

ANGUS COUNCIL

FAMILY, EDUCATION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE – 30 MAY 2024

SUMMARY OF CARE INSPECTORATE INSPECTION OF ANGUS FOSTERING AND ADOPTION SERVICES

REPORT BY KIRSTY LEE, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND JUSTICE

1. ABSTRACT

This report is to update members of the Family, Education and Justice Committee on the recent Care Inspectorate publication of inspection reports on Angus Council Fostering and Adoption Services.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

This report contributes to outcomes across a range of strategic plans:

The Angus Community Plan 2022-30:

- Provide the best start in life for children
- Improve physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Create more opportunities for people to live well and achieve their personal goals

The Council Plan 2023-2028:

- When children cannot safely live at home, keep our children local in Angus, providing for their education and family needs.

The Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2021-23

- Our children have the best start in life in a nurturing environment
- Our children growing up healthy, confident, and resilient with improving physical and mental health and strengthened emotional wellbeing

Angus Promise Plan (Corporate Parenting Strategy):

- Keeping children and young people within their local communities where that meets their needs.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Family, Education and Justice Committee:

- (i) Gives consideration to the areas of strength identified within the inspection reports;
- (ii) Gives consideration to the positive outcomes noted for children in Angus; and
- (iii) Gives consideration to the evaluation of the Key Questions and Quality Indicators for each service.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 As registered services, Angus Council Fostering and Adoption services are inspected at a frequency based on an intelligence-led risk assessment and previous performance.

The Inspectorate evaluates registered services using a framework informed by the Health and Social Care Standards. Since 2018, the Care Inspectorate have used a revised methodology for inspecting care and support services. The changes include an emphasis on experiences and outcomes; proportionate approaches in services that perform well; shorter inspection reports; and a focus on supporting quality improvement. The core of the new approach is a quality framework that sets out the elements that answer key questions about the difference care is

making to people and the quality and effectiveness of the things that contribute to those differences.

4.2 The Key Questions are:

Key question 1: How well do we support people's well-being?

Key Question 2: How good is our leadership?

Key question 3: How good is our staff team?

Key question 4: How good is our setting?

Key question 5: How well is our care and support planned?

4.3 The reports provide information to members regarding a short notice inspection of Angus Council Fostering and Adoption Services, which took place between 26 February 2024 and 19 March 2024. The inspection report was completed on 20 March 2024 and can be found online at:

<https://careinspectorate.com/berengCareservices/html/reports/getPdfBlob.php?id=318852>

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5. CURRENT POSITION

5.1 A full short-notice inspection of the Angus Council Fostering and Adoption Services was undertaken against Key Questions 1 and 5.

Key Question 1: How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing

QI 1.1 - Children, young people and adults and their caregiver families experience compassion, dignity, and respect.

QI 1.2 - Children, young people and adults get the most out of life.

QI 1.3 - Children, young people and adults' health and well-being benefits from the care and support they experience.

QI 1.4 - Children, young people and adults and their caregiver families get the service that is right for them.

Key Question 5: How well is our care and support planned

QI 5.1 - Assessment and care planning reflects the outcomes and wishes of children, young people, and adults.

5.2 In evaluating quality, the inspectorate use a six-point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent.

5.3 The Fostering Service was awarded a grade of 5 (very good) for both quality indicators.

Areas highlighted from the inspection were:

- Children and young people received nurturing and meaningful care from their foster families.
- Relational based practice was strongly evidenced within the service, but particularly within the relationships surrounding the children and young people.
- The Fostering Service played an essential role in the progression of permanency planning for children which resulted in timely progression of children's plans to secure permanence.
- Life story was prioritised within the service which ensured that children and young people had a strong sense of their life journey.
- High quality training was offered to staff and foster carers which resulted in a good understanding of trauma informed approaches.
- Risk assessments and care planning were holistic and robust which supported positive outcomes for children and young people.

No requirements or recommendations were made.

5.4 The Adoption Service was awarded a grade of 5 (very good) for both quality indicators.

Areas highlighted from the inspection were:

- Children and young people were thriving in loving adoptive families. Families were well supported by staff, who were highly skilled, knowledgeable, and promoted a culture of learning and development.
- High quality life story work, including sensitive work with birth parents, helped children and young people have a strong sense of belonging.
- Robust matching processes, including well planned child appreciation days, led to strong and secure relationships within adoptive families.
- Post adoption support was responsive, individualised and flexible. Adoptive families highly valued the support available.
- The service had developed a range of strategies to improve permanence planning, which was helping to reduce delay in children moving to their adoptive family.

Again, no requirements or recommendations were made.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

There is no requirement for any addition to the Corporate Risk Register.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out, as this report is for information only.

10. CONSULTATION

The relevant members of the Council's Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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