

North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee

July 2022 – Issue 10



Name: Philip Gosnay

Job: Senior Manager (Education / Inclusion)



1. What does the role of Senior Manager (Education/ Inclusion) involve?

“My current remit is two-fold. Firstly, it is child protection, and working with the CPC and subgroups to ensure improvements are made to protect and safeguard children. I then link with Education to ensure training, advice and guidance are in place for all school staff in North Ayrshire.

Secondly, having been with the St Matthew's cluster of schools for the last 8 years, I now have a Senior Manager role for Auchendarvie cluster; I work closely with colleagues to ensure inclusion and equity and quality of educational provision.

Health and wellbeing of all children is at the forefront through the nurturing of appropriate education and to ensure advice guidance and support is in place to cater for each child's specific needs”.

2. What are the main priorities within your role?

“Keeping all children safe will always be the first priority. This then leads to nurturing their education for the best outcomes of all children in North Ayrshire – It is a process to ensure learning and teaching is consistent across the board.

We use established quality and assurance measures to ensure all children are safe and educated to a shared national standard”.

3. What is your favourite part of the role?

“I have always taken great pride and pleasure in learning and teaching to ensure all children receive the best education they can, whilst ensuring their health and wellbeing is paramount – I now have the opportunity to be able to effect change to ensure all children in North Ayrshire are afforded and equity of opportunity.

Although forensic and analytical data is beneficial to evidence the impact of any processes put in place, I am a great believer that the class teacher is the single biggest impactor on a child's potential as they have to be able to understand and act on each child's needs and priorities to ensure they receive the best education available as well as to identifying any wellbeing needs.

Education is multi-faceted – I took great joy in working with children with autism whilst being Head Teacher at Dreghorn primary and was able to gain a small insight into life through their eyes and then adjust practice to meet their very unique and specific needs. I believe curriculum is key -It is necessary for a class curriculum to be relevant, interesting, and engaging for all children, which in turn will help with their interaction, enjoyment and ultimately their learning and communication.

Staff's mindsets have changed over the years, and we are now seeing dedicated staff more in sync with wellbeing needs. We are seeing teachers now being more effective, nurturing and understanding of the child to gain that emotional connection and relationship. If you take time to understand, listen and hear (two very different things) then the child will respond. Know me is to teach me".

4. What is the most challenging part of the role?

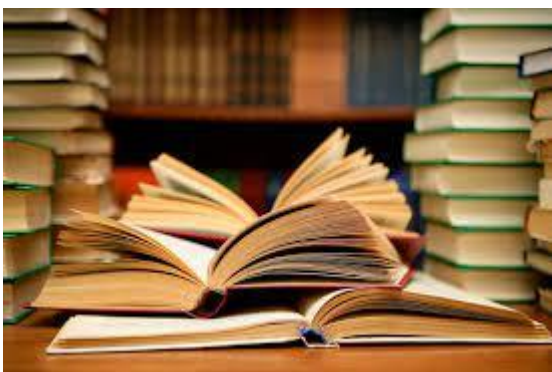
"The Child Protection aspect will always be the most challenging, ensuring staff always follow the correct procedures and processes closely. For instance, with chronologies, it is not just enough to record these, but to reflect and look at the bigger picture, to always keep children and families safe.

Safety is paramount before we do anything. I always emphasis to teachers that first and foremost they are a teacher of health and wellbeing then can do their specific jobs.

Generally, the job can be emotionally challenging due to the very nature of dealing with CP cases and ensuring all children are receiving the best education supports available. It is imperative to remember that meeting those needs is not about getting more supports or materials but in managing the range of existing resources systematically and in a "SMART"ly planned way.

Lockdown was a challenge for us all. We were acutely aware that all children needed to be nurtured and cared for- but especially our most vulnerable. Our Nurture and CP processes played a key role in deciding the allocation of support based on need, risk and resilience during lockdown and Nurturing North Ayrshire's Recovery training provided a trauma-based resource to help staff and pupils make a successful return to education.

Moving forward we are now beginning to embed a whole school nurture experience in our schools. This work will strengthen children's rights and health and wellbeing approaches in our establishments ensuring young people's voices are to the fore and play a direct role in decisions about their lives".



Philip finished his interview by recommending the following books:

Know me to teach me - Louise Bomber

What happened to you? Conversations on trauma,

resilience, and healing - Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey

North Ayrshire's Joint Inspection of Services for Children and Young People at Risk of Harm was published on 8th June 2022. The link to the final report can be found here: [Care Inspection Report](#)



Overall, the key strengths highlighted in the report as follows:

1. Recognition and initial response to risk and concern to children was a strength. Staff took timely and appropriate action to keep children safe.
2. Overall, key processes for assessing and managing risk for children at risk of harm were well established and working effectively.
3. Effective oversight and scrutiny of child protection performance was provided by the Chief Officers Group and Child Protection Committee.
4. Partners had a well-established approach to gathering and using performance data to inform and support improvement activity.

The report outlined there were two areas for further improvement:

1. The partnership should further develop its review of outcome data to demonstrate the difference services are making in keeping children safe.
2. Continued attention was needed to ensure all children and young people are meaningfully involved in decisions about their lives and in the development of future service provision.

North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee are currently reviewing the annual workplan and business plan and will ensure that areas of learning and improvement are strategic priorities going forward.

Alison Sutherland, Head of Children, Families & Justice Services had the following message for staff in response to the report:

“It is a very positive report for children’s services and one we can all be proud of. The report recognises the very strong evidence of partnership working and the clear commitment and dedication of staff working across various agencies to reduce risk of harm, develop positive relationships and improve wellbeing outcomes for our children and young people. I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the tremendous efforts made by all staff in their contributions and hard work throughout the inspection process, and in their daily engagement with children, young people and their families.”

The next referral window for PRI Dialogue cases will be **September 2022**

We continue to monitor and evaluate the feedback from these sessions from participants and facilitators. Lots of people are finding the sessions beneficial:



“I feel that it was a very informative session where professionals were able to look at a case and discuss openly and honestly about reflective practice and the importance of being able to look back and see how things could have been done differently if at all”.

“I think it was really worthwhile. It helped me to understand what others did and how we all contributed to each other's work / understanding of the case. It also gave me insight into what others' responsibilities are”.

“It is really helpful to hear reflections from different perspectives - it makes it easier to understand context of decision making and broadens ideas extrapolated from reflection”.

“I gained experience in being part of this kind of session. It certainly was not as nerve-wracking as I had thought it would be”.

“The session was useful and well facilitated. It highlighted the importance of true inter agency working and how this impacts on the child and family...”.

Please note, PRI Dialogue sessions have not been established to criticise professional practice or to blame individuals or agencies – the purpose is to provide a safe space for practitioners to reflect in a multi-agency forum. **All practitioners from all agencies can refer.**

More information on the process and how to refer also available on the CPC website here:

<http://childprotectionnorthayrshire.info/cpc/professionals/introduction/>

(Please note although the top of the page details information on the Child Sexual Abuse strategy, further information as you scroll down details information on PRI Dialogue sessions).

For more information or to refer, please email PRIdialogue@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

Signs of Safety is a strength and safety organised model of practice which has been evaluated as effective in driving cultural change. Signs of Safety states this approach, “is an integrated framework for how to do child intervention work – the principles for practice; a range of tools for assessment and planning, decision making and engaging children and families; the disciplines for practitioners’ application of the approach; and processes through which the work is undertaken with families and children, and partner agencies.



Signs of Safety practice enables child welfare intervention to be the catalyst for behaviour change by families and empowers them to make these changes. It utilises plain language and embodies aspects of change identified through the Promise in working alongside families building meaningful relationships and empowering their voices within the complex relationships that often arise from the complexity associated with Child welfare child protection work.”

Evaluation from areas which has implemented Signs of Safety has indicated that

- **Families feel more empowered and are more able to understand and address the concerns and requirements of child protection authorities.**
- **Other things being equal, the number of children removed from families reduces relative to the number of families with whom authorities work more intensively to build safety around the children.**
- **Practitioners report greater job satisfaction due to the clarity of the approach, the usefulness of the tools and the impact for the children and families.”**

North Ayrshire have agreed an implementation plan to take forward Signs of Safety which will initially include bespoke training for children and families staff and briefing sessions throughout 2022. North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee are welcoming of this family centred and rights based approach and look forward to the benefits that this will bring to children and families across North Ayrshire.

More information on the approach can be found here: <https://www.signsofsafety.net/what-is-sofs/>