the improvement action plan will be addressed by the Angus Child Protection Committee.

6 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights implications arising as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

7 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective. An equalities impact assessment is not required.

8 SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

- Safe: Children and young people in Angus will be protected from abuse, neglect and harm by others at home, at school and in the community.
- Nurtured: Children and young people in Angus will live within a supportive family setting with additional assistance if required, or where this is not possible, within another care setting ensuring a positive and rewarding childhood experience.

9 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Finance and Head of Law and Administration has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

10 CONCLUSION

This report informs Elected Members of the outcome of the joint inspection of services to protect children and young people in the Angus Council area published on 21 April 2011. The outcome of the inspection is positive in that services were graded as consistently good. The inspection report however also identifies some areas for improvement that will be addressed by the Angus Child Protection Committee.

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NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

SW&H/RP/TA