

## ANGUS COUNCIL

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 20 JANUARY 2011

## SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE – 17 FEBRUARY 2011

## 'PRE-BIRTH TO THREE: POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR SCOTLAND'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES'

## REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH

**ABSTRACT**

This report seeks to inform elected members of the publication by Learning and Teaching Scotland of new national guidance, 'Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families Guidance'.

**1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee and Social Work and Health Committee:-
- (i) note the contents of this report
  - (ii) note that the key messages within the guidance about getting it right for our youngest children will support practice across early year's services and inform the early year's service review currently underway
  - (iii) note that an electronic copy of the guidance is available at:-  
<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears/prebirthtothree/nationalguidance/index.asp>

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Reference is made to the meetings of the Education Committee of 21 January 2010 (Article 6 refers) and Social Work and Health Committee of 18 February 2010 (Article 4 refers) when members were advised about the National Early Years Framework and approved a corresponding Angus position statement.
- 2.2 The Early Years Framework calls for 'a renewed focus on the period between early pregnancy and three years old.' Evidence shows that this is the period which has the greatest bearing on outcomes for children. It is a critical period in terms of breaking cycles of poor outcomes for children and families.
- 2.3 In December 2010 Learning and Teaching Scotland launched national guidance, 'Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families' with a view to complementing and supporting the Early Years Framework.
- 2.4 This guidance, developed in collaboration with a range of key partners, is designed to support and enhance provision for Scotland's youngest children and their families.

**3 KEY COMPONENTS OF THE GUIDANCE**

- 3.1 'Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families', reflects and supports Scotland's shared vision and commitment to developing a strategic approach to prevention and early intervention in tackling significant inequalities in Scottish society. Key national priorities are set out in the Early Years Framework (2008), in Equally Well (2008) and in Achieving Our Potential (2008).

- 3.2 The new guidance specifically recognises the importance of the first three years of life in terms of influencing children's development and future outcomes. It draws on research which seeks to promote an evidence-based approach to the provision of services for the 0 – 3 population.
- 3.3 The guidance is based on four key principles - the rights of the child, relationships, responsive care and respect. Those key principles inform advice in relation to nine features of practice, namely:-
- the role of Staff
  - attachments
  - transitions
  - observation, assessment and planning
  - partnership working
  - health and wellbeing
  - literacy and numeracy
  - environments
  - play
- 3.4 The main aims of the guidance are to:-
- facilitate effective partnership working for the benefit of every child
  - build confidence, capability and capacity across the current early years workforce
  - inform students engaged in pre-service training programmes
  - provide a common reference source to promote reflection, debate and discussion
  - share and inform ways in which staff can support children and families
  - improve and enhance practice, drawing on evidence about what works best.
- 3.5 A number of tools and materials are available to support the implementation of the guidance including : DVD and CD resources, signposting to research, research to inform practice, case studies, filmed conversations and promotional materials. In order to maximise accessibility, the guidance and support materials are also available online.

## **4 ANGUS APPROACH**

- 4.1 Work in relation to the local implementation of the 'Pre-Birth to Three' guidance sits within the Children's Services Structure and, specifically, within the remit of the Early Years and Childcare Joint Action Group.
- 4.2 The key components of the guidance are under detailed consideration by that Joint Action Group and will be used to inform the review of Early Years Services within Education which is currently underway. Plans are also in place to raise staff awareness of the guidance and for early year's services and partners to utilise its key components in a way that informs, shapes and strengthens practice.
- 4.3 This approach will be developed with reference to other key national policy drivers which contribute to the early years agenda including, Curriculum for Excellence, The Early Years Framework, Equally Well and Achieving Our Potential. Ultimately, the "Getting it Right for Every Child" agenda (GIRFEC) will link together all these policy commitments and be the key approach for delivering high quality support including early years support to vulnerable children and their families.

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 Children and young people are valued members of our community. They are unique individuals who can make important contributions to family and community life. As the citizens of tomorrow they should have the best start in life, no matter what their background or circumstances and be assisted, where required to reach their full potential as they enjoy growing up in Angus.
- 5.2 In order to become confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens all Angus children need to be safe, health, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included.
- 5.3 The 'Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families' Guidance offers welcome support to the joint efforts of Children's Services and partner organisations to secure the best possible outcomes for the 0 – 3 population.

## 6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## 7 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising from the consideration of this report.

## 8 SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

8.1 This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Single Outcome Agreement:

- Children and young people in Angus will have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their skills, confidence and self- esteem to the fullest potential (National Outcome 4)
- 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 (National Outcome 5)
- children and young people in Angus enjoy the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health (National Outcome 6)
- children and their families have access to high quality services when required and are assisted to overcome the social, educational, physical, environmental and economic barriers that create inequality (National Outcome 7)

## 9 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The issues dealt with in this Report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An [equalities impact assessment](#) is not required.

## 10 CONSULTATION

10.1 In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council, this report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services, the Assistant Chief Executive, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law & Administration.

NEIL LOGUE  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

ROBERT PEAT  
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

**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.