



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 3 FEBRUARY 2021**

**SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: INSPECTION OF MORAY FOSTERING
SERVICE-UPDATE**

BY: CHIEF OFFICER HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE MORAY

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the progress made by the fostering service in the year since 4 March 2020, which is when Committee was reported to, following the inspection of the service by the Care Inspectorate on 23 October 2019.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers)

2. BACKGROUND

The Moray Fostering Service provides a fostering and family placement service for children and young people aged 0 -18 years. The service is registered with the Care Inspectorate.

- 2.2 The intention of foster care is to provide family based accommodation for children and young people who are not able to live at home. The service recruits, assesses, approves, trains and supports carers to provide the foster care. The service and carers offer permanent, long and short-term care as well as short break care.
- 2.3 At October 2019 the grading from inspection of the Fostering Service was: -
- | | |
|--|--------------|
| • Quality of Care and Support | 3 – Adequate |
| • Quality of Staffing | not assessed |
| • Quality of Management and Leadership | 3 – Adequate |
- 2.4 There was 1 requirement and 4 recommendations which reflected issues that had been prevalent across the service and organisation for some time: -

Requirement

The agency must ensure that quality assurance systems are robust and are used effectively in order to monitor that formal/statutory checks for foster carers are always up to date and reviewed appropriately.

Recommendations

- (II) To ensure a child centred approach is followed in all cases, the agency must provide comprehensive planning for every child and young person moving on a temporary basis to respite carer. This should involve all key individuals attending a planning meeting, and allow time for introductions to be made. In addition, the agency should, in participation with carers and young people explore alternative options to formal respite care.
- (III) The agency should address problematic staff relationships between and within teams to ensure good quality support for children and their families is always available.
- (IV) The agency should ensure that the quality of reports being provided to the fostering panel is appropriately scrutinised. This will improve matching considerations and clearly highlight areas of vulnerability. The creation of a panel advisor role would support decision-making within the panel.
- (V) The service should devise a development plan that follows SMART principles (Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely) and be regularly reviewed.

From that requirement and those recommendations an improvement action plan was developed.

- 2.5 The full inspection report from October 2019 can be viewed using the link – <https://www.careinspectorate.com/berengCareservices/html/reports/getPdfBlob.php?id=305808>
- 2.6 The improvement action plan, which was submitted to the Care Inspectorate, has been updated in terms of progress made within the service. This is attached at **APPENDIX 1**. Consistent with previous reporting, progress is monitored through the Practice Governance Board (PGB), which is a board convened by the Chief Social Work Officer to consider quality performance and risk in all social work activities focusing on culture, systems, practice, performance, vision and leadership. Actions marked amber and red have been assessed to ensure there is no immediate impact on the service delivery of them not yet being complete.
- 2.7 It had been expected that a progress review would have been completed by the Care Inspectorate prior to now, on the basis of the grades that had been awarded following inspection in October 2019, this has not happened,

presumably because of the impact of COVID 19. This report and progress review is therefore based on self-assessment from within the service.

3. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

This report relates to the following within the Corporate Plan 2018-2023:

Where life is better for everyone.

Provide a sustainable education service aiming for excellence.

The vision being that our children have better educational and social outcomes and so are better prepared for life.

Improved outcomes for those most in need of support.

Our most vulnerable young people and families are safe and nurtured.

Public and staff have confidence in all services we provide for children.

And within the Moray – 10 year Plan – LOIP.

Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray.

Raising aspirations – building a better future for children and young people in Moray.

The outcomes being that children and young people thrive; have a voice; learn; can get about; have a home; feel secure, healthy, nurtured to be supported to reach their full potential.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Council has responsibilities to children in need and at risk through The Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009; the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 and the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014.

(c) Financial implications

There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no specific risk implications associated with this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no specific staffing implications associated with this report.

(f) Property

There are no specific property implications associated with this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The focus of service delivery is designed to meet the needs of children and young people in Moray who are our most vulnerable children who have a number of complex needs.

(h) Consultations

Interim Head of the Joint Integration Board; the Chief Executive; Interim Head of Children and Families and Criminal Justice social work services; Senior Human Resources Advisor; Paul Connor, Principal Accountant; Morag Smith Legal Services; Equal Opportunities Officer; Placement Services Manager and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement as regards to their respective responsibilities.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The aim of this report is to provide Committee with update information about progress made since the inspection of the fostering service in October 2019.

4.2 The improvement action plan reflects the progress made and the actions that are underway which are audited through the Practice Governance Board.

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Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-1108985784-487