

## **Briefing No.52 15 June 2016**

### **Improving Children's Services in Dumfries and Galloway**

#### **Outcomes from the National Strategic Leadership Summit on Child Protection**

Lillian Cringles, CSWO/Head of Children, Families and Criminal Justice Services attended the National Strategic Leadership Summit on Child Protection on 3 June. The summit was hosted by the Scottish Government's Director for General Learning & Justice Services and was attended by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport and the Deputy First Minister. The Summit brought together senior leaders from across Scotland who are responsible for working with the most vulnerable children to consider the leadership of Child Protection in the context of Getting it Right for Every Child.

At the summit, the Deputy First Minister announced that the Scottish Government would undertake a review of the current child protection system, to be completed by the end of this year.

The Scottish Government representatives acknowledged the recent press coverage regarding the death of a young child in Fife. The First Minister outlined the importance of the Named Person in helping to protect vulnerable children and confirmed that the Scottish Government would not be deviating from this policy.

It was confirmed at the summit that the Centre for Excellence for Looked after Children (CELCIS) have received additional funding to take forward aspects of the Improvement Programme. Particular attention was given to the difficulties surrounding the identification and response to Neglect and Child Sexual Abuse. Importance was placed on Significant Case Reviews and in creating the right environment to effectively learn lessons from them.

#### **What does this mean for Dumfries and Galloway?**

At the end of this year the review of the current child protection system will report its findings. The recommendations emanating from this review will impact on local policy and practice in Dumfries and Galloway.

The focus on neglect and the acknowledgement of the inherent difficulties with early identification and response to such cases presents a challenge. In Dumfries and Galloway we are currently in the process of introducing practice guidance and a toolkit to support staff. We will keep this under review to make sure the approach is effective.

Child Sexual Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) were highlighted as areas that are challenging. We now have a Practitioners Resource Pack and Supporting Local Guidance for CSE (see below) and we will ensure that we maintain a focus on supporting improvement in this key area.

### **New Chair of Early Years Strategic Group**

Joyce Reekie, Head of Midwifery has been appointed as Chair of the Early Years Strategic Group. The Early Years Group is one of our multi-agency strategic planning groups and focuses on early intervention and parenting.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

The ***Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Dumfries and Galloway: Barnardo's Practitioners Resource Pack and Supporting Local Guidance (May 2016)*** are now available on the [Child Protection Committee Resources page](#). These are for all practitioners and managers working with children, young people and their families within the **public, private and third sectors** across Dumfries and Galloway. Managers are asked to raise awareness of these documents and promote their discussion through team meetings.

They will help you

- identify signs and indicators,
- recognise vulnerabilities and risks,
- understand roles and responsibilities and
- know how to respond.

It is recommended that all practitioners and managers read the full Barnardo's Resource Pack, however you should as a minimum be alert to the signs and indicators described in the local guidance and know how to respond if you have concerns.

- **National awareness raising posters and leaflets** about CSE for parents of secondary school pupils will be issued shortly through schools and public access buildings across the region.
- **Training** on Child Sexual Exploitation is provided as part of the Children's Services Multi agency training calendar currently available on Dumfries and Galloway Council public website <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15963/Training>.
- **Multi agency guidance for staff on "sexting"** (images or videos, generated by children under the age of 18 or of children under 18 that are of a sexual nature) is currently in development. This should be complete by September 2016.

For further information on anything in this briefing please email  
[GIRFEC@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:GIRFEC@dumgal.gov.uk)

For GIRFEC resources, please use this link to the new webpage  
<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies> and select 'GIRFEC resources for practitioners':

**Children's Services Executive Group:**

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Lindsay Abrines, Locality Reporter Manager

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