



Services for children and
young people in the
City of Edinburgh

29 April 2013



Report of a
pilot joint
inspection



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1. Introduction

At the request of Scottish Ministers, the Care Inspectorate is leading joint inspections of services for children and young people across Scotland. When we say children and young people in this report we mean people under the age of 18 years or up to 21 years if they have been looked after.

These inspections will look at the difference services are making to the lives of children, young people and families. They take account of the full range of work within a community planning partnership area including services provided by health visitors, school nurses, teachers, doctors, social workers, police officers and the voluntary sector.

The inspection teams are made up of inspectors from the Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland.

A draft framework of quality indicators was published by the Care Inspectorate in October 2012. The indicators in 'How well are we improving the lives of children, young people and families? A guide to evaluating services for children and young people using quality indicators' were used by the team of inspectors in their independent evaluation of the quality of services. We have covered all of the quality indicators in this report and reached evaluations for eight of them which are set out in the table in Appendix 1.

This report is published following a pilot joint inspection. This means that future inspections may be carried out differently and the reports we will publish at a later date may take a different format.

2. Background

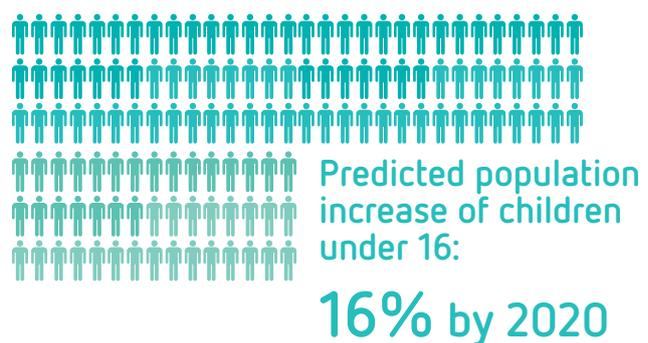
The pilot joint inspection of services for children and young people in the Edinburgh Community Planning Partnership area took place between November 2012 and January 2013. It covered the range of services working in the area that had a role in providing services to benefit children, young people and families.

Inspectors reviewed documents and spoke to staff with leadership and management responsibilities. They talked to staff who work directly with children, young people and families and observed some meetings. Inspectors reviewed practice through reading a sample of records held by services who work with children and young people. Some of these children, young people and families met with and talked to inspectors. Inspectors are very grateful to all of the people who talked to us as part of this pilot inspection.

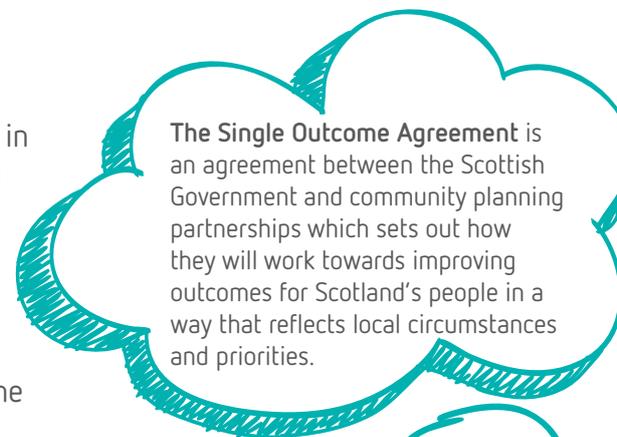
As the findings in this joint inspection are based on a sample of children and young people, inspectors cannot assure the quality of service received by every single child in the area.

3. The Community Planning Partnership area and the context for services for children and young people

Edinburgh has a population of over 495,000, the second largest local authority population in Scotland. It is the third most densely populated area in Scotland. The population is increasing at a much faster rate than the rest of Scotland and the number of children under the age of 16 is projected to rise by 16% by 2020. The equivalent figure for Scotland is 5%.



The Edinburgh Partnership is responsible for community planning in Edinburgh. It has members from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors and agrees priorities for partners to work together to improve outcomes for the city and its people. The Partnership has a vision for the city that “Edinburgh is a thriving, successful, and sustainable capital city in which all forms of deprivation and inequality are reduced.” This vision is set out in the **Single Outcome Agreement** through a set of clear outcomes for people. One of these outcomes is that Edinburgh’s children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential. The Edinburgh Children’s Partnership, which includes statutory and voluntary sector representation, directs the strategic planning, development and delivery of services for children and young people on behalf of **the Edinburgh Partnership**. The Chief Officers group of the Children’s Partnership oversees planning and continuous improvement. The Integrated Children and Young People’s Plan was developed by the Children’s Partnership to achieve the vision for children and young people in Edinburgh. Central to this plan is the implementation of the **Getting it Right for Every Child** approach in all services. In Edinburgh this is called ‘Getting it right’.



The Single Outcome Agreement is an agreement between the Scottish Government and community planning partnerships which sets out how they will work towards improving outcomes for Scotland’s people in a way that reflects local circumstances and priorities.



The Edinburgh Partnership. Responsible for community planning and brings lots of people together to plan out services for the city. **The Edinburgh Children’s Partnership** – directs strategic planning for services for children and young people in the city.



Getting it Right for Every Child is the Scottish Government’s approach to making sure that all children and young people get the help they need when they need it. For more information, search ‘GIRFEC’ online.

4. Particular strengths that are making a difference to children, young people and families

- The high motivation and strong commitment of staff to improving the life chances of vulnerable children, young people and families.
- The actions taken to keep children and young people at risk of abuse and harm safe.
- The very wide range of measures to consult and seek the views of children, young people, families and other stakeholders.
- A strong culture and ethos of positive partnership working for the benefit of children, young people and families at all levels.
- The visionary leadership and direction of the Edinburgh Children’s Partnership and commitment to prevention and early intervention.

5. Examples of good practice

Growing Confidence

A programme which is provided in nurseries and schools to build self-esteem and confidence. It is encouraging children and young people to manage things that might be getting in the way of their learning. It is also helping many parents and carers to get more involved in supporting their child's education and overall well-being.

Healthy Weight Initiative

A wide range of staff in health, education, community, leisure, and youth work are trained to help children, young people and families adopt healthy lifestyles. Their work is helping large numbers of children, young people and families to stay active, eat well and look after their health and well-being.

Family Nurse Partnership

Specially trained family nurses are offering all young parents under the age of 20 very high levels of support from early pregnancy right up until their babies are two years old. It is helping these parents to acquire the skills they need to give their babies the best start in life.

6. How well are the lives of children, young people and families improving?

Overall, the extent to which children and young people in Edinburgh get the best start in life and their life chances are improved is good. The Getting it right approach is having a positive impact on the well-being of children and young people. Staff are usually very successful in identifying the warning signs that something may be getting in the way of a child or young person's well-being. In most instances they respond quickly and provide supportive advice and guidance to help children, young people and families. This works very well for vulnerable unborn babies and very young children. Some children, young people and families who need extra support are missing out and do not get the help they need before difficulties get worse. This includes children and young people who are showing early signs of neglect or the effects of domestic abuse.

Children and young people get very effective support to keep safe. Children and young people feel safe within their care services and school environments. They are given valuable help to acquire essential skills to keep themselves safe in a wide range of risky situations. Those who are in need of protection from harm are kept safe through very effective actions and these children and young people experience notable improvements in their overall well-being as a result.

Parents and carers of very young children benefit from highly effective support and guidance. They are assisted to become confident and skilful in their parenting and to give their young children the best start in life. The Family Nurse Partnership is providing outstanding support for young women through pregnancy and to meet their babies' needs as they grow. Babies and infants are safer, healthier and better nurtured as a result. Young children benefit from high quality early years services which provide positive early learning and nurturing experiences. Children, young people and families receive very effective support for their emotional well-being and encouragement to lead healthy and positive lifestyles. Parents, carers, children and young people are deriving great benefits from Growing Confidence in schools. This is building confidence, personal resilience and supporting learning.

Children and young people are supported to attend school and this helps them to make better progress in their learning and educational attainment. The educational outcomes for looked after children are improving. The number of young people moving on from school to employment and education is increasing. **Inspiring Young People** and the increasing number of modern apprenticeships for young people through the **Edinburgh Guarantee** are highly beneficial to those who take part. These young people are becoming more responsible young adults ready to face life challenges. Vulnerable children and young people receive strong encouragement to be active and enjoy sporting and leisure pursuits.

The number of high quality nurturing and stable environments for children who are unable to live at home is increasing rapidly. Children and young people who are unable to remain in the care of their parents are supported in high quality foster placements or kinship care. They benefit from stable and nurturing care and very positive relationships. Overall, residential care services provide high levels of support and nurturing environments for young people. Comprehensive assessments of the health needs of all children and young people who are looked after away from home are carried out routinely. This now needs to be extended to children looked after at home and in kinship care.

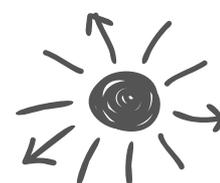
Parents and carers are very positive about the supportive and trusting relationships they enjoy with staff. They receive helpful encouragement and guidance to adopt healthy lifestyles and to manage difficulties such as substance misuse and aggression. Parents and carers become more resilient and better able to manage conflict and challenge. They have greater confidence and develop skills in parenting and describe improved family well-being.



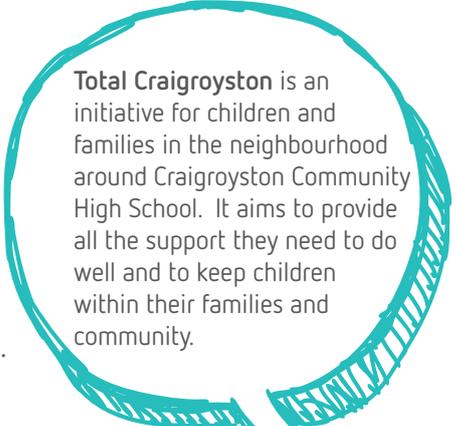
Inspiring Young People is an initiative which helps young people aged 16 to 19 years who are not in education, training or work to get support, development and work experience.



The Edinburgh Guarantee assists young people leaving school to get jobs and training through modern apprenticeships with public, private and voluntary sector employers.



Communities are encouraged to develop local solutions to local problems and to become involved in designing the services they need. **Total Craigroyston** is an innovative approach to strengthening communities. It is at an early stage of development in one local area but it is already showing positive signs of strengthening local families. Some parents and carers report that their aspirations have risen and they are contributing more meaningfully within their local communities.



Total Craigroyston is an initiative for children and families in the neighbourhood around Craigroyston Community High School. It aims to provide all the support they need to do well and to keep children within their families and community.

7. How well are services working together to improve the lives of children, young people and families?

Managers are developing appropriate joint policy and protocols to support multi-agency working and the Getting it right approach. A set of support materials and tools have been widely dispersed and these are beginning to ensure consistency in how staff across services carry out their work. They are helpfully linked to the vision, values, aims and expected service standards. The effectiveness of procedures for protecting children is closely monitored and reviewed. Managers are committed to driving up performance and standards. There are very effective quality assurance measures within some service areas such as child protection, fostering, adoption and early years. More work is needed to improve the availability and consistency of services for children with a disability. A joint strategic framework is needed to give rigour to the quality assurance of new processes and practices associated with Getting it right.



Partnership working in Edinburgh is strong. The Edinburgh Children's Partnership benefits from a wide and relevant representation and there is a culture of respecting and valuing each other's contribution. The voluntary sector is very effectively engaged and an equal partner at all levels. There is a shared commitment to service improvement to ensure the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families. There is a clear strategy for achieving multi-agency working and integrated services. Plans to achieve integrated services are managed well by the Edinburgh Children's Partnership and working groups. **The Child Protection Committee** is very effective in improving processes and practices for protecting children and young people and its work integrates well with the Edinburgh Children's Partnership. The Integrated Children and Young People's Plan has clear, strategic



The Child Protection Committee brings together all the organisations involved in protecting children in the area. Their purpose is to make sure local services work together to protect children from abuse and keep them safe.



aims and objectives across all services for children, young people and families. The plan has taken account of the views of young people and is used to monitor progress against strategic priorities.

There is a genuine commitment from the Edinburgh Children's Partnership and senior managers to consulting and involving children and young people in policy and service development. The Council has a very wide range of planned activities to engage with children and young people and seek their views such as pupil councils and surveys, the **Youth Issues Forum**, the **Young People in Care Council**. Young people involved feel listened to and their views are influencing the way services are delivered. For example, children and young people have influenced the design of play parks and have increased access to sport and recreation through the Leisure Access card. Health services consult well with parents and carers and have recognised the need to place stronger emphasis on the views of children and young people. Partners now need to build on this and establish meaningful involvement of children, young people and families in shaping and designing policy, plans and services.

Staff respond very effectively to concerns that a child or young person may be at immediate risk of abuse or harm. Legal measures are used appropriately to make sure children are moved to a safe place to live when they are in immediate danger. Signs that children and young people may pose a risk to themselves or others are not always recognised or acted upon quickly enough. Assessments of risks and needs are generally sound. The quality of assessments could be improved by a stronger focus on children's holistic needs and full involvement of all relevant staff. Plans for individual children do not always set out clearly enough what actions are needed to improve all aspects of their well-being. Plans for individual children are reviewed regularly at multi-agency meetings. However, planning and review tends to stop too quickly when children, young people and families begin to show signs of progress. Services should now ensure that plans provide ongoing support so that children and young people experience long-lasting improvements.

Staff pay close attention to the views of children, young people and families. They treat children, young people and families with respect and fairness and build positive relationships with them. Children and families are encouraged to attend meetings and helped to take part in decisions about the services they receive. Helpful independent support is available for some children, young people and families and this could be more widely available.



The Youth Issues Forum allows young people to discuss and air their views about services. The Forum is open to all young people in the city aged 11 to 21 years and they take part in young person friendly events and consultations on a wide range of issues and services.



The Young People in Care Council brings together young people who are looked after and accommodated. It allows them to have a voice and influence how services address their particular issues.

Team working is very positive and staff across services work very well together in multi-agency teams. Staff are highly motivated to provide a high quality service to children, young people and families. There is a very strong commitment to improving the life chances of vulnerable groups and to joint working. Staff are very aware of the vision for children, young people and families and their different roles and responsibilities to achieve this. They receive effective supervision, feel valued and well supported. Widespread multi-agency training is improving the use of the Getting it right approach to make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people. Staff find it beneficial and use this well to improve their work. The quality of work is constrained due to high workloads and limited availability of some staff groups.

8. How well do services lead and improve the quality of work to achieve better outcomes for children and families?

There is a very clear shared vision for children, young people and families. This vision is very successful in building a strong commitment to improving lives and to closing gaps in the outcomes between the least and most vulnerable children, young people and families. Staff understand and own this vision. A continued focus on improving children's well-being through Getting it right will help to realise the vision for children. There is a strong commitment to meeting the responsibilities of corporate parents and improving the lives of looked after children. A comprehensive Corporate Parenting Action Plan is in place and outcomes for children and young people who are looked after are improving.

There is a clear strategy and direction for integrating services for children and young people. Leaders share accountability and responsibility for leading and directing services for children across Edinburgh. They share a commitment to driving strategies which promote early intervention and are beginning to redirect resources and pool budgets to achieve this. Strong, collective leadership is successfully creating and modelling a strong ethos of team work and a supportive and enabling culture within and across services. Staff morale is positive and they are encouraged and motivated to work well together across services.

The Edinburgh Children's Partnership is strongly committed to improving the quality of services and to improving processes for joint **self-evaluation** across children's services. The investment in improving systems, processes and practice has resulted in significant benefits for children and young people in need of protection. The Partnership is committed to learning from case reviews and case studies. Partners have recognised the need to focus more on quality and outcomes for children and young people. The Getting it right approach is beginning to be successfully implemented across Edinburgh. Partners have effectively communicated the changes required to build sustainable improvements for the overall well-being of children and families. The capacity to deliver these changes may be constrained due to high workloads and the variability in the levels of support and access to services for some children and families.

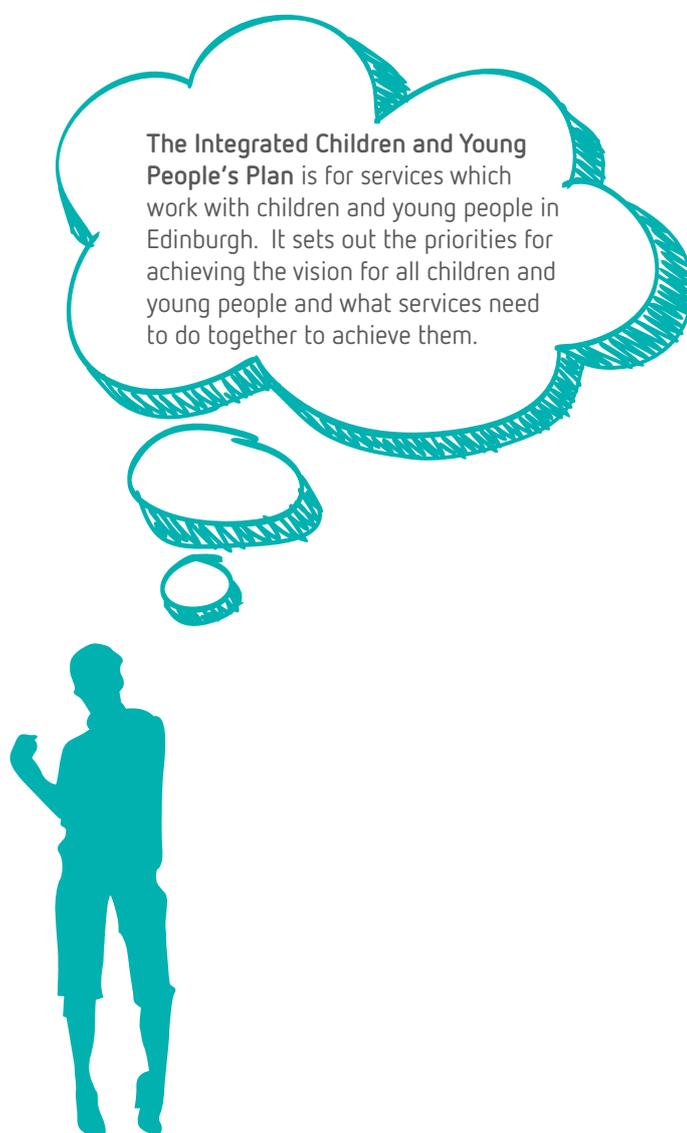
Self-evaluation

means taking a close look at what services have done and how well they have done it. It is important because it helps people to see clearly where they need to make improvements.



There is a strong commitment to leading joint self-evaluation at a strategic level. The Child Protection Committee is effectively monitoring a range of performance data about key processes and has made an encouraging start at conducting multi-agency audits of individual cases. Self-evaluation is mainly carried out within individual services. Services are heavily engaged in activities to audit and quality assure their work which leads to recommendations for improvement which are not always translated into concrete and measurable actions. The Edinburgh Children's Partnership and senior managers recognise the need to establish more systematic and integrated approaches to quality assurance and self-evaluation as a means of improving outcomes for children, young people and families.

Overall, partners are making steady improvements in the well-being of children and young people. Good progress is being made against the performance indicators set out in the Single Outcome Agreement and the **Integrated Children and Young People's Plan**. There are upward trends in improving outcomes for all children and young people and in reducing outcome gaps for children and young people whose life chances are at risk. Together, services now need to focus on achieving speedier improvement for a number of vulnerable groups.



The Integrated Children and Young People's Plan is for services which work with children and young people in Edinburgh. It sets out the priorities for achieving the vision for all children and young people and what services need to do together to achieve them.

9. Conclusion and areas for improvement

The vision for children, young people and families is generating strong commitment to partnership working, improving lives, and tackling inequalities. Strong leadership and direction for the Getting it Right approach is underpinning successful joint working and integrated services. Overall, partners are making steady improvements in the well-being of children and young people. Positive progress is being made against the performance indicators set out in the Single Outcome Agreement and the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan. Encouraging trends are being achieved in the outcomes for all children and young people and in reducing outcome gaps for those whose life chances are at risk. Considerable improvements have been made in the quality of services to protect children. The Edinburgh Children's Partnership is strongly committed to continuous improvement and has plans to introduce and build capacity for systematic joint self-evaluation across services for children.

Inspectors are very confident that services will be able to make the necessary improvements in the light of the inspection findings. In doing so the Edinburgh Partnership and the Edinburgh Children's Partnership should take account of the need to:

- **improve and extend help and support at an early stage for children, young people and families so they get the help they need before difficulties get worse;**
- **improve planning to meet needs so that children and young people experience long-lasting improvements;**
- **implement more systematic and joint approaches to quality assurance and self-evaluation to improve outcomes for children and young people; and**
- **continue to reduce outcome gaps for children and young people whose life chances are at risk and place a stronger focus on achieving speedier improvement for the most vulnerable.**

10. What happens next?

The Care Inspectorate will ask the Edinburgh Partnership to publish a joint action plan detailing how it intends to make any improvements identified as a result of the inspection.

The Care Inspectorate and other bodies taking part in this inspection will continue to offer support for improvement.

Jacque Pepper
Inspection Lead
April 2013



Appendix 1 Indicators of quality

Quality indicators help services and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved. In this pilot inspection we used a draft framework of quality indicators which was published by the Care Inspectorate in October 2012. 'How well are we improving the lives of children, young people and families? A guide to evaluating services for children and young people using quality indicators'. This document is available on the Care Inspectorate website. To view the document click [here](#).

Here are the evaluations for eight of the quality indicators.

How well are the lives of children and young people improving?	
Providing help and support at an early stage	Good
Impact on children and young people	Good
Assessing and responding to risks and needs	Good
Planning for individual children	Good
How well are services working together to improve the lives of children, young people and families?	
Planning and improving services	Good
Participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders	Very good
How good is the leadership and direction of services for children and young people?	
Leadership of improvement and change	Good
Improving the well-being of children and young people	Good

This report uses the following word scale to make clear the judgements made by inspectors.

Excellent	outstanding, sector leading
Very good	major strengths
Good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
Adequate	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Weak	important weaknesses
Unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

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