



HIGHLAND CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2019 – 2022

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Preface by Chief Officers

The Highland Chief Officer Group is pleased to endorse Highland Child Protection Committee's Improvement Plan and priorities for 2019 – 2022. This reflects our direction to the CPC and our views based on the available various briefings and formal reports made available to us.

As Chief Officers we give a continued commitment and support to the work of the Committee, but acknowledge the particular challenges facing us all within the context of an ever changing child protection landscape, increasing demands and expectations of agencies alongside current financial restraint and uncertainties.

The Chief Officer's would also like to extend our thanks to staff and managers who deliver frontline services for children and families, and commend their professionalism, sensitivity and diligence in meeting the demands and responsibilities facing them within the restraints highlighted.

Foreword on behalf of the Highland Child Protection Committee

As Chair of Highland Child Protection Committee I am pleased on behalf of the Committee to present our Improvement Plan 2019–2022. The plan is based on desired outcomes from our 6 priority themes. We seek to achieve better preventative and protective measures for vulnerable children and better outcomes for those we aim to protect in the future. In support of its successful delivery we aim to continue to capture increasing levels of information on the outcomes being achieved for our most vulnerable children.

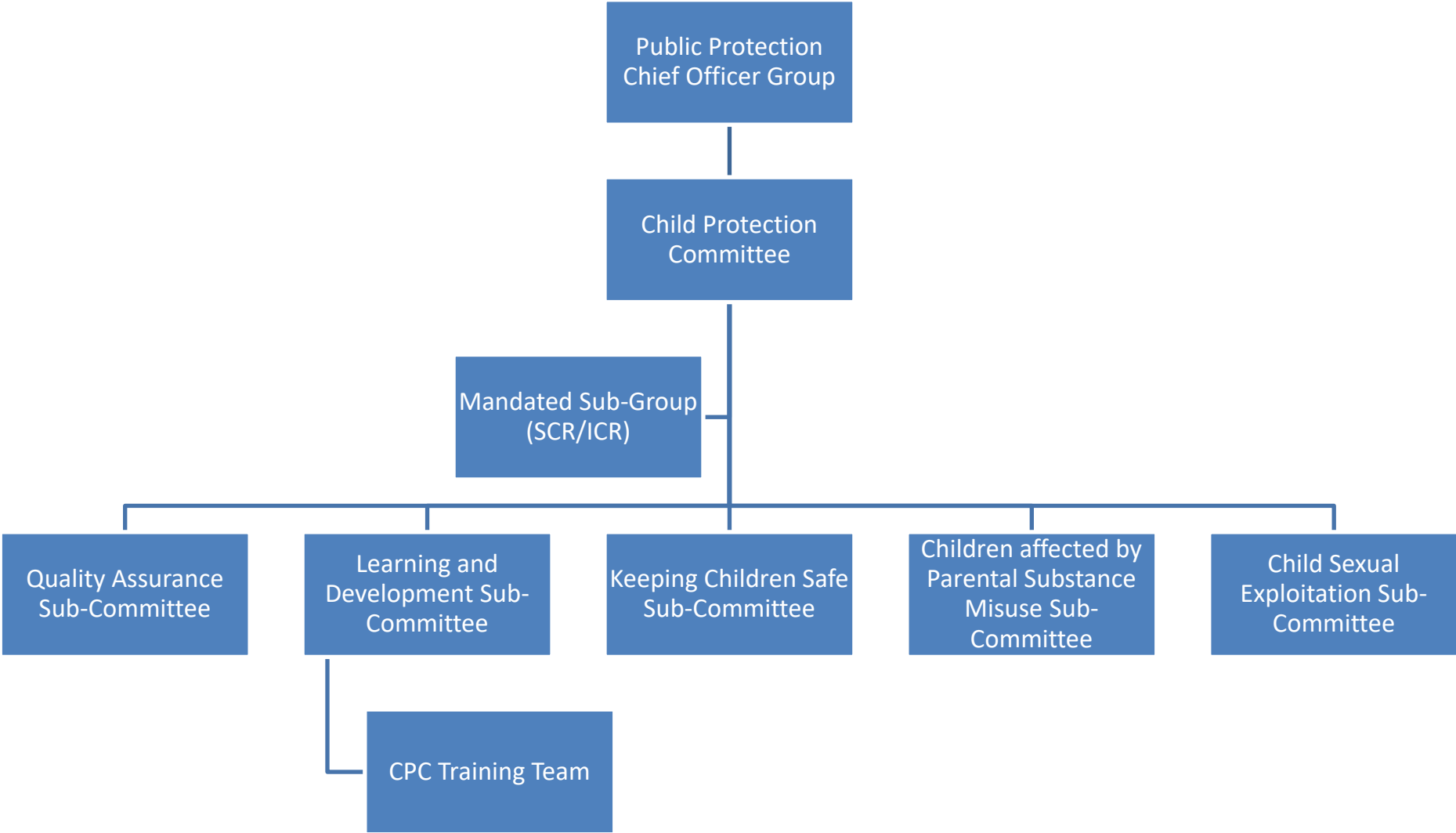
The proposed measurement of these outcomes has been carefully considered and demonstrates the application of *SMART criteria*:

- **Specific** – target a specific area for improvement
- **Measurable** – quantify or at least suggest an indicator of progress.
- **Achievable** – be able to specify who will do it.
- **Realistic** – state what results can realistically be achieved, with available resources
- **Time-limited** — specify when the result(s) can be achieved.

The Highland Child Protection Committee’s Improvement Plan 2016 to 2018 has been positively evaluated and the results show that we have delivered to expectation. A period of review and reflection has enabled the CPC to move forward to a position where we can now be more proactive and ambitious, developing and providing a range of tools and training to assist services in delivering effective support and interventions for children and families. With a robust Quality Assurance plan in place we can also identify and measure improvement across Highland.



Reporting Structure – Highland Child Protection Committee



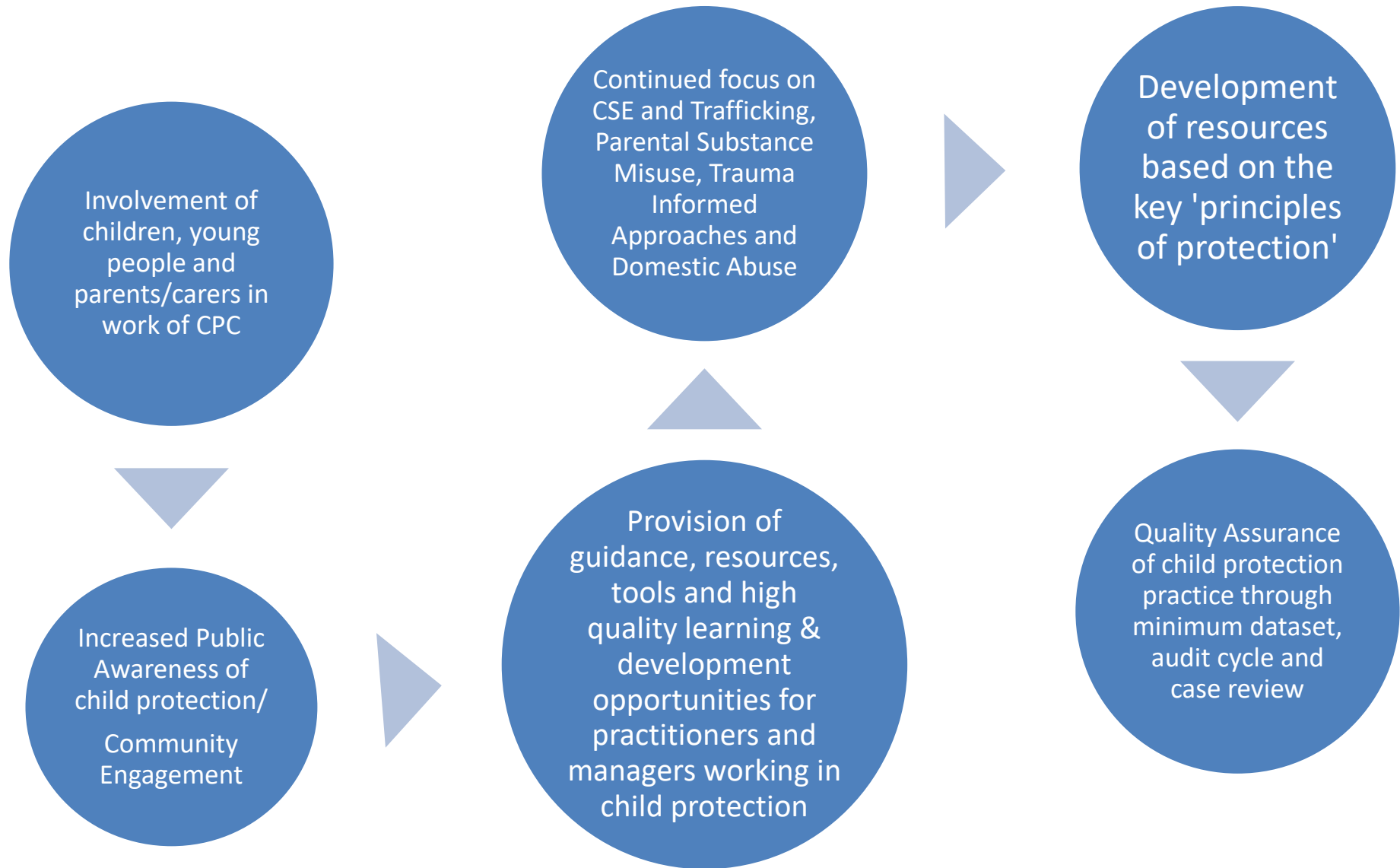
Strategic Planning – Child Protection Committee



Child Protection Committee Membership

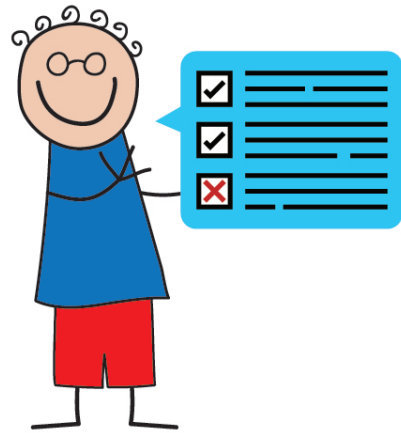


Priorities 2019-2022

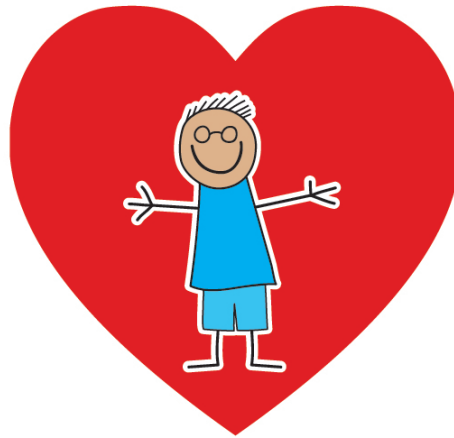


PRINCIPLES OF PROTECTION – CPC THEMES FOR GOOD PRACTICE IN CHILD PROTECTION

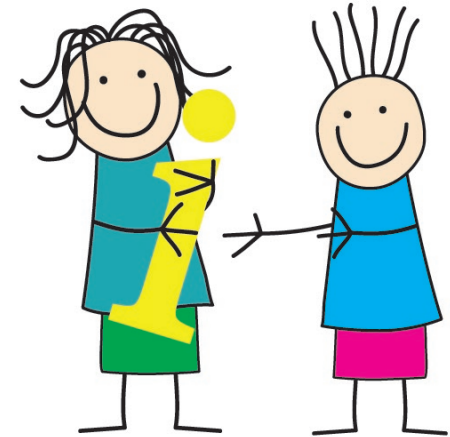
EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING



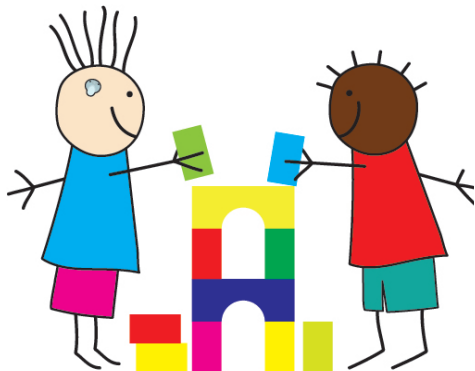
KEEPING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE



INFORMATION SHARING



BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS



TIMELY INTERVENTIONS



STRONG LEADERSHIP



For Highlands Children

Key Outcomes

The achievement of better outcomes for Highlands's children, their families and the communities in which they live is the overarching objective for children's services. The outcomes are designed to consider the ways in which;

- *Children and young people receive the help and support they need to optimise their well-being at every stage.*
- *Children and young people get the best start in life and enjoy positive, rewarding experiences growing up.*
- *Children and young people benefit from clear protocols, procedures and effective systems for recording observations and concerns which take account of best practice in information-sharing.*

The outcomes relate to the impact of services on the well-being of children and young people using the SHANARRI indicators. It focuses on their experiences and the extent to which their lives and life opportunities will be enhanced to ensure they are;

- Safe
- Healthy
- Achieving
- Nurtured
- Active
- Respected and Responsible
- Included

The Highland Child Protection Committee is committed to supporting these outcomes in the following ways:

Safe

1. Children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.
2. Children are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves safe.
3. Young people and families live in increasingly safer communities where anti-social and harmful behaviour is reducing.

Highland CPC Improvement Plan 2019-2022

FHC Outcome: Children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community				
Improvement Priority: Children and young people are at the centre of child protection practice, policy development, prevention and intervention initiatives across Highland				
CPC Theme(s): The needs of children are at the centre of all practice (QI 4.1)				
Needs assessment				
<p>UNCRC Article 3 (best interests of the child) requires we work to ensure the best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect them. The 2018 Analysis of Case Reviews report identified a tendency for child’s plans to focus on parental issues rather than child’s needs particularly in cases where there are factors such as domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and/or mental ill-health. The views of children and young people should also be clearly evidenced within child’s plans and staff should be supported to establish these views regardless of age and stage of development. The Child Protection Committee (CPC) has invested in Viewpoint to help practitioners capture the views of children in planning and review processes.</p> <p>UNCRC Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) determines that every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. The Care Inspectorate’s ‘Review of Findings Joint Inspection services for children and young people 2012-17’ also discusses the need to include children and young people in the design and delivery of child protection initiatives. Highland CPC is committed to taking forward this work and is currently pursuing opportunities to engage with children and young people and their families effectively.</p>				
Actions	Lead	Timescale	Measures/Evaluation	BRAG
All children of school age (with capacity to do so) due for child protection plan review will be offered the opportunity to complete Viewpoint questionnaire (or other suitable method) to ensure their views are sought and recorded	Katrina Beaton, Principal Officer (Social Care)	April 2019	% of viewpoint questionnaires completed Feedback collated	

Deliver master class in relation to child protection and children with disabilities for practitioners to highlight potential vulnerabilities and risks for children and families	Learning & Development Sub-Committee	June 2020	Master class delivered No. of participants Participant feedback	
Develop a Young People's Sub-Committee to co-ordinate the participation of young people in the work of the CPC	James Martin Gillian Pincock Donna Munro	July 2020	Young People's Sub-Committee established and meeting regularly Young People's Sub-Committee Improvement Plan	
Work with CALA and Safe, Strong and Free to create test resource for seeking the views of very young children/children with limited communication	Keeping Children Safe Sub-Committee	Oct 2019	Resources developed and tested Feedback from children and families	
Work with UHI Visual Communication and Design Degree students to develop awareness/ educational resources relating to relationships/CSE	Lead Officer with SLWG	May 2020	Resources developed and available through www.hcpc.scot Feedback from young people and parents/carers	

FHC Outcome: Children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community				
Improvement Priority: Practitioners are encouraged and supported to build effective relationships with parents/carers in child protection practice				
CPC Theme(s): Relationships with parents/carers are effective, constructive and central to improving wellbeing and minimising risk of harm (QI 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 5.4)				
<p>UNCRC Article 5 requires that Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up, so that they fully enjoy their rights. This must be done in a way that recognises the child’s increasing capacity to make their own choices. In Child Protection practice it can be challenging to maintain effective relationships with parents/carers under stressful circumstances. However, UNCRC Article 18 (parental responsibilities and state assistance) also states that ‘Governments must support parents by creating support services for children and giving parents the help they need to raise their children’. Significant Case Reviews have also highlighted the importance of developing effective relationships with parents/carers with the ability to support and/or challenge parents/carers particularly in cases where parental behaviour contributes to the risk of harm.</p> <p>Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect) states that Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them. The Analysis of Case Reviews report 2018 found that practitioners need to be able to identify and respond to signs of non/disguised compliance and practice with respectful uncertainty. This can be achieved and acted upon effectively where constructive relationships with parents/carers are developed. Practitioners also need to take cognisance of the age, ethnicity and history of parents/carers in order to develop plans which are realistic, achievable and effective. The 7 minute briefing model has been successfully used in Fife to provide short inputs to staff groups. In 2018/19 Highland CPC tested the model using two Significant Case Reviews and this has been received positively by staff and managers within key statutory and third sector organisations.</p>				
Actions	Lead	Timescale	Measures/Evaluation	BRAG
Develop prompt cards for staff based on principles of protection themes – aide memoires	Lead Officer	Sept 2019	No. of cards disseminated Staff feedback re: effectiveness	

Develop and disseminate 7 minute briefing paper on respectful uncertainty to help staff challenge presenting behaviour and identify over optimism in practice	Quality Assurance Sub-Committee	April 2019	No. of briefing session delivered Feedback forms received	
Deliver training and refresher sessions on Graded Care Profile to highlight strengths based approach and help parents make sense of levels of risk and need	Learning & Development Sub-Committee	Aug 2019	No. of participants attending training	
Identify methods for consulting with parents and carers about their experiences of child protection processes	Quality Assurance Sub-Committee	Nov 2019	Report for CPC	
Include disguised/non-compliance in child protection training	Learning & Development Sub-Committee	June 2019	Disguised/Non-Compliance included in training materials	
Audit child's plans and supervision records to evidence parent/carer views are sought and recorded effectively	Quality Assurance Sub-Committee	Nov 2020	QA Improvement Plan/Audit Reports	
Include parents/carers in Community engagement strategy to encourage early sharing of child protection concerns and awareness of child protection issues	James Martin, High Life Highland with SLWG	December 2019	Strategy and Plan developed with SMART targets	

FHC Outcome: Children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community				
Improvement Priority: Practitioners, managers and communities are supported to identify, share and respond to concerns about children promptly and effectively				
CPC Theme(s): Effective and timely intervention minimises the risks to children and young people (QI 5.1, 5.2, 5.3)				
Needs assessment				
<p>UNCRC Article 9 (separation from parents) states that Children must not be separated from their parents against their will unless it is in their best interests (for example, if a parent is hurting or neglecting a child). Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this could cause them harm. UNCRC Article 20 (children unable to live with their family) also states that if a child cannot be looked after by their immediate family, the government must give them special protection and assistance. This includes making sure the child is provided with alternative care that is continuous and respects the child’s culture, language and religion. Child Protection work is often complex with practitioners and managers having to make decisions with limited time and information available.</p> <p>The 2018 Analysis of Case Reviews report highlighted the necessity for effective and timely intervention to minimise risks to children. Significant Case Reviews have demonstrated that ‘drift’ particularly in cases of neglect and parental substance misuse can have severe consequences for children and young people. Likewise, in Reviews people within the local community have been aware of the risks posed to the child but were unwilling and/or unable to report these. Work undertaken with High Life Highland to increase staff knowledge and confidence in relation to child protection issues has resulted in better working relationships with Police Scotland and local Social Work teams with more appropriate sharing of concerns about children using High Life facilities and services. The CPC would want to use this model to engage with Community Partnerships and local communities to encourage and support people who may have concerns about children and young people.</p>				
Actions	Lead	Timescale	Measures/Evaluation	BRAG
Community Engagement Strategy and Plan to be developed to raise awareness of child protection in local communities and encourage communities to report concerns	James Martin, High Life Highland with SLWG	December 2019	Strategy and Plan developed with SMART targets	

Updated Initial Referral Discussion (IRD) process to be disseminated to Family Teams and reviewed after 1 year	Quality Assurance Sub-Committee	June 2020	Audit of IRDs undertaken in 2019/20	
Develop a suite of recommended resources for use with young people in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation	Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Committee	Nov 2019	List of resources produced and made available through www.hcpc.scot	
Develop and deliver training on Child Sexual Exploitation for residential staff, front line practitioners and community groups (including night time economy)	Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Committee	June 2020	CSE Improvement Plan No. of people receiving training Feedback from participants	
Launch updated Highland Underage Sex Protocol to include information regarding online behaviours	Jennifer Baughan/Dan Jenkins	July 2019	Website data – no. of pages viewed Practitioner feedback	
CPC will develop a dataset based on the national minimum dataset to keep Chief Officers, Managers and Practitioners informed of patterns and trends relating to child protection in Highland	Quality Assurance Sub-Committee	Oct 2019	Dataset established with system for collection and collation established Quarterly reports considered at QA Sub-Committee Formal reporting and consideration of dataset at CPC	

FHC Outcome: Children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community				
Improvement Priority: CPC will promote effective information sharing with children, young people and families, within agencies and across the partnership				
CPC Theme(s): Relevant information is shared appropriately, clear lines of responsibility for action are understood across partners and communication is effective in minimising potential risks (QI 1.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1)				
Needs assessment				
<p>The majority of case reviews highlight flaws or gaps in information sharing within and between agencies. In Highland’s Analysis of Case Reviews 2018, Dr Vincent acknowledged strengths in relation to appropriate information sharing across Highland, particularly in relation to child protection concerns. However, the length of time taken to share information was highlighted, along with a reluctance to retain some ownership of the concerns once shared, and a lack of feedback and further discussion between agencies. The need for integrated chronologies which clearly identify significant life events is also highlighted within the ‘Analysis of Case Reviews’ report and the Care Inspectorate’s ‘Review of Findings Joint Inspection services for children and young people 2012-17’</p>				
Actions	Lead	Timescale	Measures/Evaluation	BRAG
Disseminate information about chronologies e-module and monitor feedback	Learning and Development Sub-Committee	March 2020	No. of participants undertaking e-module Quality of chronologies	
CPC Website to be further developed to include a practitioner log-in area containing policy and guidance documents, research papers, training materials and resources	Lead Officer/Chairs of Sub-Committees	Sept 2019	Website updated with practitioner area available No. of subscribers Website data – pages visited, number of views	

Deliver training in relation to Trafficking and the National Referral Mechanism to ensure timely sharing of concerns	Learning & Development Sub-Committee	Dec 2019	Learning and development Improvement Plan/No. of staff attending training	
Update local trafficking protocol to ensure practitioners and managers are clear how to share information in relation to trafficking concerns	CSE Sub-Committee	Sept 2019	Protocol updated and available on www.hcpc.scot	
Develop local guidance in relation to missing children	Multi Agency Missing Children review group	Oct 2019	Guidance document provides detail of governance, reporting and quality assurance of missing incidents – available on www.hcpc.scot Children Missing from Education guidance developed and disseminated	
Provide support to CAPSM Co-ordinator to shape work plan and consider recommendations	CAPSM Sub-Committee	March 2020	CAPSM Co-ordinator appointed and reporting to CAPSM Sub-Committee CAPSM Improvement Plan	

FHC Outcome: Children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community

Improvement Priority: Practitioners are supported to develop effective child protection plans

CPC Theme(s): Child protection plans are effective in achieving outcomes to meet needs and minimise risk of harm, and all available resources, techniques and tools are used to best effect (QI 1.1, 2.1, 5.1)

Needs assessment

UNCRC Article 6 (life, survival and development) states that every child has the right to life and Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential. UNCRC Article 27 (adequate standard of living) also states that every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development. In keeping with the ethos of the Highland Practice Model agencies and practitioners must work together with families to ensure that children receive the right help at the right time in order to promote the best possible outcomes.

Care Inspectorate’s ‘Review of Findings Joint Inspection services for children and young people 2012-17’ discusses the need for improvements in early intervention and in particular, recognising early signs of neglect. The review also discusses the complexity of issues involving the behaviours of adults such as parental substance misuse and domestic abuse, along with cases of neglect where risks are cumulative. The CPC Dataset evidences that Neglect, Domestic Abuse and Substance Misuse remain the three highest risk indicators in child protection registrations across Highland. Child protection plans are required to have clear goals, outcomes and actions in order to reduce or minimise risk of harm and practitioners require support to develop effective plans which can lead to improved outcomes for children. In order to assist with assessment and planning processes, Highland CPC have developed a number of tools and invested in the Graded Care Profile to help practitioners measure care given to children and young people. These now need to be embedded in practice across Highland, underpinned by a trauma informed approach and with clear mechanisms for reviewing the effectiveness of practice.

Actions	Lead	Timescale	Measures/Evaluation	BRAG
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Quality Assurance Sub-Committee will review a proportion of Child's Plans to determine if they are evidenced based and provide a clear analysis of areas of strengths, risk, need and concern, including cumulative concerns and the potential impact they may have on the child.	Quality Assurance Sub-Committee	March 2020	Multi-agency file audit and single agency file audits evidence good or improving practice	
Advanced training on Assessment and Analysis/Direct Work with Families to be developed	Learning & Development Sub-Committee	March 2020	Training materials developed No. of staff attending training	
Set up quarterly monitoring system to measure use of Graded Care Profile across Highland for reporting to CPC	Katrina Beaton, Principal Officer (Social Care)	Aug 2019	No. of staff receiving training No. of GCP2 assessments completed	
Substance Misuse Practitioner Toolkit to be rolled out to teams across Highland	CAPSM Sub-Committee	Dec 2020	Feedback from practitioners	
Develop advanced e-module on Child's Plans	Highland Practice Model Improvement Group	Dec 2019	No. of completed modules Participant feedback QA Audits of child's plans – is quality improving?	
Develop resources and training for practitioners in relation to domestic abuse based on the Safe and Together model	Quality Assurance Sub-Committee with Violence Against Women Partnership	Dec 2019	No. of staff trained Resources available Feedback from practitioners	
Undertake literature review of Recovery services (sexual abuse and exploitation) and develop report with recommendations for effective Recovery services in Highland	CSE Sub-Committee	Nov 2019	CSE Improvement Plan/Report presented to CPC	

FHC Outcome: Children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community

Improvement Priority: CPC should evidence clear leadership, delivery of high quality learning and development opportunities and scrutiny of child protection practice across Highland

CPC Theme(s): A culture of effective leadership, management, support and supervision is embedded in child protection work across Highland and in the principles of Highland Child Protection Committee (QI 3.1, 7.2, 9.1)

Needs assessment

UNCRC Article 17 states that every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them. CPC have a role to play in ensuring information available for children and families in statutory, third sector and community settings is appropriately monitored and challenged where concerns arise.

The Care Inspectorate Review of Inspections 2012-2017 identified leadership as a key measure of child protection practice within local areas. The Public Protection Chief Officer Group was established in 2018 to consider child protection alongside public protection themes within Violence Against Women, Criminal Justice, MAPPA and Adult Support and Protection. The CPC is responsible for the scrutiny of child protection practice in Highland and required to consider child protection data, quality of practice across the partnership and the provision of effective learning and development opportunities for practitioners and managers working with children, young people and families. CPC is required to report to Chief Officers on a quarterly basis as well as keeping them informed of findings from Significant or Initial Case Reviews in regards to individual children.

Actions	Lead	Timescale	Measures/Evaluation	BRAG
Staff and managers will receive updated information regarding core and additional child protection training available and recommended for staff groups across Highland	Donna Munro	Sept 2019	Training Leaflet for Staff and Managers updated and re-issued through all member agencies Training statistics – attendance	

Chief Officers will receive regular written feedback about key child protection issues affecting children & young people, staff, agencies and communities in Highland	Chair	June 2019	Reports to Public Protection Chief Officer Group	
CPC will review ICR/SCR action plan quarterly to ensure agencies are accountable for actions arising from local case reviews	Chair/Lead Officer	March 2020	ICR/SCR Action Plan updates and reporting	
In 2019/20, 3 newsletters will be produced to keep practitioners and communities informed about child protection practice in Highland and nationally	Lead Officer	March 2020	CPC Newsletter	
Staff will have access to core child protection training across Highland appropriate to their roles and responsibilities	Learning and Development Sub-Committee	June 2019	Training Calendar available on www.hcpc.scot No. of Training Places offered Training Figures reported to CPC/Annual Report 4 x Master Class sessions delivered Places taken up Evaluation reports	
A minimum of 4 x 7 minute briefings will be developed to support team meetings and reflective discussions on a range of child protection issues	Quality Assurance Sub-Committee	March 2020	7 minute briefings developed Feedback from staff groups Summary reports	
CPC Training Team will deliver a minimum of 4 master class sessions in 2019/20	Learning and Development Sub-Committee	May 2020	Master class sessions delivered Feedback from attendees	

Updated Child Protection Guidance to be disseminated to staff and made available on CPC website	Lead Officer/Nominated CPC Leads	July 2019	No. of staff receiving link to Guidance No. of views on www.hcpc.scot Feedback from practitioners	
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Abbreviations

CALA	Care and Learning Alliance
CAPSM	Children affected by Parental Substance Misuse
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
FHC	For Highland's Children
GCP2	Graded Care Profile 2
ICR	Initial Case Review
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
QA	Quality Assurance
SCR	Significant Case Review
SMART	Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Timescales
SLWG	Short Life Working Group to take forward a specific piece of work
UHI	University of Highlands and Islands
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Glossary of Terms

Sub-Committee	Group directed by the Committee to implement actions on behalf of the Child Protection Committee. Sub-Committees are required to report progress to Child Protection Committee on a quarterly basis
Graded Care Profile 2	Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) helps professionals measure the quality of care being given to a child. It's an assessment tool that helps them to spot anything that's putting that child at risk of harm from neglect
7 Minute Briefing	A method of delivering messages in a short period of time
Chronology	A list of significant events in a child's life in order of their occurrence
Chief Officers Group	The Public Protection Chief Officer Group comprises of the chief officers and senior managers for each of the key partner agencies in Child Protection and Public Protection. This includes representatives from Highland Council, NHS Highland and Police Scotland
Child Protection Committee	Every Local Authority must have a Child Protection Committee. Child Protection Committees are locally based, inter-agency strategic partnerships responsible for the design, development, publication, distribution, dissemination, implementation and evaluation of child protection policy and practice across the public, private and wider third sectors in their local area
Keeping Children Safe	Keeping Children Safe is a collective group of Third Sector providers with an interest in Child Protection. Chaired by the Care and Learning Alliance the group supports practitioners and managers working in the third sector and community groups
Safe and Together	A programme for working with families where there are concerns about domestic abuse. It is a strengths bases approach working in partnership with the victim of abuse to reduce risk to themselves and any children. It also promotes work with perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Safe, Strong & Free

The Safe Strong and Free Project (Ssf) is a Primary Abuse Prevention Programme. It is a Highland charity which aims to reduce the vulnerability of young children to abuse and assault

Viewpoint

An interactive tool for gathering and collating the views of children and young people

Highland Child Protection Committee Membership -2019/2020

	Name	Organisation
Current Chair:	DCI Vince McLaughlin	Police Scotland
Current Vice Chair:	Karen Ralston	Interim Head of Children's Services, Highland Council
Elected Member Rep:	Linda Munro	Councillor
Lead Officer:	Donna Munro	Highland Child Protection Committee

Members		
Hugo van Woerden	Lead Director Children's Services	NHS Highland
Dr Stephanie Govenden	Lead Doctor Child Protection	NHS Highland
Sally Amor	Children's Service Commissioner	NHS Highland
DI Diane Smith	Chair of CSE Sub-Committee	Police Scotland
Karen Erskine	Authority Reporter	SCRA
Suzann Barr	Chair of Children's Panel	Children's Panel
Fiona Shearer	Care and Learning Manager	Highland Council
Debbie Milton	Chair of CAPSM Sub-Committee	Highland Council
David Goldie	Head of Housing	Highland Council

James Martin	Head of Development	High Life Highland
Norma Reuttimann	Training and Development Co-ordinator	Keeping Children Safe/Care and Learning Alliance
Tracie McDermott	Welfare Officer	Army Welfare Service
Fiona Malcolm	Legal Manager – Litigation and Advice	Highland Council
Gillian Pincock	Lead Child Protection Advisor (Health)	Highland Council
Mark Holloway	Head of Operations	Scottish Prison Service