Dumfries & Galloway
Child Protection Committee
Annual Report 2005 - 2006

Protecting Children and Young People in Dumfries and Galloway

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Preface from Chief Officers

As Chief Officers, we share a real commitment to making sure that the children of Dumfries and Galloway live in a safe and caring community. When problems do happen, we are determined to make sure that they are dealt with promptly, professionally and with sensitivity.

The services we deliver across all of our agencies make a real difference to children and young people. We have a responsibility to provide a child-centred focus, a dedication to performance and delivery, and professionalism and accountability in the service we provide.

We wish to commend this Annual Report as a record of achievements and challenges in the past year, and as a statement of our aspirations for the year to come.

We would like all of the people and agencies who work with us to protect children to use it as a reference; as a practical guide to turning our commitment to children into practice.

Philip N Jones
Chief Executive
Dumfries & Galloway Council

David Strang
Chief Constable

John Burns
Chief Executive
NHS Dumfries & Galloway

Introduction: Chair of Child Protection Committee

I am pleased to introduce the Annual Report of Dumfries and Galloway Child Protection Committee (CPC) for 2005 - 2006.

This has been a challenging year for everyone concerned with protecting children and young people. It has seen us putting into practice the recommendations made following the National Child Protection Audit. As well as this, the complex and demanding issues of child protection have received a great deal of attention and interest as a result of several other high profile enquiries.

Working together with our partners, and with vulnerable children and their families, is an evolving process. We need to constantly monitor, review, evaluate and improve our services to make sure that they are more joined-up and child-focused. Our annual report demonstrates that we are moving towards this continuous improvement process.

The steps that we have taken over the past year - and will continue to take - have contributed towards this process. They fulfil our commitment to promote the protection of children and young people in our community.

Beth Smith
Chair of Dumfries & Galloway Child Protection Committee

Listening to children

Our key challenge is to ensure that the work undertaken is informed by the experiences and opinions of children, young people and their families. It is particularly important to ask the views of our most vulnerable members of the community and those with direct experience of child protection services.

The CPC tries to achieve this through three different ways:

Communication and consultation strategy

We are currently developing a strategy to improve communication with the public and with people who come into contact with child protection services.

Part of this strategy will be focused around the need to consult with children, young people and their families.

Links with other Children and Young People's groups

We want to encourage the inclusion of other groups who work with children and young people at our CPC sub-committee meetings.

Directly through the Voluntary Sector Forum

A Voluntary Sector Forum will be set up as a platform for children and their families to share their views.

Fulfilling Functions

In this section, we outline what we do - our functions - and how we have carried them out over the past year - **fulfilling our functions**.

During the past 12 months, Dumfries and Galloway CPC has made important progress in a number of areas.

We have:

- continued to progress the CPC Action Plan, outstanding objectives of which are incorporated into the Business Plan which accompanies this document. This is a dynamic process with the Plan being continually reviewed and updated
- the Children's Services Chief Officers Group has been established and we have agreed an accountability and reporting line both to the Chief Executive of Dumfries & Galloway Council and this group
- increased connections with other services through direct links, joint working and multi-agency partnerships
- recognised and promoted the contribution of e-care and IT approaches to information sharing and integrated assessment
- worked closely with the national Child Protection Reform Team in our contribution to consultation and working groups and representation on the National Steering Group
- reviewed the constitution[1] of the CPC in line with the guidance published by the Scottish Executive in March 2005
- consolidated our position within the West of Scotland Consortium giving Dumfries and Galloway a role, with other CPCs, in the co-ordination of systems, policies and procedures
- actively contributed to the West of Scotland Managed Clinical Network (MCN) with the Vice Chair of the CPC assuming Chair of the MCN
- made successful financial bids across Health and Social Services in order to contribute to the overall quality assurance and accountability systems for child protection
- put into practice specific actions in line with the publication of the Child Protection Committee guidance
- appointed a Lead Officer to the Child Protection Committee who will co-ordinate the business agenda of the CPC, chair the key Sub Committees and provide a link between the Committee and other child protection groups both locally and nationally
- secured funding from Changing Children's Services Fund to introduce Senior Social Worker posts, Administrative Co-ordinators for child protection and Looked After Children, a Family Group Conference pilot project and the development of the service for children with problem sexual behaviour.

[1] Constitution available in full from Dumfries and Galloway Council or www.dumgal.gov.uk/childprotection

Public information

We must ensure that everyone involved with our service understands who we are and what we do, and that members of the public understand what to do if they have concerns about the well being of a child or young person.

We are in the process of commissioning a Communication Strategy which will define and develop the communication activity of the CPC for 2006.

Some 20,000 child protection awareness cards have been distributed to key agencies, including the wider childcare and voluntary sector.

Dumfries and Galloway CPC has a range of leaflets, which are available to children, young people and families involved in child protection matters.

The West of Scotland Consortium is in the process of devising an updated suite of leaflets, which will be presented to the CPC with a view to coming into use locally.

A 'child protection specific' miniweb is under construction, which will contain information about the roles, functions and activities of the CPC.

Policies, procedures and protocols

The Policy and Procedure Sub Committee is chaired by the Lead Officer and links directly into the CPC.

Policies, procedures and protocols are being continuously introduced and improved to accurately reflect current demands, new situations or shared good practice.

The CPC plays a key part in the process of reviewing the Integrated Children's Services Plan. The focus of the CPC group spans the Scottish Executive's seven vision statements for children and young people - that they should be safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, respected and responsible and included.

The Integrated Assessment Framework pilot project is due to take place later in 2006 in a selected area in Dumfries and Galloway. There will be a qualitative and quantitative review of the pilot prior to full implementation across Dumfries and Galloway.

The CPC has commissioned, assisted and agreed the following multi-agency policies, protocols and procedures:

- interim Child Protection Procedures for Schools and Nurseries
- guidance in responding to under age sexual activity and pregnancy

- protocol between Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary, police and children and families social work
- Dumfries and Galloway Fire Brigade child protection policy
- Dumfries and Galloway sports and leisure children and vulnerable adults protection policy, and
- Dumfries and Galloway College children and vulnerable adults protection policy.

The following are under preparation or review:

- multi-agency child protection procedures
- policy, procedure and assessment framework for children who display problem sexual behaviours
- multi-agency information sharing protocol
- protocol for the management of registered sex offenders, and
- Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary are one of the Police Authorities, in conjunction with Criminal Justice Social Work, currently piloting the VISOR system for the management of sex offenders.

Management Information

We gather information from all our key agency partners about their work to protect children. We can use this information to help analyse trends, share important research from reports and decide how we will respond to the findings of reports and shared information.

Statistical information is presented to the CPC on a quarterly basis and considers information on a range of factors such as:

- number of children on the Child Protection Register across the 4 localities in Dumfries and Galloway, and how these figures relate to national trends
- number of child protection referrals across the Council and within localities
- number and percentage of children presented to Child Protection Case Conference and the outcome from each conference
- registration levels
- locality comparisons of registration categories
- length of time on the CP Register
- percentage of children who are re-registered current year and previous year.

Quality Assurance

The Performance and Quality Sub Committee is chaired by the Lead Officer and works with a Practice Group to look into practice issues commissioned by the CPC.

The Sub Committee will look after the Self Evaluation programme and put into practice quality assurance mechanisms as well as auditing against the Framework for Standards.

Over the past 18 months, we have commissioned a number of case reviews into specific situations. It is planned that case reviews will take place on a routine basis to identify good practice, and areas where practice needs to be improved.

Child Protection practice in Dumfries and Galloway is overseen by the child protection Planning and Assessment Team which is managed from within Social Work Services. In addition, all case conferences are chaired by Planning and Assessment Officers.

The Performance and Quality Sub Committee will gather information about child protection activities across the multi-agencies and will drive a sub group which will examine the practice in specific cases.

Promotion of good practice

Over the past two years, we have undertaken an extensive examination of practice standards. This is a continuous programme with a review of the Exception Report due to take place by the end of 2005.

Examples of good practice are fed by the Lead Officer into the various Sub Committees which can then translate them into policy and procedure, incorporate them as part of the training strategy and implement them into daily practice.

Training and staff development

In the same way that policies, practices and procedures are being continuously improved and updated to reflect current needs, the training and development of staff needs to be examined and amended to reflect those same demands.

Child protection training in Dumfries and Galloway is co-ordinated by the Training and Communication Sub Committee. One of the challenges to the Sub Committee over the past year is the increasing demand for basic child protection training, particularly from the voluntary sector. We anticipate that, through the increased capacity from the Training for Trainers programme, more of this demand will be met in the coming year.

The CPC is currently in the process of commissioning a training strategy for 2006 - 2007.

Basic Awareness Training

Basic awareness training at Tier 1 was delivered:

- across Health settings by the Child Protection Adviser, NHS Dumfries and Galloway
- across schools settings by the Senior Child Protection Officer, Education and Community Services
- across the wider child care sector
- to Dumfries and Galloway Fire and Rescue Service.

Multi-agency Training

Multi-agency training at Tier 2 level was delivered over 4 localities in Dumfries and Galloway during the spring of 2004-2005 on a 3-module basis. The current Modular programme comprises:

- Module 1 - Recognition and Referral
- Module 2 - Assessment and Investigation
- Module 3 - Decision making and intervention

All 3 modules were delivered in each of the 4 District CPC localities and in Spring 2005, 115 people from across the range of services and agencies completed all modules.

There are currently plans to develop 5 new modules in response to requests for input on broader issues and include:

- Children with disabilities
- Children living with domestic abuse
- The Children's Hearing System
- Children of parents with problem drug or alcohol use
- Children of parents with mental health problems

Training for Trainers

The Training for Trainers programme was successfully completed in 2005. Two groups from across agencies in Dumfries and Galloway were trained in the spring and autumn having undertaken the 4½ day event. Some 20 trainers are now available and will form the training working group to take forward training initiatives in 2006.

The training priorities for 2006 include:

- Increased Modular delivery of Multi-Agency Training
- Children with problem sexual behaviour - general and specific training on procedures and assessment
- Increase capacity to deliver Tier 1 training across Dumfries and Galloway.

Scottish Executive Strategic Training Group

Dumfries and Galloway continue involvement in the Scottish Executive Strategic Training Group which is in the process of collating training materials from local authorities across Scotland.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is considered under the following:

- Communication and co-operation
- Planning and connections
- Public information

Communication and co-operation

One of the key mechanisms in the delivery of communication and co-operation is the function of the Sub Committees.

Beyond the above structures, the CPC has links with the following groups:

Chief Officers Group (COG)

The CPC is represented directly at COG through the Committee Chair. Other CPC members are also members of this group. Links to this group will be strengthened in the coming year to ensure robust exchange of information at a strategic level.

Managed Clinical Network for Child Protection (MCN)

The Managed Clinical Network Steering Group is chaired by the Director of Public Health for NHS Dumfries and Galloway, Vice Chair of the CPC.

The purpose of this Network, which works across the Health sector, is to:

- Identify gaps and inequity of resource within West of Scotland and offers NHS Regional Planning Group broad based solutions
- Formulate detailed standards specific to Child Protection Medical Services for agreement and application across Dumfries & Galloway. This includes the development of agreed procedures, protocols, care pathways, specifications for facilities and equipment
- Share and encourage good practice by providing local and regional training programmes and peer review
- Work with local audit facilitators to agree data collection of agreed minimum data set
- Engage with the voluntary sector and young people to consult on medical services for vulnerable young people.

Domestic Abuse Strategy Group (DASG)

The Chair of the DASG is currently a member of the CPC. The DASG has a sub-group for Children and Young People which is also represented, both directly and indirectly, at the CPC.

Alcohol and Drug Action Team (ADAT)

The ADAT is directly represented at the CPC by the Lead Officer Substance Misuse, ADAT. The Chair of the CPC also attends the ADAT and the ADAT Chairs group. A working group has been convened to consider the recommendations from "Hidden Harm" and "Getting Our Priorities Right" and examine the need for a training plan in order to ensure awareness and good practice.

West of Scotland Consortium (WoSC)

Dumfries and Galloway CPC is represented at the WoSC through the Chair of the CPC and the Lead Officer CPC.

Integrated Children's Services Plan (ICSP)

There are currently five Tactical Groups who are thematically contributing to the review of the ICSP. The CPC directly contributes to this through the Scottish Executive's seven vision statements agenda. CPC members are also members of tactical groups.

Sexual Health Strategy Group (SHSG)

Stronger links are being developed with the SHSG through the Lead Officer CPC.

Scottish Executive Training Materials Project

The Scottish Executive is currently developing a bank of training materials based on models currently used by CPCs across Scotland. It is envisaged that, through a process of quality assurance and copywriting, that this will eventually be available through the internet for all CPCs to access.

Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF)

Following a recent presentation at CPC by the IAF Project Manager, further consideration is being given to the area of child protection risk management and risk analysis in advance of the Pilot Programme later in 2006.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

A short life group will be convened by the Lead Officer CPC, to develop a local procedure to respond to this group of children.

Vulnerable Witnesses

The Vulnerable Witnesses lead officer is currently the Senior Child Protection Officer.

To date, the focus has been on establishing remote access sites with appropriate video-conferencing facilities for vulnerable witnesses as required by the Scottish Executive nationally. Two sites in Dumfries have now been established and approved by the Scottish Court Service. Plans are in place to establish a similar service in Stranraer. These arrangements will be reviewed after one year.

The next stage will be to agree and roll out a training/raising awareness programme for all relevant staff. This will be discussed and co-ordinated through the Training and Communication Sub Committee.

Sure Start and Changing Children's Services Fund

Funds have been accessed through the above sources to establish multi-agency parenting projects including the Cradle Project in Stranraer. This project provides intensive support to new young mothers until their child is one year old.

Planning and Connections

Activity	Connection
Children's Services planning structures	CSCOG CPC Chair
Community Planning structures	Safe and Health Communities Director: Public Health CPC Chair
Other CPCs	WoS Chairs Consortium WoS Lead Officers
Community Safety Partnerships	TBA
ADAT	Represented CPC (Lead Officer Substance Misuse)
Domestic Abuse	Represented CPC (Chair DASG)
Community Care planning structures	TBA
Child Care Partnerships	Represented Senior Officer Education and Community Services
Voluntary Sector	Voluntary Sector Forum
Youth Justice structures	Represented by members of Youth Justice Strategy Group
Anti-social behaviour Sexual Health Strategy Group	Represented CPC Liaison via Lead Officer CPC
West of Scotland Managed Clinical Network	Represented CPC Chair of MCN

Evaluation and Inspection

In July 2004, the CPC hosted a multi-agency Recall Conference to look at progress against the National Audit Report "It's Everyone's Job To Make Sure I'm Alright", and to launch the Framework for Standards for managers and Elected Members. The conference reviewed developments against the Reform agenda, and the draft guidance for Child Protection Committees.

The CPC redrafted its constitution and reviewed its membership and the seniority of Officers in the committee. It made proposals for the refocusing of the shape, role and function of sub committees and proposals for the appointment of a Lead Officer were also agreed.

In April 2005, the CPC met for a Development Day to take greater ownership of the overall child protection agenda across agencies in Dumfries and Galloway. This event examined the progress of the CPC's work against the National Guidance and identified areas where improvement was required.

Alongside the work, which resulted in the multi-agency Action Plan, the CPC was involved with the West of Scotland Consortium in the production of an audit tool to be used during the process of self-evaluation. This has been refined in the light of the publication of the Quality Indicators Framework.

The Lead Officer CPC continues to link with the Scottish Executive in terms of the pending multi-agency inspection and self-evaluation and a model for self-evaluation is in the process of being produced. This will be refined by the Performance and Quality Sub Committee and presented to CPC and COG by 2006. Self-evaluation will commence in early 2006 in anticipation of fuller inspection at some point in the near future.

Information Technology

The Lead Officer CPC has been closely involved in the specification of the child protection model for Bluesky, the Council's information system.

Powered by Bluesky and wider management information, the Performance and Quality Sub Committee of the CPC will develop more sophisticated reporting to enhance the information already available to the Committee which will help in their analysis of patterns and trends.

Future Plans

The CPC considered 237 key recommendations from 7 key reports into the deaths of children. These were thematically sorted into an Action Plan which enables us to compare our child protection practice against these recommendations. As a result, an Exception Report was prepared which identified areas or activities which need additional work or resources to meet the recommendations. The Exception Report forms our very constructive Business Plan to take forward our commitment to child protection.

Statistical Trends and Management Information

Dumfries and Galloway Council Child Protection Committee routinely monitors basic child protection statistical information. **(Appendix - Management Information)**

Overall, child protection activity between April 2004 and the present has settled, following a significant increase from around year 2000.

The number of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) for years 2004 and 2005 was **60**. This is 2.4 per '000 child population aged 0 - 15 and compares with a national average of **2.3**. In 2006 there were 48 children on the CPR which equates to **1.73** per '000.

The level of child protection referrals shows a similar trend having fallen from over **300** in 2001 - 2002, to **231** for 2005 - 2006. Numbers of children placed on the CPR rose to over **150** in 2000 - 2001 but has fallen to **48** in 2005 - 2006.

Of children referred for child protection in 2005 - 2006, **37%** were considered at a Child Protection Case Conference (CPCC). This compares to a national figure for 2004 - 2005 of 36%. In 2005 - 2006, **76%** of children considered locally at CPCC were placed on the CPR compared to 69% nationally in 2004 - 2005.

Around **50%** of children in Dumfries and Galloway have been on the CPR for less than 6 months with a small number registered for longer than 2 years. In terms of registration categories, 2005 - 2006 has seen a reduction in children placed on the CPR under the category Emotional Abuse.

Almost **70%** of the children who were removed from the CPR had a reduction in risk as the reason for de-registration.

The above must be seen in the context of the Hammond Report which was published in 2001. This has made the task of trend interpretation complex over the past 5 years. However, the continuing success of inter agency training, development of robust procedures, and the appointment of key child protection posts has hopefully brought a more informed and consistent approach to child protection in Dumfries and Galloway.

In the coming year we will be working towards an enhanced quality of management information to improve links between statistical trends and strategic planning.

Appendices

Membership of the
Child Protection Committee

Business Plan

Statistical Trends
and Management Information

Appendix

Membership of the Child Protection Committee

Chief Social Work Officer, Dumfries and Galloway Council (Chair)

Director of Public Health, NHS Dumfries and Galloway (Vice Chair)

Lead Officer Child Protection Committee

Child Health Commissioner Children's Services, NHS Dumfries and Galloway

Group Manager (Adult Services), Education and Community Services

Operations Manager (Fieldwork) East, Children and Families Social Work

Operations Manager (Fieldwork) West, Children and Families Social Work

Service Manager (Criminal Justice Social Work)

Service Manager (Performance and Quality), Children and Families Social Work

Lead Officer Substance Misuse, Education and Community Services

Group Manager (School Services), Education and Community Services

Operations Manager (Psychology Services), Education and Community Services

Operations Manager (Leisure and Sport), Education and Community Services

Operations Manager (Housing Services), Education and Community Services

Consultant Paediatrician, NHS Dumfries and Galloway

Child Protection Adviser, NHS Dumfries and Galloway

Detective Inspector, Family Protection Unit, Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary

Procurator Fiscal Depute

Authority Reporter, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration

Appendix

Business Plan 2005 - 2006
Dumfries and Galloway Child Protection Committee

The Dumfries and Galloway Child Protection Committee Business Plan sets out the range of objectives for the Committee for the coming year.

These objectives are informed both by the CPC guidance issued by the Scottish Executive in 2005 and by key objectives identified by the Exception Report from the CPC Action Plan.

Contained at the outset are outline financial implications for the full delivery of the Action Plan. CPC member agencies will conduct a review of the specific actions from the Exception Report which apply to their sector, with a view to the provision of a total estimated cost of meeting all recommendations.

It is proposed that the CPC itself will undertake a Risk Assessment process by way of the Zurich Risk Assessment Model in order to evaluate the risks and consequences to the collective organisations of the CPC of not delivering services as outlined in the Action Plan.

The Business Plan looks at the objectives for the CPC, the actions needed to fulfil these objectives and the person with lead responsibility. The Plan also outlines the timescales within which these objectives should be completed, the resource implications and the auditing plan in terms of how the Committee will know that the work has been completed.

The Business plan is divided into 10 sections:

1. The Child Protection Committee
2. Public information
3. Policies, procedures and protocols
4. Continuous improvement
5. Management information
6. Quality assurance
7. Training and staff development
8. Promotion of good practice
9. Strategic planning
10. Communication and co-operation

Appendix

Management Information - Statistical Trends

Child Populations and Child Protection Registrations as at 31st March 2006

	Annandale & Eskdale	Nithsdale	Stewartry	Wigtown	Total
Total Population	36,368	57,035	23,792	29,373	146,567
Children 0 - 15	6,326	11,185	4,417	5,812	27,740
% of Council Child Population	22.80%	40.30%	15.90%	21.00%	100%
% of Total Child Protection Register	33.3%	39.6%	4.2%	22.9%	100%
Number per 1000 of Child Population	2.5	1.7	0.45	1.89	1.73
Number of children on CP Register	16	19	2	11	48

Number of Children on CPR

Number of Children on CPR as at 31 March

Registration Numbers

Registration Categories

Length of Time Children on CPR

Number of Child Protection Referrals

Number of Referrals - 2005/2006

Referral Decision

Decision of Conference

Reason for De-Registration

Child Protection Committee
Woodbank, 30 Edinburgh Road, Dumfries DG1 1NW
t: 01387 260000
f: 01387 260034
e: CIS@dumgal.gov.uk
w: www.dumgal.gov.uk/childprotection

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