

Multi-agency Practice Learning Session 'Getting it right for everyone'.

7 minute briefing



1 Background

Three sessions were held virtually on 23rd, 24th and 27th May 2022 attended by workers from partner agencies from Social Work; Health; Education and the Third Sector. Over 160 people took part.

Much has happened over the past two years and this opportunity allowed for updates on developments in Child Protection; the Learning Review, the Promise and the GIRFEC refresh. Another aim was to 'promote positive relationships through collaboration and mutual understanding'. An 'Appreciative Inquiry' (AI) approach was used. The model includes appreciating the best of what is; envisioning what might be; and designing what the ideal may look like.

2 GIRFEC

Each session was introduced by Alan Small, Chair of Falkirk's Child Protection Committee.

Group facilitators were instrumental in running the discussion sessions.

An overview of the GIRFEC refresh, values and principles was given by Gillian Millar, Children's Partnership Coordinator & GIRFEC Lead, Children's Services Falkirk; who noted that the refreshed guidance was due to be published at the end of the summer 2022.

Further information can be obtained from:-

[GIRFEC in Falkirk – Forth Valley Practitioner Pages \(glowscotland.org.uk\)](https://www.glowscotland.org.uk)

3 Child Protection

The work of the Child Protection Committee was explained by Sue Johnstone, Lead Officer Child Protection; Falkirk Child Protection Committee.

Important ambitions include:- having one multi-agency assessment at the right time; developing our workforce training and guidance policies and procedures; involving/collaborating more with children and families; identifying what we're good at and what we can still improve.

The Updated Child Protection Guidance which services need to comply with by September 2023 can be found at:-

[National guidance for child protection in Scotland 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

4 Group Exercise – AI

Pre-course reading explained the AI approach and the questions to be considered. Participants were moved into break out rooms with facilitators by Christine Brown, Training Manager SW, for discussion and to upload responses on to Mentimeter (www.menti.com).

Q1 asked participants for examples of effective multi-agency working they had been involved in – without being modest, a high point, a time when you felt positive and engaged.

Q2 asked about the core factors that lead to multi-agency working at its very best in Falkirk.

Q3 asked for 'Provocative Propositions' to take the 'ideal' way of multi-agency working forward.

5 Responses Q1 responses included:-

- During the pandemic everyone came together and worked well together.
- Professionals sharing their specialist knowledge with each other.
- Establishing good relationships.
- Early intervention from the team around the child leading to positive outcome.
- Interagency training.
- Honesty if disagreement occurs.
- Good communication and information sharing. Joint planning.
- Working alongside each other and with families to support children.

Q2 responses highlighted the above especially: communication; family at the centre; sharing information; joint decision making; knowledge of agency location and personnel; management support; manageable workloads; being curious, respectful & passionate.

6 Provocative Propositions (Q3)

Q3 examples included:-

'Getting it right sooner – finding ways to access supports when needed...'

'MA working is key, moving forward, easier access to sharing information to ensure we are having a positive impact...'

'Embracing different views within a team around a family...constructive ways to learn together ...to move forward'

'Better funded with a mix of experienced and newly qualified staff. Investment in community resources...'

'Communication to continue to improve. Child's Plan to implement change growth and enthusiasm...'

'Involving yp & families more in decision making about their own lives, options and choices...'

7 Your feedback from the session

What you enjoyed most:-

- Engagement with others, the group discussions in the break out rooms.
- Learning about other people's roles and their perspectives.
- You liked the AI approach which framed the discussion.

What you may do differently?

- Continue to value MA working.
- Engage with a wider range of services.

What next steps would help?

- Regular updates.
- How we can make more use of our time in meetings e.g. Solution Focused approaches.
- The integrated assessment framework/shared assessments.