

Announcing ... a first for North Ayrshire

Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People

North Ayrshire has been chosen as one of five pilot areas for a new kind of inspection being conducted by the **Care Inspectorate**, the unified independent scrutiny body for care and children's services. The Inspection Lead for our inspection is Marc Hendrikson.

What is a Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People?

It is a multi agency inspection that will focus on how well services work together to improve outcomes for all children, young people and families. A team of inspectors with a range of professional backgrounds will visit North Ayrshire to evaluate all agencies and services working with children, young people and families.

The new model of inspection will encompass a wide range of services working directly with children and their families, including universal provision as well as the more targeted and specialist services.

It will hold **Community Planning Partnerships** accountable for the delivery of children's services and for improving the lives of children residing within the local authority area.

How Will Services Be Evaluated?

The Care Inspectorate has published a revised guide to self evaluation using quality indicators, called, ***How well are we improving the lives of children and young people?***

This self evaluation guide has been designed to complement existing self evaluation guides

which are used by many services. These guides contain the same six high level questions, with a range of quality indicators sitting beneath each question:

1. What key outcomes have we achieved?
2. How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?
3. How good is the delivery of services for children, young people and families?
4. How good is our operational management?
5. How good is our leadership?
6. What is our capacity for improvement?

Inspectors will be looking for evidence of how well services are performing against each of the twenty two quality indicators contained in the new self evaluation guide.

They will do this by conducting a range of inspection activity that will include:

- Reviewing our own self evaluation material
- Reading a number of background documents
- Scrutinising the Integrated Children's Services Plan and relevant progress reports
- Speaking with groups of staff
- Reading some case records
- Speaking with some children and their families

When will this happen?

From now until the end of January, we will be working with service managers in building a multi agency portfolio of self evaluation evidence to present to inspectors.

Inspections of regulated services in North Ayrshire such as child minders, early year's centres and children's units are taking place right now and the findings of all of these will be shared at the start of our multi agency inspection.

During February 2013, inspectors will be reading any available documentation and intelligence from other scrutiny bodies and will send electronic surveys to selected staff members.

On Monday 4th March 2013, the inspection team will arrive in North Ayrshire and spend three days here. Initially they will be undertaking evaluation activity in respect of leadership and self evaluation. This will primarily involve the Community Planning Partnership, Chief Officers and Senior Managers from all agencies. During this time they will also undertake activity which engages young people as inspectors in providing evidence on the effectiveness of involving children and young people in service development

On Monday 18th March inspectors will begin five days of reading children's records. These will be the Lead Professional record for the child, which is expected to be the social services record as the children involved in this part of the inspection will be amongst the most vulnerable in North Ayrshire. For some children, inspectors will also read records from police, education and health.

On Monday 15th April, inspectors will return after a short break to follow up on their findings so far. This is called the core/proportionate phase and will consist of some observations of key processes and meetings with groups of staff, some of which will have more focus on individual children and the services they have received.

The inspectors then present their overall findings and publish these in a report about six weeks after the end of the inspection.

The Community Planning Partnership will then be responsible for preparing an improvement plan to address inspection

findings and they will share this with the Care Inspectorate.

Is it only children's services that are involved?

No. Adult services will be involved too because they provide services to parents and carers. There will be an emphasis on the interface between adult and children's services with an expected focus on addiction services and mental health services.

I have more questions...

We will be holding staff briefing sessions in January 2013 to ensure staff are up to date with the inspection and provide an opportunity for questions. In the meantime, if you have any particular questions you can contact a member of the Integrated Children's Services Team:

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