



Brief 2a)

Children, Young People and Families (Service Brief for family support -early years/young families)

1.0 Introduction & Background

1.1 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the policy driver Getting it Right for Every Child inform service development and delivery across the partnership in Fife to improve outcomes for children, young people and families in Fife. Central to this is a focus on children's rights within the context of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the requirement for public bodies to report back every 3 years on steps to embed key elements in practice.

1.2 The Early Years Framework 2009 has informed policy and practice for early years services (0-8 yrs.) within the context of the above legislation ensuring all children get the best start in life. The National Parenting Strategy 2012 has also shaped service development and delivery in Fife leading to a refresh of Fife's Parenting & Family Support Strategy in 2018.

Fife's Child Wellbeing Pathway (2018) supports the Framework/ Strategy and emphasises the importance of a continuum of support. The framework outlines steps for local authorities and partners to achieve transformational outcomes based on the following 4 principles:

- the same outcomes and opportunities should exist for all children
- identification of risks taking preventative steps
- effective action to address risk
- work with parents, families and communities to develop solutions

1.3 The above principles are interconnected with the principles and vision of getting it right for every child whereby all children should be:

- valued and at the centre of service delivery
- have opportunities to develop healthy attachment relationships
- supported to develop through play and early learning
- supported by universal services
- able to achieve positive outcomes irrespective of race, disability, or social background

1.4 The 10 elements of transformation change within the early year's framework have influenced the Family Nurture Approach (FNA) and Parenting and Family Support Strategy in Fife which includes:

- Fife's commitment to early intervention and prevention to break the cycle of disadvantage (close the gap)
- Strengthening universal services through better integration
- Improving outcomes and tackling inequalities
- Improving the health and wellbeing of children and families
- Engagement with families and communities through an asset-based approach
- Improving parenting and primary attachment
- Improving early learning and literacy

1.5 The above elements remain relevant and important for current service development to ensure services are responsive and agile to the needs of families with young children with a focus on:

- 0-3 yrs. as a critical period of child development
- ante-natal and postnatal care including infant mental health
- a strength-based approach
- building capacity, parenting skills and access to intensive family support
- flexible integrated provision
- streamlining access and pathways
- building capacity through informal community networks
- development of the workforce approach through a common language (Solihull)

1.6 The Plan for Fife and the Children's Services Partnership Plan set out partnership objectives and priorities for improvement. The Children's Services Partnership agile action plan (2020-21) re-confirms these priorities:

- **Safety** – by working together we will protect our children and young people
- **Wellbeing** – by working together we will support and promote the health and wellbeing our children and young people
- **Opportunity**-by working together we will improve the life chances of our children and young people
- **Poverty** -by working together we will mitigate the impact of poverty on Fife families

1.7 Education & Children's Services and specifically the Children & Families Social Work Service has a key responsibility for improving outcomes for Fife's most vulnerable children and families. Objectives for phase 3 of the Children and Family Strategy 'Belonging to Fife' include:

- The voice of children and young people must be at the heart of practice, supported by a right to live within their families and community
- Shifting the profile of care away from high cost placements towards better support for children and young people at home or wider family
- Better alignment of services for all including care experienced children, providing a 'scaffolding' of support around needs
- Services need to be agile, responsive, family focused and community facing
- Support to all children but with a priority for those in most need due to risk and adversity to prevent the possibility of family breakdown and need for formal care.

1.8. The Children & Family Strategy is informed by the recommendations within the Independent Care Review and the importance on help and support being readily and locally available; maintaining connections within the family and wider networks; focusing on relationships; building resilience within families and communities.

1.9. The contribution of the Third sector in achieving these objectives is important alongside a requirement for review and system redesign across current delivery models. The independent review of Third sector services in 2019 provided recommendations which have been considered within wider strategic re-commissioning plans for E&CS to achieve the above priorities.

2.0 Service Model

2.1 The service model should be cognisant of recent policy, research and evidence of what works to improve outcomes for children and families in the early years.

2.2 This service is focused on prevention and support for families with young children (**0-8 yrs.**) where there are indicators of vulnerability which if not addressed will lead to breakdown, crisis and statutory measures. A key driver is for children to remain within their family and community where it is safe to do so.

2.3 The components of the services delivery model should include:

- A flexible model which is adaptive to a range of needs and circumstances
- Available within the family home including evenings and weekends
- Practical 1-1 advice through a coaching, modelling and nurturing approach
- Group work to increase knowledge, understanding and skills
- Promotes the health, wellbeing and development of children
- Responsive to caregiver's emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Enhances caregivers' skills and response to child/ren's needs
- Improves parenting skills, capabilities and confidence
- Assist with basic routines, home conditions, financial/housing issues
- Provides advice and strategies on developmental stages and behaviour

- A single point of contact to support engagement with universal services
- Connects families with local opportunities and wider networks
- Supports transitions to EL&C and school

3.0 Outcomes

3.1 To deliver this brief the service will require an outcomes/performance framework with tools to evidence the progress of children and families based on the impact of interventions. The outcomes for this service are:

- Improvement in children's wellbeing, safety and resilience
- Improvement in parenting, family functioning and relationships
- Improvement in caregiver's confidence
- Improvement in family circumstances including environmental
- Improvement in access to universal services and community resources

4.0 Eligibility of Service Users

4.1 The service will be provided to children 0-8yrs. and families in each of the 7 localities in Fife within the features outlined in section 2.0

4.2 The pathway to the service will follow the Child Wellbeing process and will include referrals at:

- an early intervention level at stage 1 of the pathway. This will require a single agency assessment by the named person identifying early intervention and support to avoid escalation of needs and concerns. Regular review of support will be essential in line with the child wellbeing process and child's plan to support a multi-agency coordinated approach
- multi-agency meetings such as Child Protection Case Conferences, Looked After Reviews to mitigate against family breakdown and vulnerabilities which could result in children being on the 'edge of care'

4.3 It is anticipated that the service/s will work with between **60-100** families in each of the 7 local areas per year and that the exact number will be monitored and managed through performance reporting in the Service Level Agreement

The model of delivery will inform the number of service recipients within the budget envelope

5.0 Networking and Communication

5.1 Collaborative working to improve outcomes is a key requirement and the service should have a proven track record of working effectively on a multi-agency basis building strong relationships with a range of statutory and non-statutory services

5.2 The service should be visible and if possible either have a community presence in the 7 localities in Fife, contributing to local networks, sharing good practice and influencing service delivery and development both at a local and strategic level.

5.3 The service should provide detailed information on the service model and interventions raising awareness of provision and the ability to work in a flexible and agile way.

6.0 Continuity of Care

6.1 The service provider will be expected to provide consistency of staffing both in levels and personnel for children, young people and families, particularly through periods of absence, sickness and holidays. The service will share their organisation's comprehensive recruitment, induction and workforce development programme for staff members of this service. This should evidence capacity building with the staff team to use effective evidenced based interventions for the specified groups.

7.0 Risk Management

7.1 For each service user, identify all situations which involve elements of risk to themselves or others, and evidence the planned response which attempts to reduce and control the risk/s.

7.2 To manage risks effectively the service must have policies and procedures on the following:

- Operational policy reflecting equalities legislation
- Staff absence and management policy
Recruitment policies and procedures
- Procedure for lone working and working in service users' homes;
- Use of Volunteers
- Risk assessment and management
- Dealing with accident and incidents
- Handling challenging behaviour
- Protection of vulnerable groups including both an Adult and Child Protection policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Training and staff development
- Job descriptions and details of duties
- References and enhanced disclosure check for staff
- Procedures for the supervision, appraisal and disciplinary of staff
- Whistleblowing Policy

8.0 Recording and Monitoring

8.1 The service must have a record management system in place compliant with Data Protection guidelines with a workforce who are knowledgeable and competent to record accurately in respect to direct contact and reports for all groups.

8.2 Information regarding the overall service provided may be requested by Fife Council at any time for example, how many hours have been worked, the type of contact that took place, the work involved, changes to service plans/interventions, complaints, successful/unsuccessful outcomes and the reasons for these.

8.3 Records kept should ensure that information on the outcomes for the service can be collected for evaluation and analytical purposes

8.4 An Agreement Monitoring Meeting will be held every quarter and a report submitted to the meeting by the service.

8.5 The grant will be monitored via Fife Councils Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, a Link Officer will be appointed to work closely with the service. The Link Worker will be supported by the Social Work Service Monitoring Officer

9.0 Service support and development

9.1 Fife Council will identify an appropriate officer to link with the service provider in relation to ongoing support and development of provision.

10.0 Complaints Procedure

For each quarterly Agreement Monitoring Meeting the service provider must provide a report detailing the following information:

- The number of complaints the service provider has had during the previous quarter, by type of complaint
- The number of complaints in respect of service provision funded by Fife Council
- The outcome of the service providers investigation
- The number of complaints which were upheld and details on complainants who were satisfied/unsatisfied with the outcome
- General changes to the service providers policies and procedures as a result of complaints and progress with implementing any changes
- The service provider will be required to co-operate in any investigation of a complaint as requested by Fife Council and to remedy any concerns Fife Council has regarding the provision of the service

11.0 Fife Council Education & Children Services has set a 2021/2022 budget for this service at between £750,000- £800,000.