



EAST AYRSHIRE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Annual Report 2023-24

(covering period 1.8.23 – 31.7.24)

and

Priorities 2024-25

(covering period 1.8.24– 31.7.25)

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FOREWORD

By East Ayrshire Chief Officers Group

The East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee Annual Report for 2023-24 sets out the key role of the Child Protection Committee in ensuring the inter-agency response to the protection of East Ayrshire's children is cohesive, structured, and working towards continuous improvement.

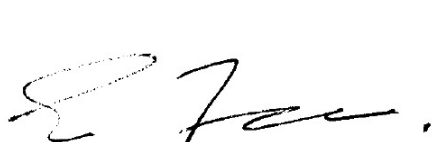
This annual report summarises some of the Child Protection Committee's achievements throughout the period under review. As a Chief Officer Group, we recognise that we are on a journey of continuous learning and improvement.

We maintain close working relationships with agencies in the statutory, voluntary, and independent sectors and are determined to ensure we retain an outcome-focused approach to child protection matters.

As Chief Officers, we fully appreciate the challenge of ensuring East Ayrshire's children are safe as well as providing a platform from which all children in East Ayrshire can reach their full potential. We have continued to make progress towards achieving our aims since the publication of the last report.

This report reflects on successes and identifies areas for further improvement. We extend our appreciation for the continuing efforts of all agencies in East Ayrshire working together to protect children and young people. This work is challenging and complex, however, it is an area in which we are committed to achieving excellence.

We endorse the contents of the East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2023-24.



Chief Executive

**East Ayrshire
Council**



**Chief
Superintendent
Police Scotland**



Chief Executive

**NHS Ayrshire &
Arran**



INDEPENDENT CHAIR OF EAST AYRSHIRE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Child Protection Committees across Scotland produce reports which sets out their priorities for the coming year. I am pleased to present East Ayrshire's annual report summarising our multi- agency activity.

This report presents the findings from a range of single and joint self-evaluation activities which are focussed on keeping our most vulnerable children and young people safe and taking action to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation. It sets out our key achievements, strengths and areas for further improvement.

The Child Protection Committee partners have worked together to achieve our improvement priorities for 2023-24 and I am pleased to report that we have achieved significant progress.

While the last year has brought challenges, it has also highlighted a strong ethos of partnership working within East Ayrshire, which has been evident through ensuring service responses have been co-ordinated and directed to those in greatest need.

It has not been possible to achieve all that we set out to do, however, significant progress has been made, and through the continued hard work, commitment and dedication of all our staff we will continue to make a positive difference to improving the life chances of all children, young people and families living in East Ayrshire.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Moira McKinnon' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Moira McKinnon

Independent Chair

INTRODUCTION

Context

East Ayrshire is a diverse area covering some 490 square miles with a population of approximately 120,390 people spread over both urban and rural communities. Kilmarnock is the largest urban area with a population of around 46,600. Other settlements range from less than a hundred people in some villages and rural areas to around 9,000 in Cumnock, the second largest town.

Many parts of East Ayrshire are prosperous, and it is a vibrant area in which to live, work and to visit and there are many opportunities for East Ayrshire children and young people.

However, significant inequalities continue to exist within and between our communities. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 highlights that in East Ayrshire, the local share of most deprived areas has fallen by two per cent, going from 33 per cent in 2016 to 31 per cent in 2020. We also have the seventh largest proportion of population, in Scotland, categorised as most deprived.

The impact of rurality on our population is significant with increased access to services an important focus for partnership working. This, coupled with our high levels of poverty and deprivation, has the potential to negatively impact on child wellbeing and poverty.

In addition, the impact of the high incidence of misuse of alcohol and drugs is considerable across many aspects of our communities, from the loss of individual talents, pressures on health services, the impact on children and families and implications for justice services and community safety. Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children, young people and families across East Ayrshire. The rate of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police per 10,000 population has been steadily increasing since 2016/17 reaching 128 in 2020/21 and remaining at this level since. However, we know that domestic abuse is not characterised by single incidents and is a pattern of abuse and control which is routinely not reported to the police.

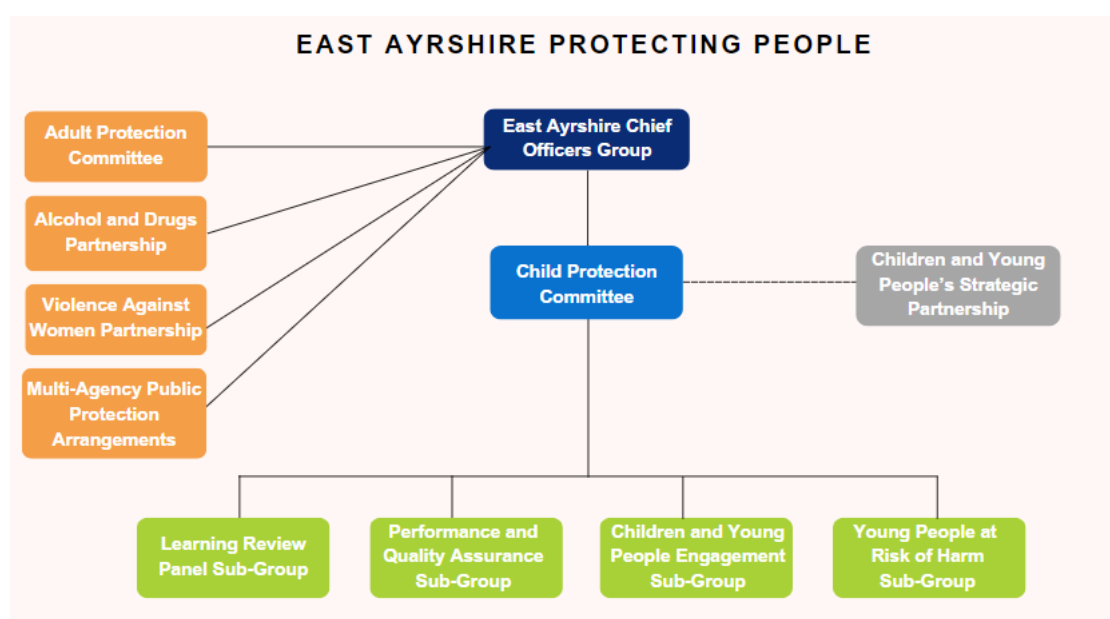
East Ayrshire had the 16th highest population in 2022, out of all 32 council areas in Scotland. In 2022, there were more females (51.5%) than males (48.5%) living in East Ayrshire. In terms of overall size, the 45 to 64 age group was the largest in 2022, with a population of 34,981. In contrast, the 16 to 24 age group was the smallest, with a



population of 10,934. The 0-15 age group had a population of 20,370 (16.9% of the overall population in East Ayrshire).

CPC LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

CPC Structure 2023-2024



Leadership

The East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee (CPC) is the key local body responsible for implementing and improving child protection strategy across and between agencies, bodies and East Ayrshire communities. The CPC have a crucial role in identifying and managing risk to children and young people, monitoring and improving performance and promoting the ethos that, “It’s everyone’s job to make sure I’m alright.” Its role, local structures and membership, provide leadership and direction for the management of child protection services across East Ayrshire.

As illustrated above, the CPC is governed by the Chief Officers Group (COG) who have clear responsibilities set out in the [Protecting children and young people: Child Protection CPC and Chief Officer Responsibilities Guidance](#) published by the Scottish Government in February 2019.

The East Ayrshire COG, comprising the statutory agencies (EAC, NHS and Police Scotland), is well established as is the relationship between the COG and CPC. The structure also illustrates the connectedness through the COG of the CPC with the other strategic partnerships across East Ayrshire and with Ayrshire partners, namely the Adult Protection Committee (APC), the Violence Against Women Partnership (VAWP), the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) all working together under the banner of

East Ayrshire Protecting People to take forward child protection policy and practice across the local area and across Scotland.

CPC Management and Strategic Links

The CPC adheres to the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#). The CPC fulfils its core functions through the structure above and the multi-agency CPC Improvement Plan, which is referenced in this report. The CPC's membership (see appendix 1) has senior representatives from partnership agencies and an Independent Chair which ensures impartial oversight and scrutiny. The East Ayrshire Independent chairs meet on a regular basis to ensure alignment of systems and processes.

The core functions of the CPC are grouped as follows:

- continuous improvement
- public information, engagement and participation
- strategic planning and connections
- annual reporting on the work of the CPC

This work is reflected in local practice and aims to meet local and national needs in keeping children safe.

An integrated approach to service planning by partners is a requirement under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and in East Ayrshire this is the responsibility of the Community Planning Partnership, with responsibility for strategic planning and continuous improvement activity delegated to the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) and managed on a shared basis with the CPC.

The CPC meets four times a year to discuss data, learning, national policy and business of continuous improvement. In addition to CPC business meetings, a CPC development session and CPC self-evaluation session are held each year. The CPC have also held an annual practitioner's forum since 2022 to ensure the experience and views of the multi-agency workforce are heard and influence the CPC improvement plan.

The Development Session in 2023 focused on considering a shared culture, connection and commitment to protecting children and young people across East Ayrshire. The session highlighted key areas including the implementation of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland within East Ayrshire, creating a pathway for annual self-evaluation of CP practice across the multi-agency partnership as well as benchmarking on current successes and areas for continued development.

East Ayrshire COG determine the budget and resource for the ongoing work of the CPC. This is required to meet staff costs, anticipated local expenditure to carry out the child protection work which includes learning reviews, priorities identified in this

report, the CPC Business Plan and moving forward 2024-27. Cost is also determined within the budget for commissioned Learning and Development training from Barnardo's (Child Exploitation). The staffing complement for East Ayrshire CPC is the Independent Chair and Lead Officer.

The Constitution and Governance Framework for the CPC was reviewed during the reporting period and will be reviewed every three years. The Framework sets out the overall business and governance arrangements for the CPC covering:

- Purpose
- Role and Function
- Reporting and Accountability
- Membership
- Business Rules
- Community Planning Connections
- Self-evaluation Approach
- Performance Reporting
- Resource Support

OUR VISION

Taking the foregoing local context into account, the vision expressed for all citizens of East Ayrshire in the Community Plan 2015-2030 is:

East Ayrshire is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high-quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs.

The combined vision and values of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership and the Child Protection Committee are:



OUR VISION

East Ayrshire is a place where all children and young people can grow up loved, safe and respected so that they can realise their full potential.

OUR VALUES

In everything we do we will develop positive relationships with children, their families and professionals.

We value children and their families and will place their voice, views and strengths to the core.

The child is the priority at all times.

Therefore, our commitment to children and young people, their families and carers is to provide them with the support they need, when and where they need it, to help them achieve their aspirations and full potential at all life stages.

Taking a collective and collaborative approach to working with the problems associated with child protection in East Ayrshire is the key to success for the CPC. By connecting partners together in a regular, meaningful and consistent manner ensures there is a good exchange of specialist knowledge, experience and best practice.



The CPC continues to be fully committed to driving forward the National Getting it Right for Every Child approach, with a view to improving outcomes; supporting the wellbeing of the children and young people; and offering the right help at the right time from the right people. This approach is strengthened through the CPC's strong focus on continuous improvement and self-evaluation, ensuring services and supports for children and their families/carers are regularly reviewed and remain of the highest standard.

In working closely with the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, we have a more holistic approach and commitment when working with children, young people and their families/carers to recognise the importance of people and relationships in our delivery of high-quality service and develop Vibrant and Sustainable Communities.

CPC ACTIVITY 2023-2024

Over the course of 2023-24, the CPC and all those working across the partnership, have worked towards delivering on the many initiatives and improvements striving to make sure children and young people are safe and well across East Ayrshire.

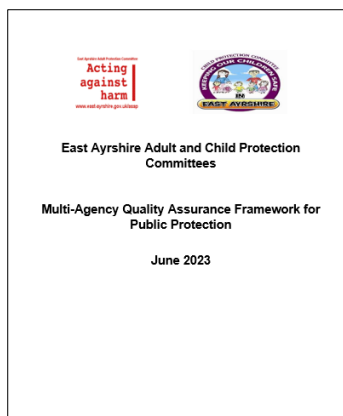
In 2023, the [Cherishing Our Families Strategy](#) was approved, and work has begun to take this forward. The aim of the strategy is to set out the strategic aims and objectives of East Ayrshire's approach to preventing and reducing neglect across the community. This includes working within the approach of the HEART model to ensure that issues are addressed holistically and in a family context, and to also pull together all the work happening across the CYPSP to reflect consistent ways of working to tackle the issue of neglect. Neglect has been an area of concern, and this is reflected in child protection referrals. We know that neglect is one of the most damaging childhood experiences and is associated with some of the poorest behavioural, emotional and cognitive outcomes.



The strategy sets out what the local context is in terms of data on child protection registration and referrals to the Children's Reporter. It is also acknowledged in the 2018 Children and Young People Joint Inspection Report that "some children who experienced neglect would have benefited from earlier decision making and targeted action." The strategy is underpinned by the following guiding principles:

- Voice of the child
- Underpinned by children's rights
- Focus on families
- Empowerment of parents and carers
- Right support at the right time
- Strengths-based

The **Safe and Together Model** Suite of Tools and Interventions is a perpetrator pattern-based, child-centred, survivor strengths approach to working with domestic violence. The Safe and Together Implementation Plan is now in its fourth year and has continued to be supported by the Scottish Government through the Equally Safe Strategy. Training has continued across the Partnership, and it is projected that 75% of key professionals involved in Child Protection processes will have accessed the appropriate level of training for their role by 2024-25. Multi-agency evaluation activities have informed large-scale learning events which have communicated the Pan-Ayrshire vision for domestic abuse-informed practice and culture change. This has created a strong commitment to practice change which has been driven by the children's health and care service over the past year. The Safe and Together Lead Officer has facilitated individual case consultations in both single and multi-agency cases which has been fundamental in supporting practitioners to make sense of complex situations and comprehensively understand risk through relationship-based approaches.



In 2023, East Ayrshire Adult & Child Protection Committees developed a joint **Multi-Agency Quality Assurance Framework for Public Protection**. The purpose of the framework is to identify evidence that people at risk of harm are safer because of multi-agency public protection activity. It provides a model of self-evaluation and audit which will be used to identify existing effective practice (for child & adult support and protection) and identify and plan for improvement where this is needed. This framework is part of a tiered approach to quality assurance in East Ayrshire.

During 2023/24, the CPC has implemented version 2 of the **National Minimum Dataset** which was shared with CPCs from June 2022. East Ayrshire CPC has an appetite for data improvement as it plays a pivotal role in the continuous improvement of the protection of children and young people. The Minimum Dataset is part of a wider suite of data and evidence used to inform improvement planning.

In June 2023, the Performance & Quality Assurance Group proposed to the CPC that the **Multi Agency Case File Audit** return to an annual audit, which would take place each November. Following the Covid pandemic multi-agency file auditing resumed November 2021, May 2022 and November 2022. With the collation of findings over November 2021 and 2022, activity of November 2023 allowed for clear comparison data of the previous two years. The multi-agency file audit focused on 8 areas of practice:

- Child Protection
- Wellbeing
- Quality of Assessments
- Children's Plans
- Effectiveness of Planning and Intervention
- Chronologies and AYRshare
- Domestic Abuse Outcomes
- Children's and Parents/Carers Views

Within the file reading exercise good practice examples were identified. Areas which were identified as requiring improvement were information sharing, planning and review, chronologies and supervision. Improvement actions were identified, and these have been incorporated into the CPC Improvement Plan for ongoing monitoring.

A **Child Protection self-evaluation survey** was issued in May 2024, attracting responses from services across East Ayrshire. The main respondents to the survey were based in social care/social work (34%), health (22%) and housing (19%) services. Most responses were positive on the impact of staff and the quality and effectiveness of their work, however varied more on questions relating to local

leadership, direction and impact of services. Engagement from staff in the housing service indicated that more training and awareness raising would be beneficial in this area to improve confidence and clarity around their role in safeguarding children and young people at risk of harm. Limited engagement from education staff in the survey highlighted the need for further planning and promotion for follow-up self-evaluation activity. The survey will be issued on an annual basis, with identified improvements informing the CPC improvement plan.

Improvement work on integrated chronologies is ongoing. AYRshare was launched in 2013 for the use of named persons in health and education, school nurses and social workers. AYRshare then became the mandatory tool to be used for sharing information across children's services. Re-training of practitioners in the use of AYRshare is ongoing and has so far included CAMHS, Social Work, Education and staff in Children's Houses. 7-minute briefings on AYRshare and Integrated Chronologies have been produced. The AYRshare briefing has been placed on AYRshare and the pan-Ayrshire GIRFEC website.

Amendments have been made to the **pre-birth planning pathway** to improve earlier decision-making. Families will now be met at an earlier gestation (from 12 weeks) than current practice (16 weeks) to allow opportunity for relationship building, assessment and early intervention and the unborn child is to be incorporated into existing child protection processes that exist within the family without the need for IRD. The multiagency guidance '*Responding to vulnerability in pregnancy*' will be updated to reflect the agreed process.

The **Ayrshire Bairns Hoose Partnership** were offered Affiliate status to the Pathfinder programme in September 2023, allowing funding bids to the Pathfinder program to support implementation. In early 2024, the Ayrshire Bairns Hoose Partnership began to work with Children's 1st to develop a Bairns Hoose Childs Rights and Recovery service. A significant amount of work has taken place in East Ayrshire to identify a suitable Bairns Hoose site. This has proved challenging. However, a temporary solution has been identified with agreement for work to continue to find a long-term solution.

The **Interagency Guidance Age of Criminal Responsibility** (Scotland) Act 2019 was published in September 2023 to provide both the local framework in which the Act is to be understood and defines the operational roles, responsibilities and processes that allow agencies to respond to situations appropriately.

The **Ayrshire Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures** were published on 01 December 2023. As part of the practitioner communication plan, the first multi-agency workforce briefing event took place on 14 December 2023. Following the festive break, the one-hour briefings have continued on a fortnightly basis throughout February and March and moved to bi-monthly from April. Dates have been established until December 2024 to ensure as wide a reach as possible to all staff of the one-hour highlights briefing.

A deep dive was conducted by the Scottish Children's Reporter's Administration (SCRA) after a spike of offence referrals. In September 2023, SCRA Ayrshire received an unprecedented spike in offence referrals, East Ayrshire received on average under 15 offence referrals per month. In September 2023, SCRA received 98 offence referrals. This analysis allowed SCRA to consider the dates of the incidents to identify any delay in referrals being made; and also identify any commonalities in terms of young people frequently coming into conflict with the law, locus of the incidents and the offence. The data was shared and discussed with all partners within East Ayrshire's Whole System Approach Group. From the data and discussions between partner agencies it became evident that within the local area there are a small group of young people who frequently come into conflict with the law. Whilst this group is known by name partner agencies, having data regarding the proportion of referrals they are involved in supports agencies to justify why it is appropriate to target intensive supports towards these young people. Discussions took place regarding the use of Early and Effective Intervention as a disposal route for some young people as EEI did not see the same spike in referrals as SCRA did. Following these discussions, SCRA have seen a decrease in offence referrals whereby EEI have seen an increase since discussions began and a continued steady referral number thereafter.

Training sessions on Child Exploitation were delivered by Barnardos throughout the reporting period. A single agency session aimed at social work practitioners took place in October and a series of multi-agency sessions were delivered from March to April 2024, aiming to increase practitioners' confidence and awareness of child exploitation issues. Over 200 multi-agency practitioners signed up for the sessions which were held in both Cumnock and Kilmarnock to ensure accessibility. Self-evaluation forms completed both before and after the sessions saw that a high proportion of attendees felt more confident in identifying (2% pre-training, 45% post-training) child sexual exploitation and understanding barriers to disclosing abuse (60% post-training). The sessions were deemed excellent by the majority of attendees, with many requesting full day sessions in the future. Comments from attendees included:

"I enjoyed the fact the training on this subject is multi-agency, supporting partnership working."

"A great start but think we all need more opportunities for further CSE (exploitation) training to further understand and support/ enhance confidence."

Learning Review Panel Sub-Group

What we have done

The Learning Review Panel was established in June 2022 following the development of the Pan Ayrshire Learning Review Guidance. Protecting children and young people is an inter-agency and inter-disciplinary responsibility overseen by the CPC and it is

responsible for deciding whether a Learning Review is warranted and, if so, for agreeing how the review is conducted. The CPC keep COG advised of all cases referred for a potential Learning Review and will report their recommendations on these matters to the COG for consideration and ratification.

The overall purpose of a Learning Review is to bring together agencies, individuals, and families in a collective endeavour to learn from what has happened in order to improve and develop systems and practice in the future and thus better protects, children and young people.

Over 2023/24, the Learning Review Panel had oversight of all Learning Review notifications which have come to the attention of the CPC.

Two Learning Reviews were concluded during the reporting period. The findings from the Learning Reviews highlighted areas for improvement. Sessions have been held with staff to review the findings and highlight areas for action. Improvement actions have been incorporated into the CPC Improvement Plan.

What we will do next

The Learning Review Panel will continue to have oversight and monitor learning review activity on behalf of the CPC, reporting findings and providing recommendations for improvement work and how learning can be disseminated across the workforce.

Performance and Quality Assurance Sub-Group

What we have done

As part of the CPC's ongoing improvement and development work, the multi-agency Performance and Quality Assurance (PQA) subgroup was established in July 2022, the group provides oversight to self-evaluation and quality assurance work on behalf of the CPC. Across 2023/24, the subgroup focused on the establishment of clear governance and reporting routes for reoccurring self-evaluation and quality assurance work taking place across the partnership. This has included the direction of the Multi Agency Case File Audit Group, the multi-agency working group now aligned to the PQA group, as well as the return of annual multi-agency case file audit work which is aligned to the Adult Support and Protection multi-agency case file audit work. The group have also supported development of an ASP/CP Quality Assurance Framework (2023-24).

The group has oversight of the CPC Minimum Dataset and identifies areas that require a deeper dive into the data across multi-agency partners.

What we will do next

The group will continue to have oversight and reporting responsibilities of all quality assurance work to the CPC. To allow for further scrutiny into the Minimum Dataset

reporting, a focused group is being established. An area that the group has identified to focus on is domestic abuse due to the consistently high number of referrals. The group are also aligning other avenues of multi-agency improvement work, including the quality assurance and review of Interagency Referral Discussions.

A Practice Improvement sub-group is being established to progress the findings of Learning Reviews, the Case File Audit and other self-evaluation work.

Young People at Risk of Harm Sub-Group

What we have done

The Young People at Risk of Harm (YPARH) subgroup (initially known as the High-Risk Vulnerable Young Person Group) was established in June 2022. The purpose of the subgroup is to raise practitioner and agency awareness of the needs of young people who are considered to be at high risk of harm and exploitation, to improve current processes regarding care planning and to oversee practice and policy development.

Following a multi-agency practitioner's workshop in November 2022 it was determined that child sexual and criminal exploitation was an immediate need of focus. The YPARH subgroup progressed a suite of workshops, in collaboration with Barnardo's and Glasgow City Council colleagues.

Work began in 2024 around contextual safeguarding processes and practices to ensure strong interagency connectedness across partners which focuses not only the child/young person but which understands the context of the child/young person's experiences and how agencies can work together to better understand contextual risk and safeguarding.

What we will do next

The subgroup will continue to progress areas of work identified as being key to working with East Ayrshires most at risk young people. Further multi agency consultation will take place moving forward to ensure the YPARH subgroup remain focused on progressing areas of work most needed and beneficial to practitioners.

Children and Young People's Engagement Sub-Group

What we have done

Initial discussions began on the establishment of the Children and Young Person Engagement Subgroup in October 2023 with a recognition of the importance of capturing the voice and experiences of children and young people. The aspiration of this group is to ensure that the voices of children and young people in East Ayrshire

are central to the work of the CPC. The group is now established, and multi-agency partners are represented.

What we will do next

The group are carrying out a mapping work to identify how children and young people engage with services currently. The group will then consider areas for improvement specifically relating to the child protection process.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND SELF-EVALUATION

Learning Reviews

The National Guidance for Child Protection Committees Undertaking Learning Reviews was published September 2021. In the reporting period, the Learning Review Panel, on behalf of the CPC, have received five notifications for consideration of a learning review, with two meeting the criteria and progressing.

Two Learning Reviews were concluded in the reporting period. Both Learning Reviews highlighted areas of improvement (which are being actioned through the CPC Improvement Plan) around the following themes:

- Adult mental health and impact on parenting
- Difficult to reach/non-engaging families
- Interagency Referral Discussions (IRD) thresholds
- Professional Curiosity and the Unseen Child
- GIRFEC pathway - team around the child processes/meetings/Named Person and Lead Professional
- Demand on services and how cases are managed when awaiting allocation
- IT systems – AYRshare
- Voice of the child
- Management oversight and supervision
- Agency thresholds
- Use and quality of chronologies

Multi-Agency Case File Audit

East Ayrshire CPC is committed to the continuous improvement of our multi-agency child protection arrangements which are underpinned and informed by our self-evaluation activity.

The multi-agency casefile audit took place in November 2023. This was the first in-person multi-agency case file audit cycle since 2019. This three-day event followed revisions made to the Care Inspectorate audit tool and was described as a success by multi agency participants.

Between the exercises undertaken in November 2022 and in November 2023, results showed a noteworthy decrease of 11% in the proportion of files examined where the individual was considered at immediate risk of significant harm in the previous two years, down from 61% to 50%. Additionally, a slight increase in the effectiveness of the service response to these concerns was noted, with the proportion of files where the service response was graded 'Excellent', 'Very good' or 'Good' at 47% in total in November 2023, up 4% from 43% in the previous audit.

During the November 2023 exercise, 77% of files examined had an assessment that considered risks to and/ or from the individual, a similar scoring to that of the previous audit in November 2022.

Again, the quality of these assessments has seen consistently high scores compared to November 2022, 42 of the 47 files with an assessment of risks had it graded as 'Excellent', 'Very good' or 'Good' in November 2023.

There was a large increase noted in the quality of the plans setting out how the risks to and/or from the individual are to be addressed. The proportion of plans rated 'Excellent', 'Very good' or 'Good' in November 2023 was 83% in total, 18% higher than in November 2022.

Interagency Referral Discussion (IRD) Reviews

IRD monthly reviews continued on through 2021 – 2023 with the use of MS Teams. The group have met every 4 weeks to review a sample of identified IRDs from both the north and south of the authority.

From improvement work identified by the group, an IRD quality assurance group was set up late 2023 to consider arising issues, alignment with national work as well as pan-Ayrshire and have revised templates for use by the audit group. Through 2024/25 the group will consider the development of local/pan Ayrshire IRD training for those of the partnership who undertake IRDs.

The Pan-Ayrshire IRD Protocol (June 2024) was reviewed to ensure consistency across our Ayrshire partners. The Protocol also sets out when Care and Risk Management (CARM) processes should be followed. CARM is for children /young people aged 12 -18, in exceptional circumstances whereby parts of a child or young person's behaviour presents risk of serious harm to themselves or others, or where a pattern of significant escalation of lesser behaviours suggests that an incident of serious harm may be imminent. Importantly, the Protocol sets out the steps when, in exceptional circumstances, no consensus can be met by professionals.

Data & Evidence

The CPC retains an overview of management information from all key agencies relating to the protection of children and young people.

The Committee:

- has an overview of information relating to children and young people with their names listed on the Child Protection Register
- receives quarterly child protection minimum dataset reports, which includes analysis of trends
- identifies and address the implications of these data reports

- ensures that management information informs the inter-agency child protection strategy and provides an oversight for the East Ayrshire's Chief Officers Group

Self-Evaluation of the Implementation of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021)

As part of the national self-evaluation exercise, East Ayrshire CPC members met in October 2023 and consulted with the Chief Officers Group November 2023 to complete the self-evaluation which informed CELCIS response to the Scottish Government. The exercise was identified as being a helpful tool to evaluate our progress of local implementation and as such the Committee agreed to hold this event on an annual basis until completion of the implementation of the national guidance and local CP Procedure.

Public Service Improvement Framework Self-Assessment

The CPC undertook the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) self-assessment to support improvement. The PSIF provides a framework of statements to challenge existing performance through a structured process. The CPC identified areas for improvement which included:

- improving approaches for gathering feedback from children, young people and families to inform strategic planning and
- consider ways for all partners to have a more active role in agreeing, monitoring and taking action to achieve the CPC's outcomes.

Progress has been made with the establishment of the Children and Young People's Engagement Group, the Induction Pack for new members being updated and meetings taking place in various locations to suit members.

MULTI-AGENCY STAFF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Multi-Agency Training

During 2023 – 2024, the Multi-Agency Children's Services Learning and Development worker delivered a total of 23 courses, and these were attended by 566 participants across a variety of services including social work, education, health, police and community engagement.

The courses that were delivered included the core Child Protection courses for social work, Care and Risk Management, Safe and Together, Neglect, Child Exploitation, Court Skills, Children and Young People Sexualised Behaviour, File Audit training, Mock Hearings, Therapeutic Play, Trauma Informed Practice and Working with Non-Engaging Families

The Multi-Agency Children's Services Learning and Development calendar will continue to be reviewed to ensure there is alignment with workforce needs and emerging issues and themes for practitioners.

BUDGET

The Committee is resourced annually through:

- A dedicated budget to meet the costs of the Lead Officer, along with essential running costs;
- A separate budget to meet the costs of the Independent Chair, including necessary travel costs;
- Resources in kind which are dedicated to support key activities e.g. Multi-agency Learning & Development events etc; and
- Resources in kind which all partner agencies make available to fulfil the functions of the EACPC e.g. contribution to multi-agency file audit etc

The following is a summary breakdown of the Child Protection Committee's budget and actual costs 2023/24.

	2021/22	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Salary costs	55,067.85	60,530.00	62,952.96	61,550.00	63,716.21	64,780
Committee Recurring Costs	10,587.63	10,929.00	14,160.25	12,010.00	18,478.95	10,920.00
NHS Contributions	-4,030.00	-4,030.00	-4,030.00	-4,030.00	-4,032.00	-4,030.00
Police Scotland Contributions	-8,248.00	-8,280.00	-8,248.00	-8,280.00	-8,282.00	-8,280.00
Net Cost	53,341.48	59,140.00	64,799.21	61,250.00	69,881.16	63,390.00
Expenditure Gross	65,655.48	71,450.00	77,113.21	73,560.00	82,195.16	75,700.00

Reviews of the CPC budget continue to ensure monies align with appropriate cost centres, in line with the changing requirements and Committee's projected needs.

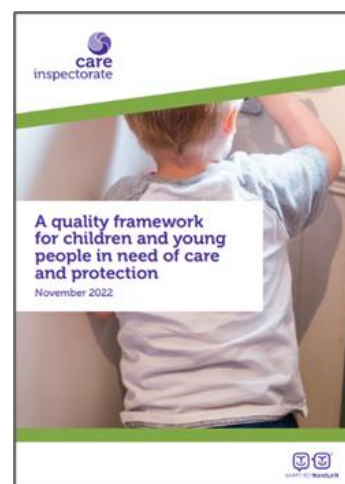
PRIORITIES FOR 2024-2025

Joint inspection of services for children and young people at risk of harm

East Ayrshire was notified on 16 September 2024 of a joint inspection of services for children and young people at risk of harm. At the time of writing, the Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and Healthcare Improvement Scotland are currently undertaking the joint inspection. The Care Inspectorate are evaluating our services against the ['Quality Framework for children and young people in need of care and protection'](#).

For this inspection, the Care Inspectorate are providing one evaluation. This is for quality indicator 2.1 which focuses on the impact on children and young people. This quality indicator, with reference to children at risk of harm, considers the extent to which children and young people:

- feel valued, loved, fulfilled and secure.
- feel listened to, understood and respected.
- experience sincere human contact and enduring relationships.
- get the best start in life.
- have improved life chances and feel their corporate parents have the highest aspirations for their futures.



The Care Inspectorate are due to publish their findings report in April 2025.

Implementation of Signs of Safety



In considering key areas of improvement, Signs of Safety was identified as a practice framework that would support professional's improve outcomes for infants, children and young people. A proposal to support the multi-agency implementation of Signs of Safety in East Ayrshire was presented to the CPC on 3 September 2024 and the COG on 1 October and was endorsed. The CPC will continue to oversee the implementation over the course of the next year.

Signs of Safety is an integrated framework for how to support infants, children and young people. It sets out the principles for practice; the disciplines for practitioners' application of the approach; provides a range of tools for assessment and planning, decision making and engaging infants, children young people and their families; and describes the processes through which the work is undertaken with infants, children, young people and their families. This practice returns child protection intervention to being the catalyst that initiates behaviour change by families.

Continued implementation of Bairns' Hoose

The Ayrshire Partnership Affiliate has taken a measured approach to their Bairns' Hoose vision. The Affiliate's commitment to secure funding concentrated on a staged and realistic approach to meeting Bairns' Hoose Standards over a period of time. The Affiliate is committed to concentrating on stages of implementation of Bairns' Hoose Standards, namely the focus on developing rights-based practice, child centred service, supporting the child's journey through care, protection, justice and recovery. The CPC will continue to oversee the implementation over the course of the next year.



APPENDIX 1 - MEMBERSHIP OF CPC 2023-2024

Member	Designation
Moira McKinnon	Independent Chair
Anna Carron	Children & Young Person's Counsellor, CVO (EA) Ltd
Irene Clark	East Ayrshire Advocacy Services
Suzanne Clark	Service Manager, Vibrant Communities, East Ayrshire Council
Anne-Marie Gallagher	Acting Senior Nurse Manager for Children's Services (East), NHS Ayrshire and Arran
Craig Donnelly	Local Authority Liaison Office, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Kirsty Fraser	Child Protection Lead Officer, East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Lyndsey Helen Frazer	Locality Reporter Manager, SCRA
Theresa Lyttle	Associate Nurse Director for Public Protection, NHS Ayrshire & Arran
Marion MacAulay	Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services, East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership/Chief Social Work Officer
Dale Meller	Senior Manager, Public Protection, East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Elaine O'Connell	Solicitor, East Ayrshire Council
Lisa Punton	Housing Services Manager, East Ayrshire Council
Kirsty Ramsay	Education Manager GIRFEC, East Ayrshire Council
Jane Simcox	Interim Senior Manager (Locality Services), EAHSCP
Peter Sharp	DCI, Police Scotland
Dalene Steele	Associate Nurse Director, NHS Ayrshire and Arran
Debbie Willett	Multi Agency Workforce Development Officer, East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Kathleen Winter	Child Health Commissioner, NHS Ayrshire and Arran
Siobhan Reid	Women and Children's Services, NHS Ayrshire and Arran
Jo Gibson	Head of Service, Wellbeing and Recovery, East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Martin Spence	Station Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Maureen Wylie	Care Inspectorate

APPENDIX 2 - CHILD PROTECTION DATA 2023-2024

Police Child Protection Referrals & Inter Agency Referral Discussions

Over the last year the number of Police CP concerns has continued to rise with an average of 111 referrals per quarter. When considering the last four quarters, Q4 (May - July 23/24) is noted to have been the highest proportion of Police CP concerns across the year.

When comparing the number of children subject to IRD, the figures demonstrate the start of a declining trend across the last four Quarters (Figure 1). When compared to figures from 20/21 it is noted figures have increased exponentially (Figure 2).

Both Figure 1 and Figure 2 demonstrate the overall number of IRDs undertaken, both within the last four Quarters and last four years, have remained relatively steady, suggesting that while Police CP referrals have increased, thresholds to convene an IRD are understood and shared across the tripartite multi-agency group.

Figure 1

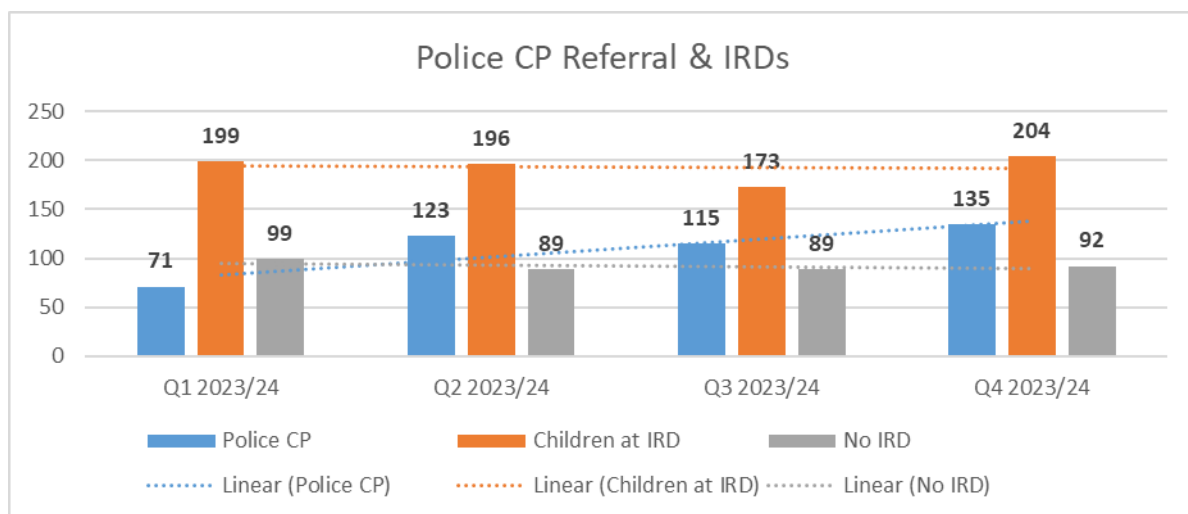
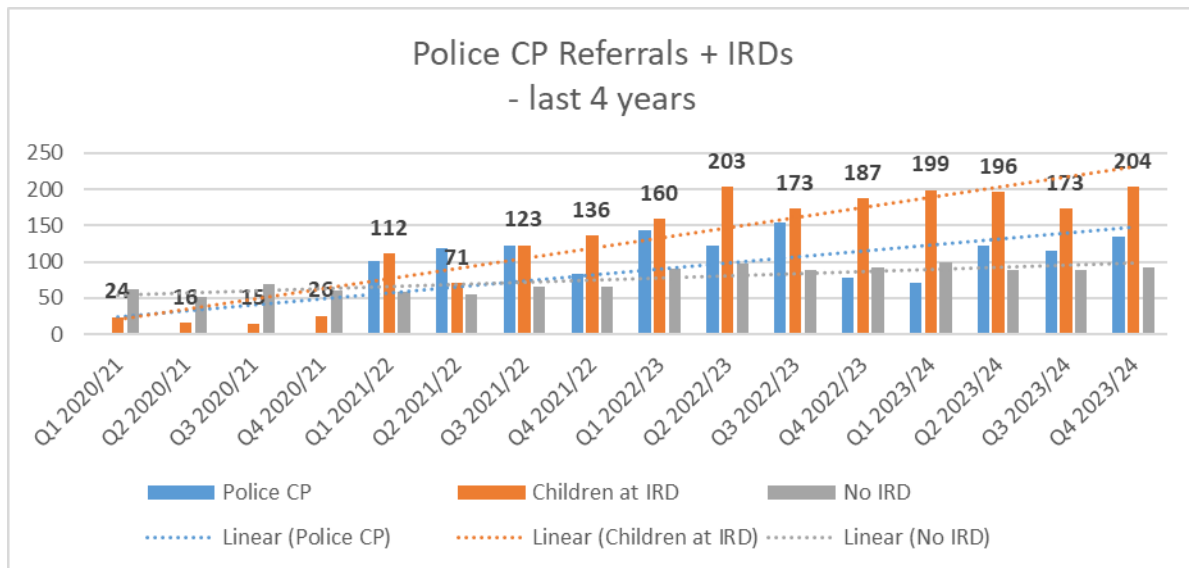


Figure 2

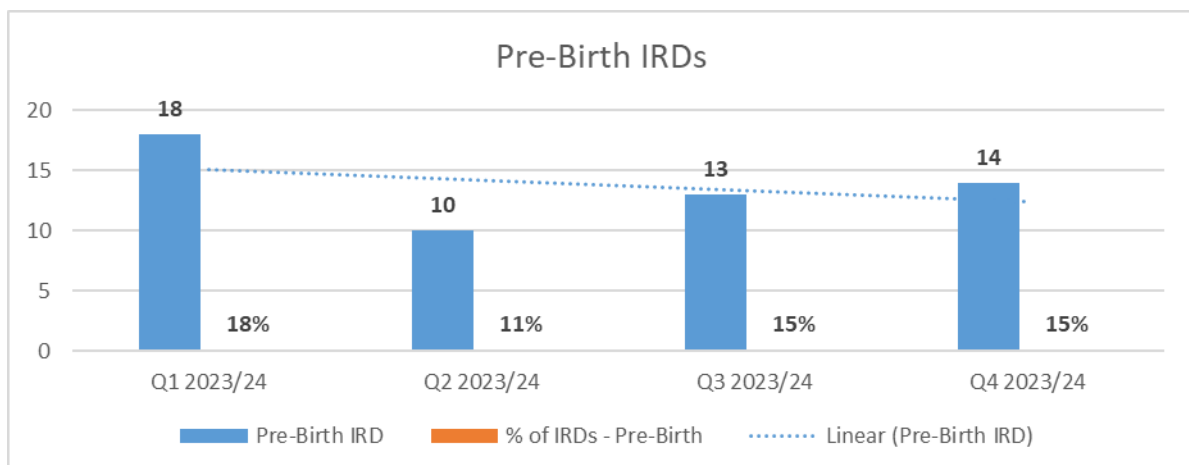


To note: The data captured does not include other routes of CP referral and work is underway to develop a data set and system/record configuration to begin to capture this to include with the CPC minimum data set moving forward into 2025, allowing for a fuller understanding of CP referrals across East Ayrshire.

Pre-Birth IRDs

There were 55 Pre-Birth IRDs undertaken across 2023/24, with the highest proportion taking place during Q1. When comparing the conversion numbers of Pre-Birth IRDs of total IRDs, the percentages remain relatively stable, with less than 20% of all IRDs across the reporting year being pre-birth child protection concerns.

Figure 3



IRD Evaluation Work

An IRD data analysis exercise, which took place Q2 23/24 (November 2023), considered 243 IRDs which were undertaken across the period of March 2023 – October 2024. The IRDs were categorised under 3 conclusions: CP Alert, No CP Alert

and Unknown Outcome. The exercise focused on forms which resulted in No CP alert (79 (33%)) and were then analysed further to produce the findings below.

Table 1

	No. of IRD Forms	Resulted in CP Alert		
		Unknown	Yes	No
North	125	23	51	51
South	118	50	40	28
Totals	243	73	91	79

The exercise noted of the overall 243 IRD forms sampled, 37% resulted in a CP Alert, 33% did not result in an alert and 30% were determined as Unknown. Except for one, all IRDs that were for an unborn child resulted in a CP Alert.

More than half of the children involved in the IRDs were part of families which were already known to Social Work (Figure 5). The most common Risk Indicators recorded in the IRD forms which did not result in a CP alert were physical, domestic, and sexual abuse. This raises a question to thresholds with consideration to the nature of recorded concerns and may require further exploration to provide assurance to the CPC that the multi-agency IRD group are providing decisions and direction where additional support is required when IRDs do not progress with CP processes.

Figure 5

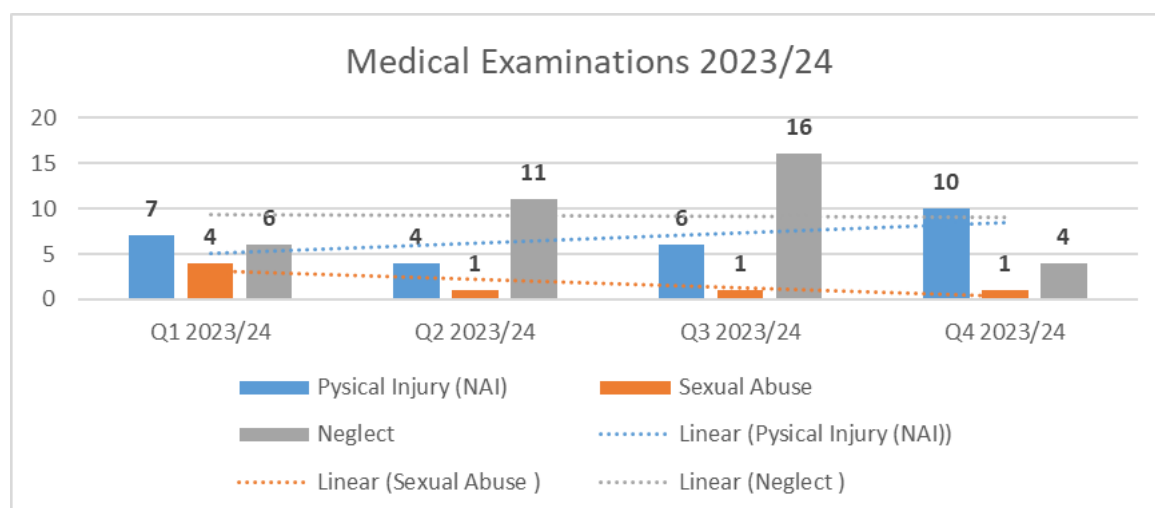


Of the 79 IRDs, where the outcome was not a CP Alert, the most common outcomes were Joint Investigative Interviews or Multi-Agency Assessments. There were fewer outcomes recorded (65) than the total sample (79) as some IRDs did not result in a further outcome being required, for example, if it was deemed that there was no clear role for Social Work, where it was deemed to be a Police matter only or sadly, if the child has passed away.

Medical Examinations

A total of 71 medical examinations were undertaken across 2023/24 with neglect being the predominant reason for medical examination. Figure 6 demonstrates while neglect (37) was the predominant reason for request of medical examination, there has been a slight decline across medical examinations for this category. Figures for sexual abuse, where at the highest proportion for Q1(6) 2023/24, are also following a downward trend. Figure 6 demonstrates physical injury (NAI) has followed an upward trend for 2023/24 with highest proportion of medical examinations for this category presenting during Q4 (May – July).

Figure 6



Joint Investigative Interviews

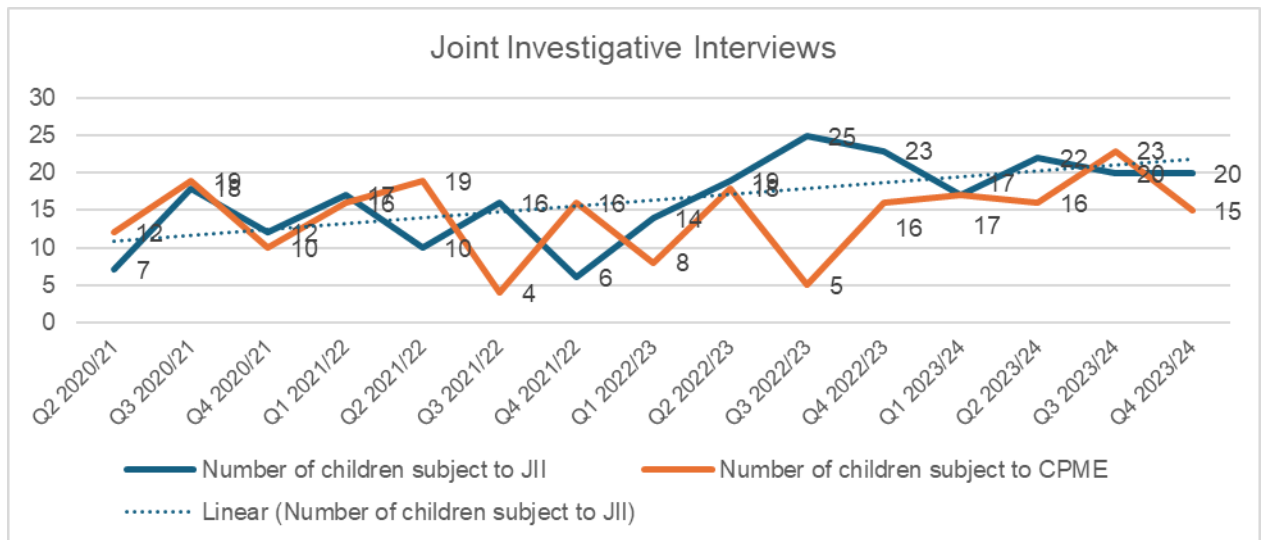
Joint Investigative Interviews continue to be completed by the Pan Ayrshire JII Team, hosted by East Ayrshire, using the Scottish Child Interview Model. The team was established in July 2022.

Across reporting period 2023/24, a total of 79 interviews were conducted with the highest proportion noted in Q2. With that being said, the graph below (Figure 7) demonstrates interview figures have remained steady across the reporting year.

When comparing figures across the last 4 years, Joint Investigative Interviews have continued to increase, demonstrating more children being provided the opportunity to provide a statement of their experience.

Further reporting on the work of the Pan Ayrshire JII Team shall be incorporated to EA Child Protection Committee minimum dataset moving forward into reporting period 2024/25.

Figure 7

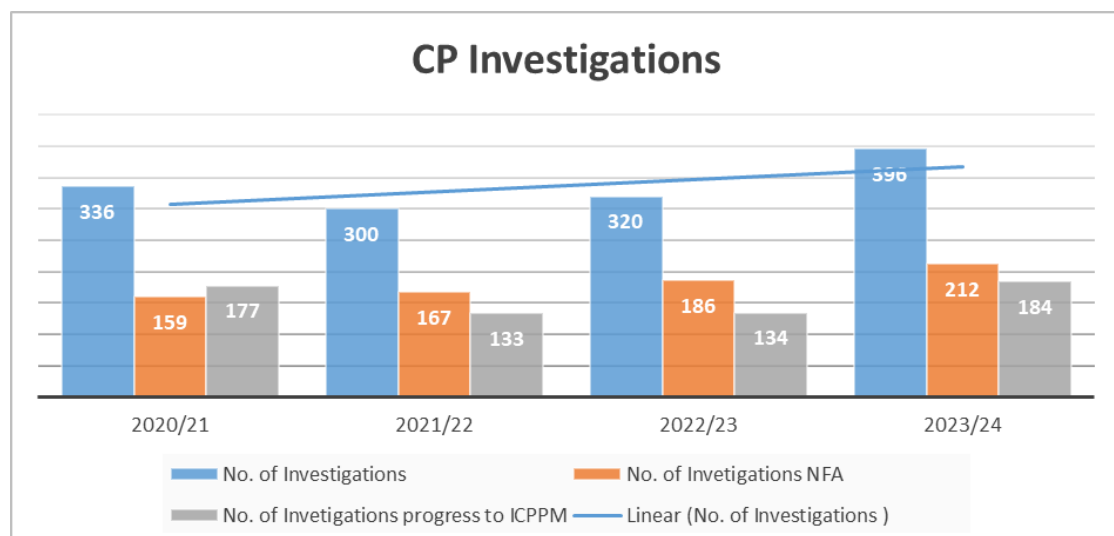


Child Protection Investigations

Reporting period 2023/24 demonstrated the highest number of child protection investigations undertaken across the last 4 years. While child protection investigation figures have increased across the last 4 years, the number of investigations progressing to Initial Child Protection Planning Meeting remain relatively steady.

Moving in to reporting period 2024/25, data on child protection investigations will be incorporated into the Child Protection Committees data report.

Figure 8



Initial & Pre-Birth Child Protection Planning Meetings

Figures show over the last four Quarters, the number of children subject to an Initial Child Protection Planning Meeting (CPPM) or Pre-Birth CPPM is increasing (Figure 9). Between reporting periods 2020/21–2022/23 figures followed national trends with a downward trend through the CP process. Reporting period 2023/24 however demonstrated an increase of CP concerns and investigations undertaken, no longer following national trends reported across other local authorities.

Much like Q2 for IRDs, the highest proportion of Initial CPPMs and number of children subject to a CPPM were noted for Q2 (Nov–Jan 23/24).

When considering conversion rates between CP referral, IRD to initial CPPM and CP registration, East Ayrshire returns have demonstrated a consistently low proportion of children follow through the process to registration in comparison to those subject to IRD. The IRD data exercise of November 2023 demonstrated approximately a third of IRDs progress through CP investigation. Analysis of figures of CP investigation which progressed to initial CPPM noted they are declining, with a higher proportion of CP investigation outcomes resulting in No Further Action (NFA). By this measure, a declining number of children who progress to Initial CPPM may indeed be proportionate to figures collated each quarter. A further exploration is required to provide the Committee with assurance of this and this will be progressed through the Performance and Quality Assurance Group.

Figure 9

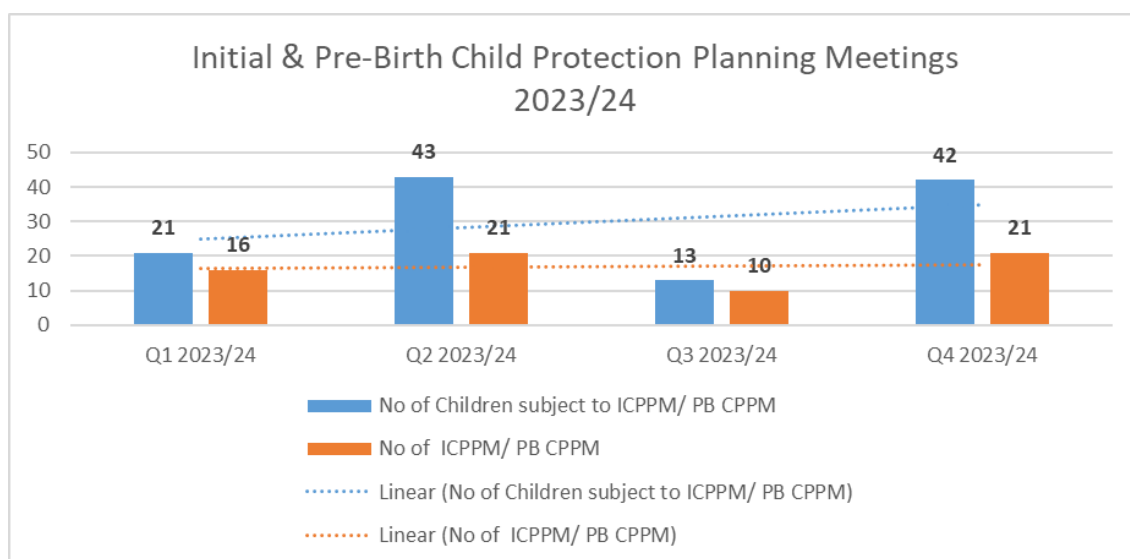
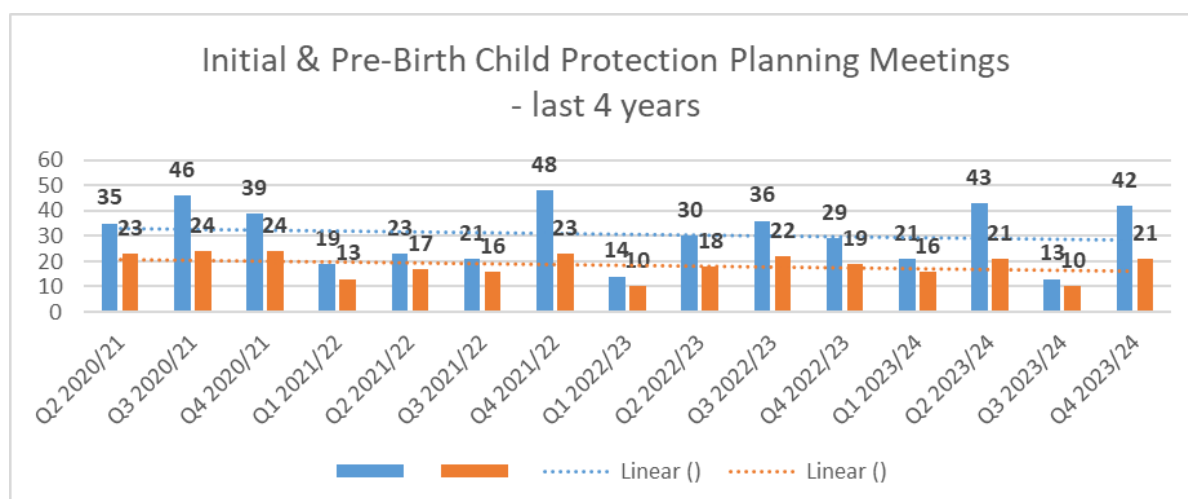


Figure 10



Child Protection Registration/ Deregistration

Child protection registrations have slowly risen across the past four Quarters, with noted spike in registrations across Q2 and Q4. Across the period of 2023/24, the number of children deregistered is noted to have declined. Figures for children on the child protection register have slowly increased but are relatively steady across the last four Quarters.

A comparison of figures to the last four years (Figure 11) demonstrates a gradual increase of the number of children on East Ayrshires CP register. With an upward trend now emerging for the number registrations. Figures for deregistration remain relatively steady.

When comparing data, consideration was given to the number of children who have been placed on the CP register for 12 months or more. Of the most updated CP

register figures (23 October 2024), there were 6 children's names (4 families) who have been on the register for 12+ months, of which 3 children (1 family) have been on the register for 20 months. The shortest period for CP registration has been for 3 children (2 families) of 10 weeks or less (south of the authority). Further analysis is required and will be progressed through the Performance and Quality Assurance Group.

Figure 11

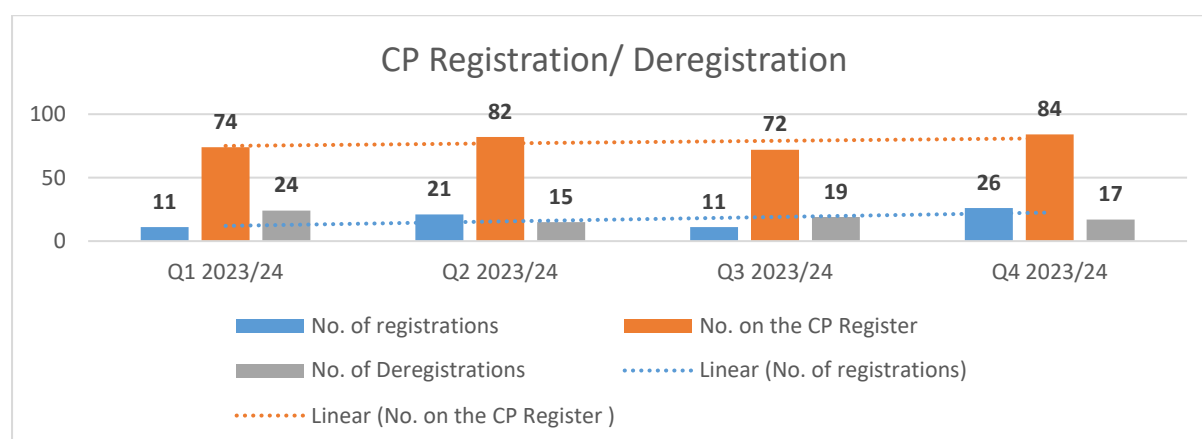
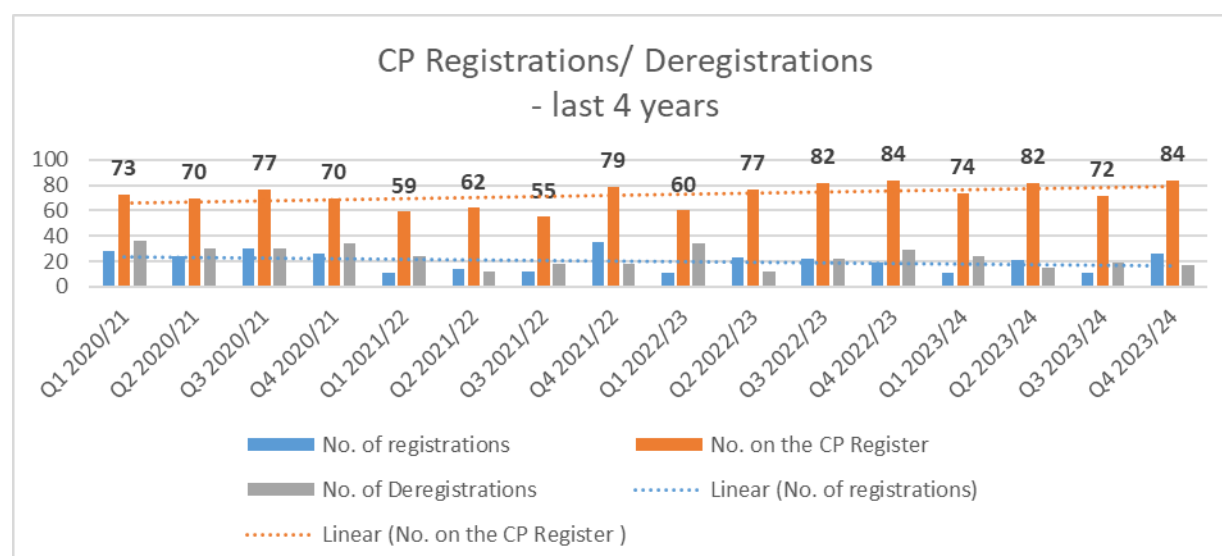


Figure 12



Age of Criminal Responsibility (ACRA) & Care and Risk Management (CARM)

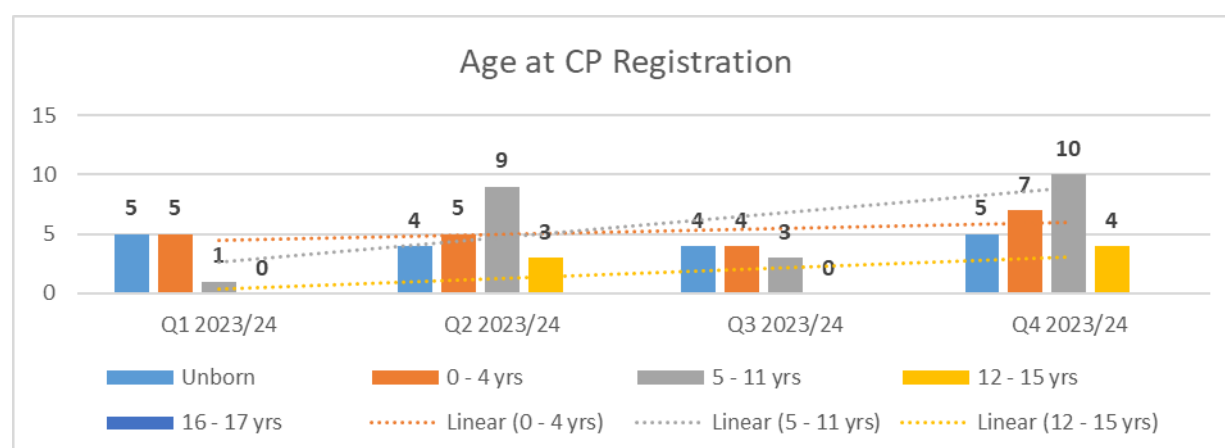
There have been no Age of Criminal Responsibility interagency referral discussions or interviews undertaken across reporting period 2023/24.

Across the last four Quarters, there have been 2 referrals per quarter noted within data reporting for 2023/24. While CARM figures are low, a file audit will be undertaken to understand decision making, planning and progress of support and risk management for EA young people who are supported via CARM.

Age at CP Registration

Figures demonstrate over the last four quarters, CP registrations for unborn children (pre-birth) are on a downward trend. Registrations for 0–4-year-old and 12–15-year-old are on a slow incline with most noted significant increase in registration for children aged 5–11-year-old. There were no registrations for 16–17-year-olds across the period 2023/24.

Figure 13



Concern Categories

Across reporting period 2023/24, domestic abuse (38) was the highest proportion of concerns leading to child protection registration followed by child affected by parent/carer mental health (34). Emotional abuse (25) and neglect (23) should also be highlighted.

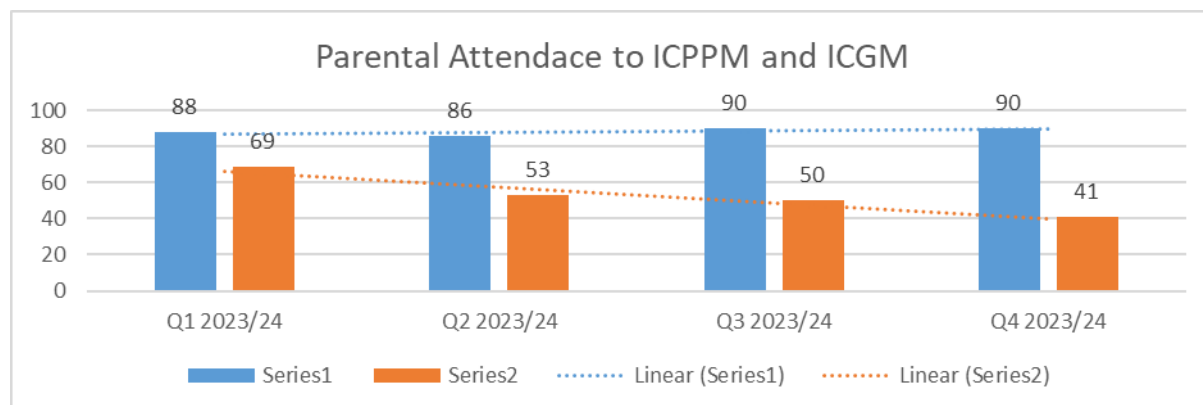
When considering categories of registration across the last four years, domestic abuse has remained the top category of child protection registration, followed by parental mental health and neglect.

Across the last 4 years there has been one registration for child sexual exploitation (Q2 2022/23) with lowest categories of child protection registration under child sexual abuse.

Parental Attendance to Initial Child Protection Planning Meetings and Initial Core Group Meetings

Figures for parent/carer attendance to initial child protection planning meetings (ICPPM) have slightly increased across 2023/24, with an average attendance of 88.5% across the reporting year. In comparison, initial core group meeting (ICGM) figures (Figure 14) show a decline in parent/carer attendance to meetings. This is an area of focus as the ICGM is utilised as the forum to develop the child protection plan. Low figures could suggest a lack of voice of the child and parents/carers within the development of plans, further supporting findings from November 2023 case file audit which considered the period of Nov 2021–Nov 2023.

Figure 14



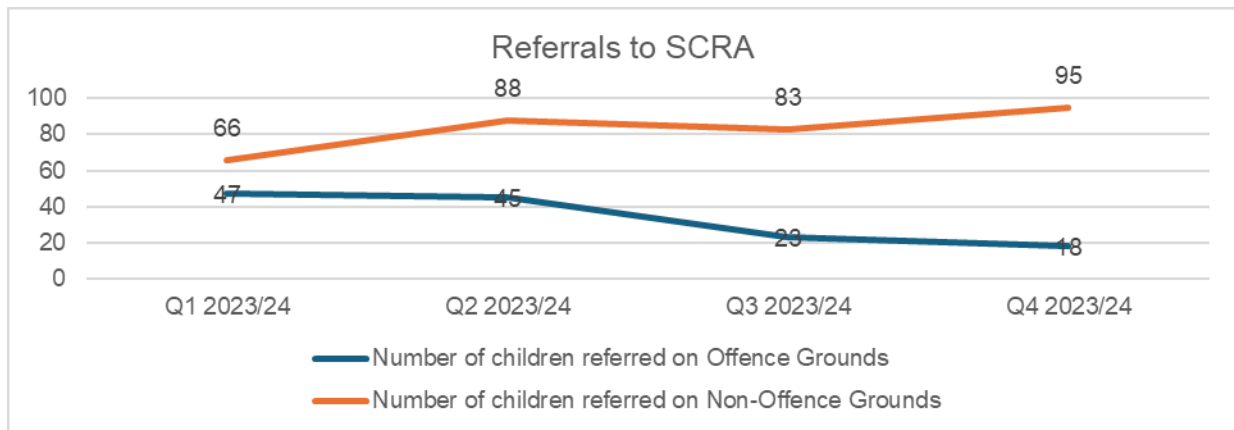
Scottish Children's Reporter Administration

Figure 15 below demonstrates the continued rise of referrals to the Children's Reporter for children on non-offence grounds. Q4 2023/34 had the highest proportion of referrals under this category than any other quarter across this reporting year. The following reasons were the top three categories for referral to the Children's Reporter during Q4:

- Lack of parental care
- Failure to attend school without reasonable excuse (highest number of referrals seen for this category across 2023/24 reporting period)
- Victim of schedule 1 offence closely followed by Close connection with person who has carried out domestic abuse.

Referrals to the Children's Reporter for offence grounds continue to fall with Q4 noting the lowest number of referrals for this category across 2023/24. Following a noted significant spike in referrals for this category during September 2023 which was explored by SCRA and Police Scotland Partners. Following this piece of work, a more rights-based, needs-led approach is being utilised with children/young people in conflict with the law.

Figure 15



APPENDIX 3 – CPC IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024/25



East Ayrshire Child Protection Improvement Plan 2024/25

Introduction

Child Protection Committees and Chief Officers have a responsibility to produce an annual report and improvement plan, as set out in the [Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities \(2019\)](#) guidance. The East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee (CPC) improvement plan covers the period from 1st August 2024 – 31st July 2025 and sets out our key priorities and improvement actions for over the next 12 months. This Plan has been developed in line with the Care Inspectorate's 2022 quality framework – [A Quality Framework for children and young people in need of care and protection](#) and is informed by a range of activity including Learning Reviews, case file audits, self-evaluation and local and national child protection data.

Our Role and Function

CPCs are the key local bodies for developing, implementing and improving child protection strategy across and between agencies, bodies and the local community. A CPC is expected to perform a number of crucial functions in order to jointly identify and manage risk to children and young people, monitor and improve performance and promote the ethos that “It’s everyone’s job to make sure I’m alright”. CPCs must ensure all of these functions are carried out to a high standard and are aligned to the local Getting It Right for Every Child arrangements¹.

¹ [Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities \(2019\)](#)

Core Functions of East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee:

Strategic Planning and Connections	Continuous Improvement	Public Engagement Participation	Information, and Annual Reporting
Ensure strong links to wider children's services planning arrangements.	Policies, procedures and guidance.	Raising public awareness and understanding of their role.	Produce and publish an annual report, setting out work undertaken by the Committee, endorsed by Chief Officers.
	Data and evidence.	Promoting role of services	Report on delivery of activity against key performance measures in each year.
Link effectively with other multi-agency partnerships and structures locally, regionally and nationally.	Quality assurance and self-evaluation.	Engaging with local communities.	Ensure reporting period aligns with the shared dataset reporting period (1 st August to 31 st July).
	Learning and development	Involving children, young people and their families.	
	Conducting Learning Reviews	Taking account of new and emerging risks.	Identify priorities for the year ahead.

A key function of the CPC is the regular programme of multi-agency audit, quality assurance, self-evaluation and review. The joint ownership and commitment of action leads reflected in this plan reinforces our ethos that we all have responsibility, individually and collectively, to protect children and young people who are at risk of harm within our communities, and we know collaboration, cooperation and a sense of community responsibility will achieve this.

Our Aim

The aim of the East Ayrshire's Child Protection Committee (CPC), and therefore of its improvement plan, is to ensure the children and young people of East Ayrshire remain safe and protected through providing organisational and public assurance about the effective operations of child protection key processes and leadership for child protection within East Ayrshire. The plan has oversight of core business functions whilst ensuring multi-agency partners are working towards the shared vision of the CPC and Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership: *"children and young people growing up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential"*

We are committed to continuous improvement to ensure that services are providing the best possible care and support to children, young people and their families. To support us to achieve this, we have aligned our improvement actions to the quality indicators set out in the Quality Framework for children and young people in need of care and protection.

Actions are set out across four of the six key questions posed in the framework:

- How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders? (QI 2-4)
- How good is our delivery of services for children, young people and families? (QI 5)
- How good is our operational management (QI 6-8))
- How good is our leadership? (QI 9)

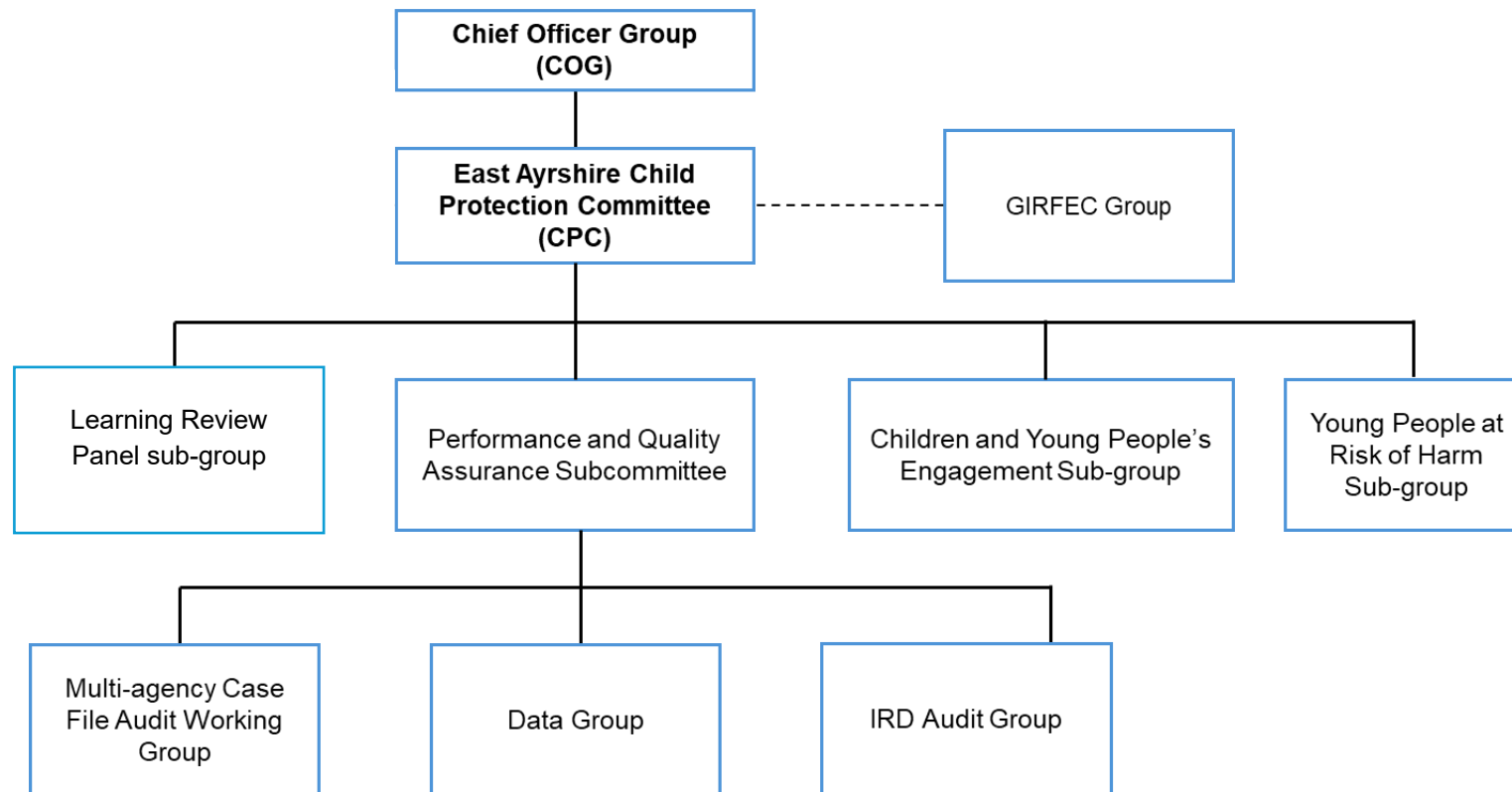
What key outcomes have we achieved?	How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?	How good is our delivery of services for children, young people and families?	How good is our operational management?	How good is our leadership?
1. Key performance outcomes	2. Impact on children, young people and families	5. Delivery of key processes	6. Policy, service development and legal measures	9. Leadership and direction
1.1 Improvements in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people.	2.1 Impact on children and young people. 2.2 Impact on families.	5.1 Recognition and response to initial concerns. 5.2 Assessing risk and need. 5.3 Care planning, managing risk and effective intervention. 5.4 Involving individual children, young people and families.	6.1 Policies, procedures and legal measures. 6.2 Planning and improving services. 6.3 Participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders. 6.4 Performance management and quality assurance. 6.5 Securing improvement through self-evaluation	9.1 Vision, values and aims. 9.2 Leadership of strategy and direction. 9.3 Leadership of people and partnerships. 9.4 Leadership of improvement and change.
	3. Impact on staff		7. Management and support to staff	
	3.1 Impact on staff		7.1 Recruitment, deployment and joint working. 7.2 Workforce development and support.	
	4. Impact on the community		8. Resources and capacity building	
	4.1 Impact on the community		8.1 Management of resources. 8.2 Commissioning arrangements.	
10: What is our capacity for improvement? Global judgement based on an evaluation of the framework of quality indicators				

The remaining quality indicators, 1 – key performance outcomes and 10 – capacity for improvement, will be captured through annual reporting and development of the annual improvement plan from 2024/25 onwards.

We will know that we have been successful in our aims by achieving the following outcomes:

- Our workforce is competent and confident in their collective roles to protect children and young people at risk of or affected by abuse, neglect, harm or exploitation.
- Procedures and guidance in relation to core child protection business and emerging priorities are evidence-based, up to date and accessible.
- The voice of children and young people is evident in decision making and policy and practice development.
- Families are supported to in a stigma-free, holistic way meet individual needs and fulfil children's right to be raised safely in their own families where possible.
- Local leadership is effective in driving improvements in child protection practice and
- Public information is available and easily accessible through a range of formats, and individuals and communities are aware of their role in supporting the protection of children and young people in East Ayrshire.
- Changes to policy and practice are evidence-based, monitored and evaluated to ensure improvements in the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Learning from improvement activity, including self-evaluation, auditing, learning reviews and local performance data informs priorities and service development.

Leadership and Governance



The Performance and Quality Assurance Sub-Committee of the CPC has oversight of this Improvement Plan, as part of its statutory function, through receiving and co-ordinating updates from action owners who have accountability for ensuring the actions are progressed through established improvement work that incorporates child protection. This will include establishing any short life working groups to focus on new or emerging trends or priorities. CPC will retain oversight of the Plan as part of their statutory function through receiving quarterly reports from the Chair. The plan will be managed and held on East Ayrshire Council's performance management system which will support regular progress updates and recording throughout the plan's lifecycle.

East Ayrshire Child Protection Improvement Action Plan 2024/25

1. HOW GOOD IS OUR OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
1.1	The CPC will engage with front-line staff, to demonstrate the supportive role of the CPC and hear directly from staff their perspectives on child protection.	You said/we did – evidencing front-line staff's voices are being heard Practitioner evaluations	Moir McKinnon Kirsty Fraser	May 2025	Date currently set however may have to change due to inspection (MM)		SE	7.2
1.2	Develop and disseminate Practice Standards alongside a catalogue of good practice examples	Auditing after guidance issued	Jane Simcox Kirsty Fraser Gillian Brown	February 2025	Draft circulating		MACFA LR-J4 LR-J10	6.1 2
1.3	Review single agency mandatory training and induction for all new practitioners with a clear focus on GIRFEC in practice.	Induction completion measured against number of new practitioners within set timescales. GIRFEC pre/post questionnaires, Assessment auditing following completion of programme Induction pathways	Debbie Willett (MA) Gillian Brown (SA) Kirsty Ramsay (Education) Stephen Palmer (Police) Anne Marie Gallagher	January 2025			MACFA LR-J2	6.4
1.4	Undertake Learning Needs Analysis with frontline staff and update training	CPC Learning needs analysis survey CPC minutes to identify response to	Debbie Willett	December 2025	MM - Survey developed and issued to all staff		MACFA LR-J7 LR-J3 LR-N	6.4

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
	calendar to reflect results.	findings and action taken						
1.5	Review multi-agency guidance for working with families where services find it difficult to engage and 'unseen children', in line with national child protection guidance, local practice and research.	Auditing Workforce feedback Children/families feedback	Jane Simcox	December 2024	NHS has single agency guidance (to be shared 04/11)		LR-J3 LR-J5 LR-J7 LR-N4	6.1
1.6	Refresh GIRFEC guidance and disseminate through updated multi-agency CP training and 7-minute briefings.	7-minute briefings	Jane Simcox Kirsty Fraser Kirsty Ramsay	July 2025	KR - 7 minute Briefings on AYRshare & Chronologies disseminated. 7 minute briefing on GIRFEC to be completed on GIRFEC by end of year.		MACFA LR-J2 LR-N2	6.1/ 6.2
1.7	Disseminate and implement national CP Guidance through updated multi-agency CP training and 7-minute briefings.	7-minute briefings Practitioner evaluations Case file audits	Jane Simcox Kirsty Fraser Kirsty Ramsay Debbie Willett Gillian Brown	July 2025	KR - 7 minute briefing on CP Guidance delivered to CP Co-ordinators in Education.		MACFA LR-J2	6.1/ 6.2
1.8	Ensure frontline staff have clarity and are comfortable using the agreed	Evidence in self-evaluation Evidence of tools being referenced in	Debbie Kirsty F Kirsty R Jane	June 2025	KR - The use of the national practice model for assessing		MACFA LR-J8	7.2

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
	assessments and tools.	minutes, SCRA reports etc.			wellbeing is embedded within the named person's practice in Education as are other appropriate tools.			
1.9	Review, evaluate and quality assure the effectiveness of the Inter-Agency Referral Discussions.	IRD Audit	Jane Simcox	February 2025	MM - IRD Audit group established and meets on quarterly basis to review QI IRD processes	100%	IRDA	6.4
1.10	Carry out a review of the children's social work services interface with that of legal services in East Ayrshire Child Protection practice, when seeking emergency legal orders.	Benchmarking Report to CPC on outcome of review.	Jane Simcox Craig Young	February 2025	MM - Meeting scheduled for Nov to discuss next steps		LR-N5	6.1
1.11	Review local practice in relation to child concern VPDs being shared with both social work service and education services.	Report to CPC on outcome of review.	Kirsty Fraser Kirsty Ramsay Stephen Palmer Anne Marie Gallagher	December 2025	KR - The police re-introduced the sharing of wellbeing concerns to the named person service in Education on the 14 th of October.		LR-J6	6.3
1.12	Home schooling policies and procedures to be reviewed to ensure	Report to CPC	Kirsty Ramsay	December 2024	KR - Changes to home schooling processes have been updated.	90%	LR-J11	6.3

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
	that potential risks are reflected in local child protection procedures and guidance.				Standard Circular 92, our local guidance on Home Schooling is being updated to be issued to staff in January			
1.13	In partnership with the Adult Protection Committee, develop a clear escalation policy and pathway for communicating concerns between each service.	Development of policy and pathway. Promotion to multi-agency workforce	Kirsty Fraser ASP Lead Officer	December 2024			MACFA LR-N2 LR-J1 LR-J10	6.1
1.14	Standards for supervision, in relation to case file discussions, to be agreed across all agencies and implemented across all teams, ensuring appropriate recording is taking place.	Case file audit	PQA chair – Marion MacAulay	June 2025			MACFA Sampling	6.4

2. HOW WELL DO WE MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR STAKEHOLDERS

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
2.1	Develop standards to ensure we seek the views of children and young people	Standards established	Chair of CYP Engagement Group - Suzanne Clark	April 2025	MM - Signs of Safety programme to begin rollout January 2025		MACFA Sampling	2

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
	experiencing the child protection process.	<p>Promotion of standards to workforce</p> <p>Increase the views of children and young people being recorded.</p> <p>Introduction of Signs of Safety</p>	Independent Advocacy Provider		following approval at October 2024 COG.			
2.2	Multi-agency CP training is available to all relevant i.e. non-children's services staff, to raise awareness.	<p>Learning Needs Assessment</p> <p>Training data</p> <p>Referral data</p> <p>Self-evaluation survey</p>	Debbie Willett	March 2025	<p>MM - Learning needs audit has been issued – process complete by end Dec 2024</p> <p>L&D to review current CPC training programme and update in light of audit findings</p>		SE	2, 3, 4
2.3	Each child and young person, going through child protection processes, is offered and referred to advocacy services to provide an independent representative to share the child's views and wishes.	<p>Independent advocacy support available for children and young people going through the child protection process.</p> <p>Increase in number of children and young people with advocacy representation at child protection meetings.</p>	Jane Simcox Clare Wilson	January 2025	Who Cares? are commissioned to provide advocacy to children and young people.	90%	MACFA	2.1 5.4

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
		<p>Increase in child's views being recorded.</p> <p>Advocacy reports submitted to CPC</p> <p>MA CFA</p>						
2.4	Parents/carers are offered and referred to advocacy services to provide an independent representative to share their views and wishes.	<p>Independent advocacy support available for parents and carers going through the child protection process.</p> <p>Increase in number of parents and carers with advocacy representation at child protection meetings.</p> <p>Increase in parents and carers views being recorded.</p> <p>MA CFA</p>	Jane Simcox	April 2025	MM - CPC to agree reporting structure by Jan 2025 for EA Advocacy to feedback on work with parents/carers.		MACFA	2.1
2.5	Improve support for young people transitioning to adult services or young people accessing services for the first time aged 16/17yrs old by developing Transition Planning Guidance.	<p>Guidance developed.</p> <p>Feedback from young people on their transition experience.</p>	Claire Wilson Kirsty Ramsay Dale Meller	June 2025			CPC	2.1

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
2.6	Develop supports for children who are particularly vulnerable as a result of parental mental health to ensure their needs are being met by all agencies.	Referral data	Jane Simcox Mairi Gribben	July 2025			LR-N3	2.1
2.7	Identify and agree on the assessments and tools used in East Ayrshire.	Staff evaluation Quality of assessments	Jane Simcox	February 2025			LR-J10	3.1
2.8	Review Multi-agency audit process and update in line with ASP processes and Care Inspectorate guidance.	Process developed. Feedback from Multi-Agency Casefile Audit Group.	Scott Campbell	December 2024	MM - Current inspection process will inform EA audit practice and processes in 2025. Meeting arranged for November to discuss modelling updated processes on the current process used by ASP.		MACFA	2
2.9	Joint training for children's and adult services staff is delivered on the impact of substance use, domestic abuse & parental mental ill health issues on children (Trigger Trio)	Number of training sessions. Evaluation of training. Number of attendees.	Debbie Willett Emma Guthrie Diane Langley Caroleann MacLellan	July 2025			LR-N3 IRDA	2.2

3. HOW GOOD IS OUR LEADERSHIP

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
3.1	Produce an annual CPC communications and engagement plan that supports key information/awareness raising campaigns, audit and self-evaluation activity.	Plan developed. Campaigns developed.	CPC Comms and Engagement Group chair – Suzanne Clark	March 2025			MACFA LR-J10 LR-J9 LR-J2	9.4
3.2	To continuously improve the knowledge of CPC members, alternate CPC meetings will include a learning and/or delivery in child protection topic relevant to improvement planning.	Feedback from CPC members. Self-evaluation of CPC. CPC minutes	Moira McKinnon	March 2025	MM - PQA will identify the theme as part of their programme planning and governance		CPC	9.3
3.3	Annual Half Day Development Sessions (or as requested by CPC) will be held for Committee and sub-group members to continuously improve the knowledge of CPC members.	Feedback from CPC members. Self-evaluation of CPC.	Moira McKinnon	May 2025	MM - Date for 2025 will be agreed in January 2025 and communicated to all CPC and Subgroup members		CPC	9.3/ 9.4
3.4	Emerging national issues in child protection, and care experienced community, will be shared and reported to CPC with proposals for responding to these.	CPC reports. Self-evaluation	Kirsty Fraser	July 2025	MM - CPC will be responsible for informing CPC of relevant national issues that have relevance to CPC members and multi-agency CP activity		LR-N2 CPC	9.2
3.5	Provide opportunities for shared learning, peer	Event sign-ups Event attendance	Moira McKinnon	December 2024	Proposal for Local Conversations		MACFA LR-J2	9.1

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
	support and sharing of good practice through a series of multi-agency practitioner engagement events.	Pre-post event questionnaires	Kirsty Fraser		focusing on Children going to December IJB Multi-Agency Events scheduled for October and November – first date cancelled due to lack of numbers (MM)			
3.6	Examine and quality assure the CPC Minimum Dataset to respond to emerging themes/issues.	Data Group quality assurance questions, data analysis	Lyndsey Frazer	March 2025	LF - CELCIS guidance pulled together in advance of first data group meeting – Jan 2025		Data	9.2

4. HOW GOOD IS THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
4.1	Multi-agency practice to be reviewed by all partners to ensure consistent thresholds for referrals/taking action where there are concerns for risk or harm to infants, children and young people	Minimum dataset/data analysis MA Case file audits	Marion MacAulay	April 2025			LR-J4	5.1
4.2	Establish a repeat referral and unallocated case work process to social work to ensure referrals are treated as an accumulation of concern	Process developed. Referral data analysis	Jane Simcox	January 2025			LR-J1	5.1 5.2 5.3

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
	based on all held information.							
4.3	Review and refresh current process for chronologies, ensuring all staff have accessed up-to-date training and guidance.	Process reviewed. Staff training. Quality of chronologies improved.	Jane Simcox Ann Marie McKenna Emma Guthrie Debbie Willett Kirsty Ramsay	January 2025			MACFA LR-J10	6.4
4.4	Current IT systems for delivering services will be evaluated to establish where improvements can be made to support practitioners in their respective roles.	Review undertaken. Improvement actions identified and progressed.	Kirsty Fraser	June 2025			LR-N1	6.4
4.5	Develop a single Child's Plan for all agencies.	Plan developed. Use of single Plan.	Jane Simcox Anne Marie Gallagher Kirsty Ramsay	July 2025 <i>(longer-term, will be continued into 2025/26)</i>			CPC	6.1 5.3
4.6	Agree consistent format of recording assessments and plans across Social Work teams.	Assessment/plan auditing	Jane Simcox	November 2024			MACFA LR-J4 LR-J10	5.3
4.7	The Young People at Risk of Harm Group continue to develop our approach to tackling child exploitation and complex themes of contextual safeguarding for the most vulnerable children and young people across East Ayrshire.	Casefile audit Quality of assessments YP@RH group action plan/minutes	Moria McKinnon	July 2025 (24 month plan in place)	MM - Action plan in place and regularly reviewed. Focus of work – creation of contextual MA safeguarding group, further exploitation training and development of guidance		LR-J9	5.2

#	ACTION	EVIDENCE	LEAD	TIMESCALES	UPDATES	% COMPLETE	SOURCE	QI
4.8	Develop multi-agency pre-birth pathway, pre-birth planning guidance and associated training.	Pathway developed Guidance developed Training delivered to multi-agency workforce. Casefile audit identifies improvement of pre-birth support	Kirsty Fraser Anne Murphy	April 2025	MM - Pan-Ayrshire guidance in draft, to be presented at November CPC for sign-off. Training to be developed and delivered		CPC	5.1 5.2 5.3

Sources that have informed actions:

- MACFA – Multi-agency Case File Audit
- LR – Learning Review: ‘J’ – J Children, ‘N’ – Child N - *Number notes finding of the learning review the action relates to*
- SE – Self-evaluation staff survey
- IRDA – Inter-agency Referral Discussion Audit
- Sampling – Random case sampling
- CPC – Child Protection Committee – carried over from previous plan
- Data – Minimum Dataset, National Data, local data captured via case recording etc.