



# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION

Quality and Standards Annual Report

1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019

getting  
it right  
*for every child  
in Moray*

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## **Preface from Vice Chair of Moray Child Protection Committee**

On behalf of the Committee Members I am delighted to present the Annual Report of Moray Child Protection Committee (CPC). Child Protection in Moray is taken very seriously by all involved; this commitment is evidenced in this report through the developments and improvements undertaken throughout 2018/19.

There have been various key priorities that have moved forward this year as part of the wider agenda for the Moray partnership; how we tackle neglect, chronologies, and risk assessment. This report outlined progress against the Care Inspectorate [quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection](#) which relates to both the areas of child protection and corporate parenting. This report has been endorsed by the (then) Executive Leadership Group on 9 June 2019 and the Public Protection Chief Officers Group on 26 July 2019

We have experienced a number of changes towards the beginning of 2019 both in the role of chair and supporting officer to the Child Protection Committee. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in the work of the Moray Child Protection Committee over the last 12 months, and I hope to be in a position to welcome our new Independent Chair to the committee in the near future.

Sean Coady  
Moray Child Protection Committee Vice Chair  
Head of Service - Primary Care, Child Health, Health Improvement and Out of Hours  
Services

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### **1. Quality Assurance**

Moray's Quality Assurance Team was established following the joint inspection of services for children and young people in Moray in October 2016. Initially established on an interim basis in May 2017, the team was made a permanent arrangement in April 2018.

The team comprises of colleagues from across the Moray Community Planning Partnership. The Quality Assurance Team, working together with the Strategic Groups, developed the Moray Children and Young People's Quality Assurance and Performance Framework, which was approved by the Executive Leadership Group (ELG) and Chief Officers Group (COG) in 2017.

The [Quality Assurance and Performance Framework](#) provides all partners with a clear framework that can be used to evidence the quality of service delivery, identify areas for improvement and outline steps to be taken to deliver identified improvements. The overall aim is to monitor and improve practice across partnership to help ensure children's wellbeing and safety is promoted at all times.

## 2. Timeline

2016	Oct	Joint Inspection of Children Services in Moray
	Nov	
	Dec	
2017	Jan	<p>Joint Inspection Report Published</p> <p>Moray Children's Services Plan 2017-2020 Published</p> <p>Quality Assurance Team Established (Interim Basis)</p> <p>Children and Young People's Quality Assurance and Performance Framework Published</p> <p>Multi-Agency Practice Hub Established</p> <p>Care Inspectorate Visit to Moray: Initial Progress Review</p> <p>Initial Progress Review Published</p>
	Feb	
	Mar	
	Apr	
	May	
	June	
	July	
	Aug	
	Sept	
	Oct	
	Nov	
	Dec	
2018	Jan	<p>Quality Assurance Team Made Permanent</p> <p>Moray Children's Services Plan Year 1 Report Published</p> <p>New Care Inspectorate Quality Framework Published</p> <p>Moray Children's Services –Partnership Self Evaluation Exercise Completed</p> <p>Care Inspectorate Visit to Moray: Second Progress Review</p>
	Feb	
	Mar	
	Apr	
	May	
	June	
	July	
	Aug	
	Sept	
	Oct	
	Nov	
	Dec	
2019	Jan	Second Progress Review Published
	Feb	
	Mar	

### **3. Joint Inspection of Children's Services**

#### **3.1 Initial Improvement Priorities**

Between August and October 2016 the Care Inspectorate carried out a joint inspection of services for children and young people in Moray. The inspection identified six priorities for improvement that partners have worked together on since 2016.

These were: -

- Improve standards of operational practice.
- Improve initial risk assessment and response to children at risk of experiencing neglectful parenting or cumulative harm.
- Strengthen collective vision and collaborative leadership to direct the delivery of integrated children's services.
- Strengthen the governance, leadership and accountability of the Child Protection Committee.
- Strengthen approach to corporate parenting, participation and children's rights.
- Implement a framework of joint self-evaluation ensuring focus on improved outcomes.

#### **3.2 Review Recommendations**

The Care Inspectorate carried out two progress reviews, the first in September 2017, six months following the initial joint inspection. The second, more in-depth progress review was carried out in November 2018. Each review assessed progress made by partners in planning and implementing actions to address the main areas for improvement.

The review in November 2018 recommended partners:

- Maintain the strong momentum that has been built over the last two years to fully address the improvement actions set out in the report of the joint inspection in 2016. While acknowledging the challenging financial context facing leaders, it will be important to sustain the resources needed to implement these changes and improvements.
- Continue to build on the improvements already achieved.
- Pay particular attention to quality assurance and supervision to gain the consistency in operational practice that children and families have the right to expect.
- Hear from children and families about what it feels like to be involved in processes and services, and whether services are making a positive difference. Partners should use this knowledge to continually refine service delivery.
- Find ways to demonstrate the difference services are making to the lives of children, young people and their families.
- Fully embed a rights-based, child-centred culture across Moray.

Based on the quality indicators laid out within the Care Inspectorate publication [“A quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection, July 2018”](#), this progress report outlines the key achievements of the partnership during the period April 2018 to March 2019 in working towards improving outcomes for children and families in Moray

As part of the Care Inspectorate progress review, 434 staff across the partnership completed the staff survey, in October 2018: the results of which are shared throughout this report.

In advance of the progress review process, in preparation for that review, file reading audits were conducted by partners and the Quality Assurance Team; in addition, findings from the weekly Multi-agency Practice Hub audits informed the Quality Assurance evidence for the progress review and they are detailed within this Quality and Standards report.

Partnership wide self-evaluation activity informed the self assessment which was submitted to the Care Inspectorate as part of the in-depth progress review, and key statements from this activity and identified actions are outlined throughout this Quality and Standards report.

**Quality and Standards Information Sources:**



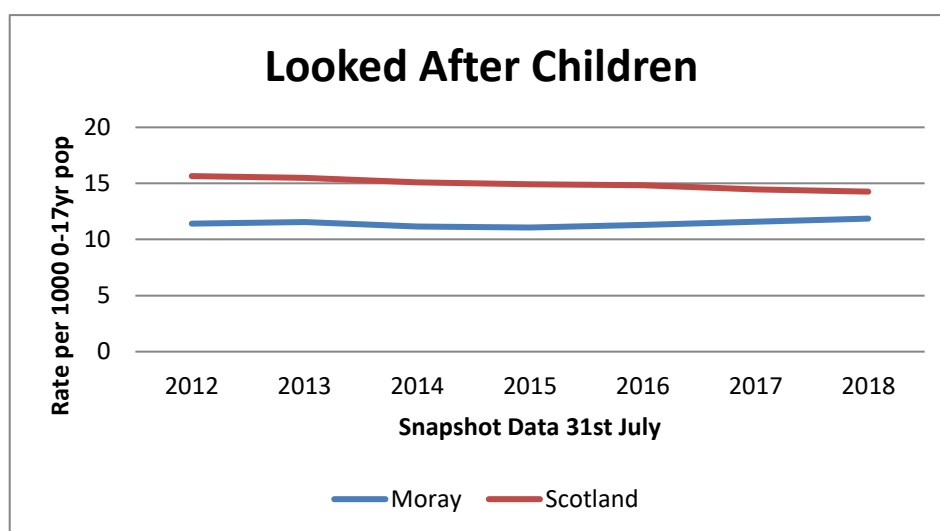
#### 4. Improvement: Change Ideas Summary

<i>"Not all change is an Improvement, but to improve requires change"</i>				
Improvement Priority	Done	Doing	Developing	To Do
	<i>Change Ideas we have Implemented</i>	<i>Change Ideas we are Testing</i>	<i>Change Ideas we are Planning For</i>	<i>Change Ideas We Want to Test</i>
<b>Standards of Operational Practice</b>	MLDG workforce training delivered Moray SCR Group established	Quality Assurance Reviewing Team Remit Restructuring C&F SW teams	Reviewing Practice Standards for CP Processes	Relational Based Practice –Signs of Safety – family decision making
<b>Initial Risk Assessment and Response to Children at Risk of Neglectful Parenting or Cumulative Harm</b>	Multi Agency Practice Hub New IRD Protocol Neglect Medical Pathway Vulnerable Pregnancy Pathway	PRISM Moray Care Profile in Social Work Services  Childs Planning Tool Test of Change	Multi Agency Screening Hub	Moray Care Profile in Universal Services
<b>Collective Vision and Collaborative Leadership</b>	Published Children's Services Plan Executive Leadership Group Established	Leadership Practitioner Network Consultations Realigning Children's Services	Development of 2020-23 Children's Services Plan	
<b>Governance, Leadership and Accountability of Child Protection Committee</b>	Independent Chair Appointed Chief Officers Group Strengthened	Revised Performance Management Framework	Workforce Development Training Needs Assessment	Publicity and Promotion improvement plan
<b>Corporate Parenting</b>	Champions Board Developed Health Flagging Fit Life Card Project Reduced travel scheme	Permanence and Care Excellence New foster scheme Scatter flat initiative	Performance Monitoring Framework	Youth work service support to promoting engagement in champions board
<b>Children's Rights and Participation</b>	Rights and Respecting Schools Champions Board	Participation and Engagement Strategy and operational lead	Participation in child protection – focus group and improvement plan	Schools mental health and wellbeing survey
<b>Joint Self Evaluation Framework</b>	Quality Assurance Framework and Team Established	Quality Assurance Calendar	Review of Quality Assurance Framework	

## 5. Improving Outcomes for Children in Need of Care and Protection

Currently looked after children and young people, and care leavers, for simplicity referred to as Care Experienced Children and Young People (CECYP) continue to be recognised as a vulnerable group in society, despite the attention over recent years towards improving individual outcomes. Corporate Parenting is the term used for the collective responsibility of the members of the Community Planning Board and the Chief Officers, as a corporate body, to ensure that our CECYP receive the same quality of support from the Partners as they would from a supportive parent.

The Community Planning Partnership approved Corporate Parenting Strategy for Moray 2017-2020, details 10 guarantees pledged for our CECYP. These guarantees are reflective of the “asks” of a number of our CECYP and the legal duties placed on us in our role as corporate parents. The guarantees are progressed by working in pillars that correlate with Care Leavers Covenant columns. The Corporate Parenting Strategic Group has the remit to provide support and deliver actions so that all corporate parents will have the same aspirations and commitment to CECYP as parents would have for their own children.



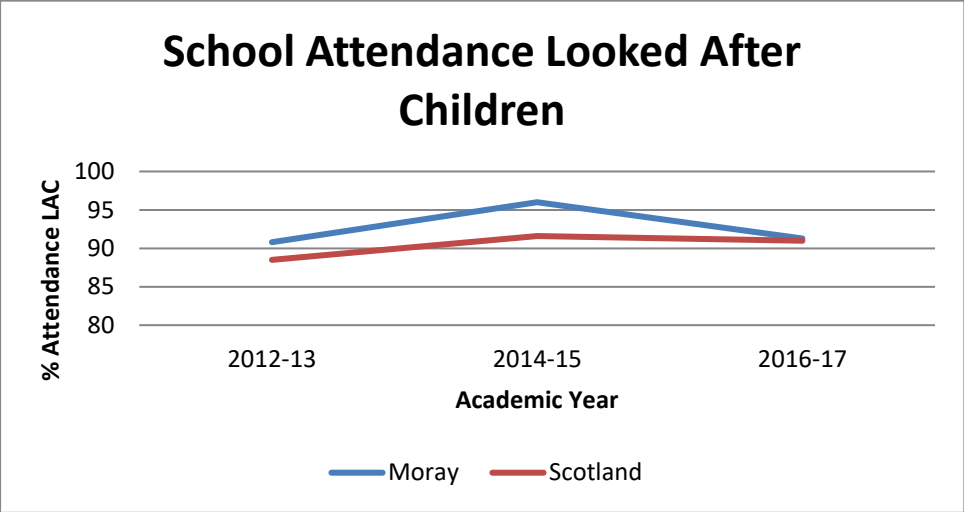
The number of children looked after in Moray at 31 July 2018 was 222 (an increase of 3.3% from 215 at 31 July 2017) the rate (per 1,000 pop 0-17yrs) is 11.6. This is less than the Scottish average rate of 14 and greater than the comparator authority average rate of 7.9.

### 5.1 Improving how well our looked after children are achieving and their learning is optimised – Education and Employment Pillar

#### Attendance:

During the 2017-18 academic year, the attendance rates for Looked after Children in Moray have fallen to 87.5% showing an overall decrease in attendance over the last four academic years, falling from 96% attendance in 2014-15. During the 2016-17 academic year, Moray was placed 14th out of 32 Local Authorities in Scotland with a 91.3% attendance rate for Looked After Children, just above the Scottish average at the time.

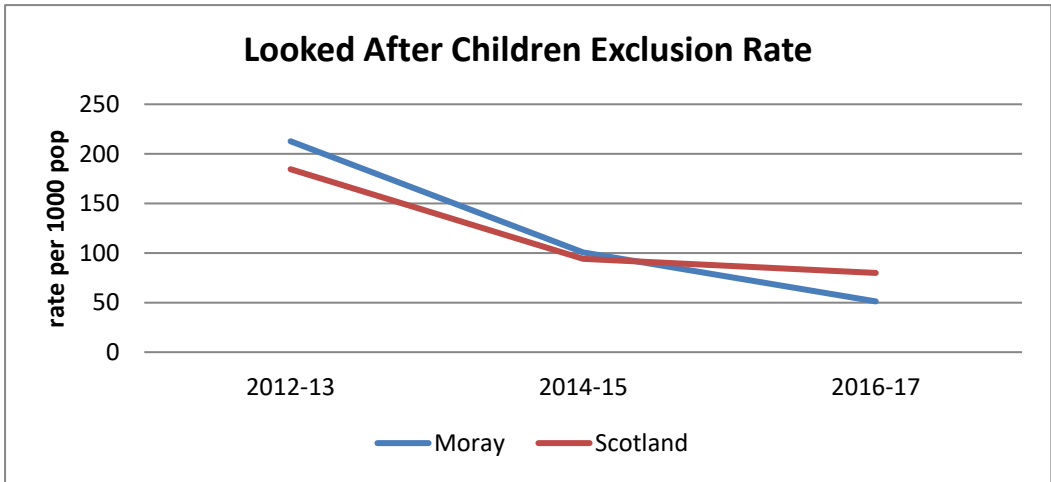




**Exclusion:** Overall exclusion in Moray primary schools and secondary schools has shown a reduction over the past three academic years, both in terms of individual pupils being excluded and also in relation to the overall number of incidents of exclusion.

The overall reduction in exclusions is a result of improved behavioural support strategies within schools, the use of alternatives to exclusion and improved partnership working. Head Teachers, Additional Support Needs Staff and Social Emotional and Behavioural Needs Team staff have all contributed towards this improvement. Moray Schools Exclusion Policy was reviewed during 2017/18 following consultation and feedback from staff across the Partnership and discussions with a number of other local authorities.

The stats for CECYP is variable. In the 2016-17 academic year exclusion rates for Looked after Children fell to 51.2 (per 1000 population of Looked after Children), placing Moray below the national average of 79.9 for that academic year.

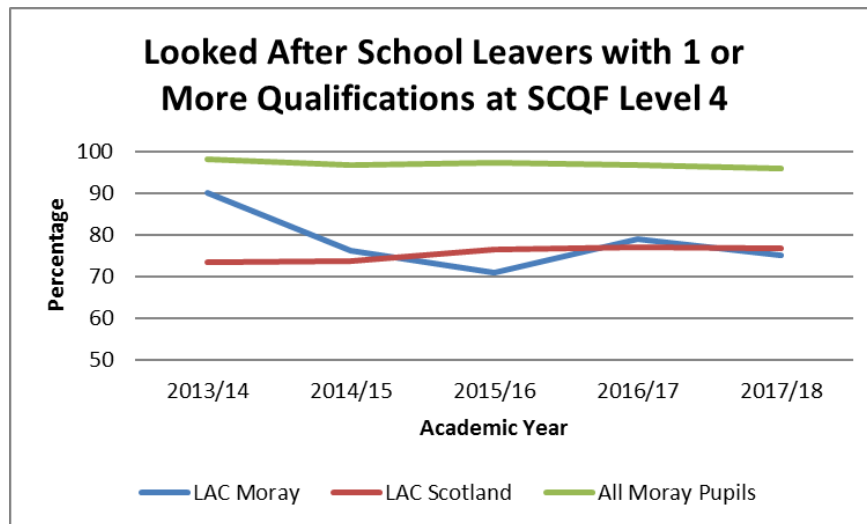


This indicator is published for all Local Authorities biannually and will next be available to benchmark Morays performance for the 2018-19 academic year.

Local data for the 2017-18 academic year shows an increase in exclusion rates for Looked after Children rising to 109.3 (per 1000 population of Looked after Children). This area will be the subject of further focus and scrutiny by the Education Pillar Group of the Corporate Parenting Committee over the next 12 months to ensure effective strategies are in place to support CECYP to achieve and engage positively with education.

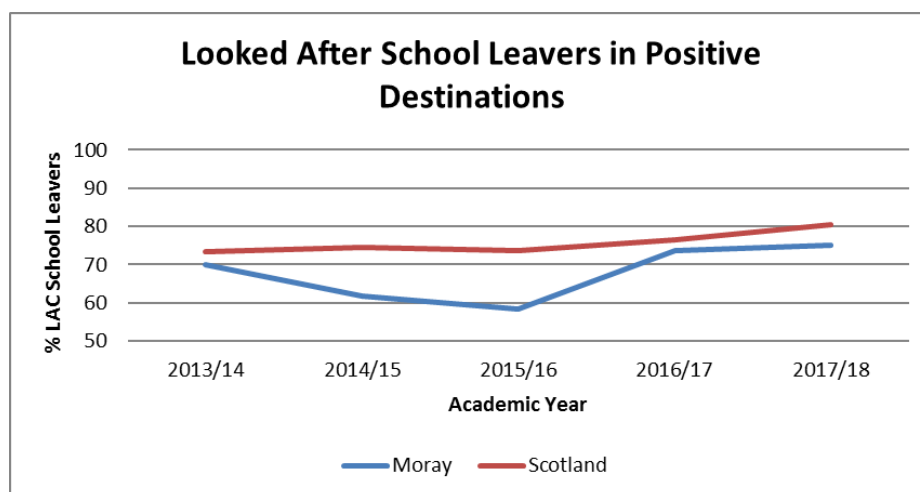
This indicator is published for all Local Authorities biannually and will next be available to benchmark Moray’s actual performance for the 2018-19 academic year.

## 5.2 Care leavers becoming successfully independent into adulthood



To help our Care Experienced Young People into training, employment or further education after leaving school, we are continuing to develop and expand our Family Firm policy. This involves Corporate Parents, from various statutory agencies, pledging to provide targeted opportunities to enable the young people to develop those skills and attributes necessary to contribute and engage with society.

We have an established Career Ready program, for all school children, which has been integrated into the Family Firm policy for Care Experienced Young People



### 5.3 Improving the physical, mental and emotional health of care experienced children and young people – Health Pillar

#### Access to Leisure Facilities

It was identified by a number of CECYP in Moray that they found it difficult to access services and places of interest by public transport, and one such key service they felt they would benefit from was leisure facilities.

As a result the Corporate Parenting Strategic Group worked in partnership with Moray Council and Stagecoach to develop and launch the Fair Travel Card scheme which enables all Care Experienced Young People, aged 16 to 25, to travel on Stagecoach and Moray Council buses, subject to service availability, within the Moray area at a reduced cost.

To date, 15 Care Experienced Young People have applied for and been issued with a Fair Travel Card: details of how to apply are on the website and are advised within the Newsletter for CEYP, which is produced and published by Who Cares? Scotland and Moray Council.

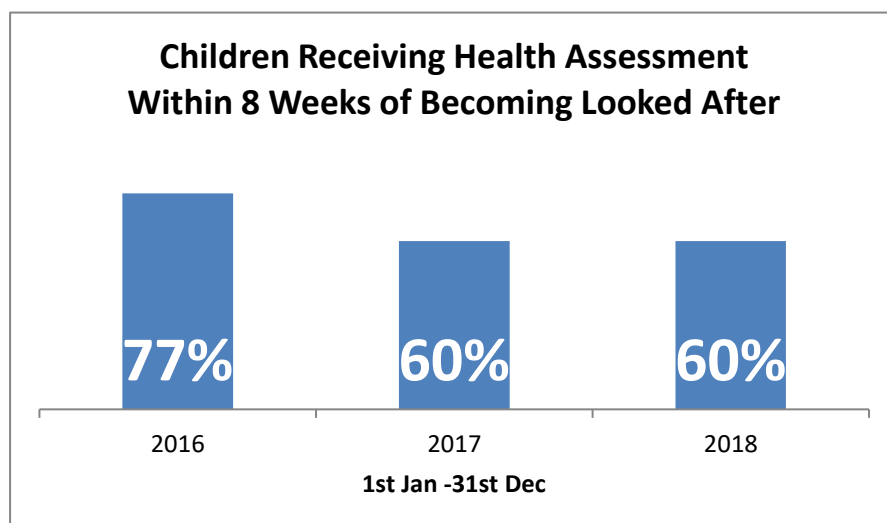
The Community Planning Partnership has also committed support by agreeing that Care Leavers aged 16 to 25, inclusive, have the right to have free “Fit Life” membership. This means that care leavers who apply to the scheme will have access to the sporting and leisure facilities across Moray, which operate the “Fit Life” scheme.

To date 34 Care Experienced Young People have applied for and been issued with a “Fit Life” Card.

#### Health Assessments

All children and young people have the right to have their physical and mental health needs assessed and met. To ensure we are achieving this for our Looked after Children we are working in partnership to strengthen the process for alerting medical staff when a child becomes Looked After.

We have monitored the percentage of health assessments for Looked After Children carried out within 8 weeks of notification to the Health Board, and continually monitor and address barriers within this process that result in delays.



### Improvement Project Looked After Children Health Assessments

An improvement project was developed in 2018 with the aim to reduce the time taken for general practices to submit Looked after Children health assessment information to the NHS Clinical Nurse Specialist for Looked After Children. Three GP practices were identified and agreed to participate in the improvement project undertaking 5 health assessments before evaluating the changes being tested. Within those identified practices it has taken approximately 12 months for 5 looked after children health assessments to be undertaken, using the test process. For each assessment conducted there has been a reduction in the time taken for general practices to submit the health assessment information, but other factors have impacted the overall time which does not show a reduction in time taken overall for assessments. Moving forward the improvement project will approach and secure general practices with a larger patient population, to allow for a more regular application of the test of change cycles using quality improvement methodology.

### Mental Health

In addition to the statutory physical health assessment, activity has centred on mental health assessment. When a child/ young person becomes looked after, a Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is completed. Analysis of those assessments have provided assurances that those Looked after Children identified as requiring referral to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services were either currently receiving a service or had already been referred.

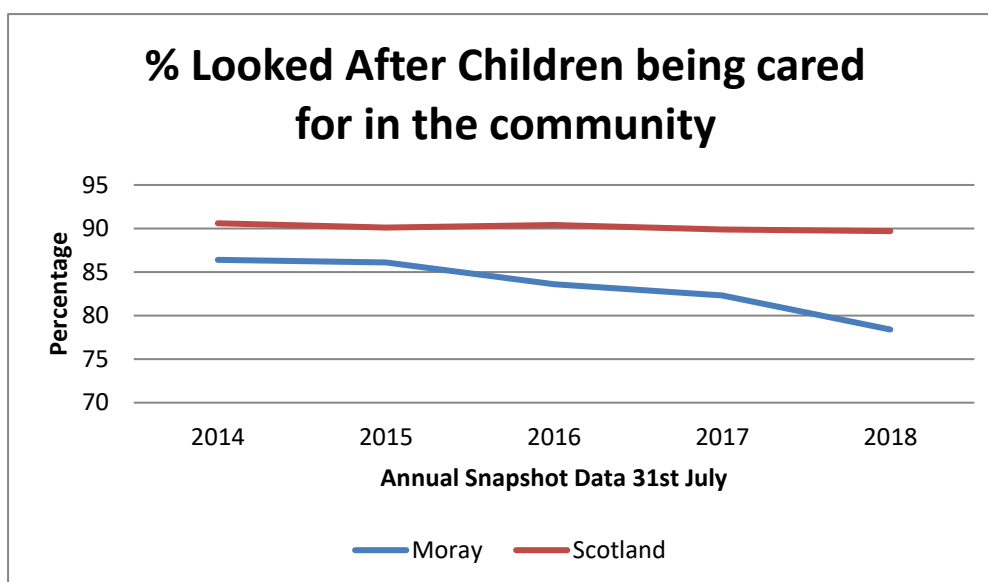
### GP Flagging System

Consistent with the “ask” of our CEYP, that their needs and care history is known, so that they need not constantly repeat themselves, a flagging system has been created within Health on acute care systems for Children and Young People who become looked after, where consent has been given. Since February 2018 all children who become looked after are flagged on the GP practice acute system at the point of being looked after, and work is underway to update systems retrospectively. This flagging ensures that health professionals are aware when treating the young person of their care status and history.

## 5.4 Providing nurturing and stable care arrangements and achieve permanence without delay – Rights and Participation Pillar

### Balance of Care

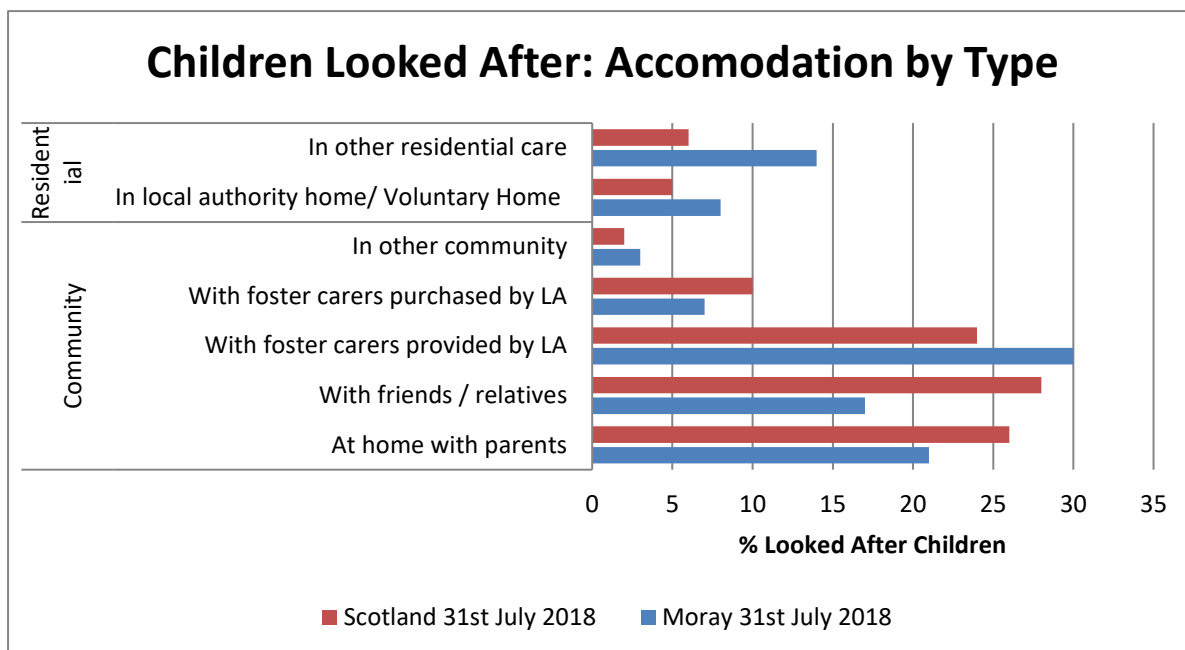
As at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018, 78.4% of Moray’s Looked after Children were being looked after in a community rather than a residential setting. This includes children looked after at home, in kinship care or foster care, and children who have been placed with prospective adopters.



From the national figures on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018 Moray ranked 30<sup>th</sup> out of 32 Local Authorities across Scotland. The figures show that Moray has a higher proportion of children in residential care than the national average, and the lowest proportion of children looked after in a community setting of all comparator authority areas.

One of the “asks” of our CECYP was to have fewer placement moves and to be placed with their siblings. To this end, over the course of 2018, Moray Council’s placement services team redesigned the fostering scheme and this was approved by the Children and Young People’s Service Committee in March 2019. This new scheme reflects not only the “asks” of CECYP, but is designed to respond to: -

- the need to provide care for Moray’s most vulnerable children in Moray;
- the new health and social care standards and
- the learning and development framework – the standard for foster care.



#### Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE)

Permanence and Care Excellence is a whole systems approach to reducing drift and delay in the journey to permanence for looked after children and young people. PACE applies Quality Improvement methodology, to ensure that decisions about permanence for children and young people are made without delay and drift.

Working together with the Centre for Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland (CELCIS) and the Scottish government, Children and Families Social Work Services together with Health services, the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration and Children Hearing Scotland have identified 4 key aims for improvement: -

- Aim 1: By 30 September 2018, 100% of children looked after at home for more than 2 years from 1 June 2018, will undergo a peer review that will be reported to the Service & Team Managers.
- Aim 2: By 1 July 2019, 90% of looked after & accommodated children, accommodated on or after 1 June 2018, will have a recommendation for permanence within 30 weeks.
- Aim 3: By 1 July 2019, 60% of children who have had a recommendation for permanence away from home from 1 June 2018, will be presented to the Fostering & Adoption Panel within 15 weeks.
- Aim 4: By 1 July 2019, 60% of children from 1 June 2018, who have an agency approved permanence plan to be secured via a Permanence Order, will have the order lodged within 16 weeks of the agency decision date.

The PACE group continues to meet monthly however the support from CELCIS and the Scottish government has become “long arm”, given demands on that resource. The group is advised monthly of progress with a number of tests of change which are designed to promote the 4 aims listed above. Monthly run charts show where progress is indicated, however given the life cycle of the aims, the detail to date does not reflect the cycle in entirety.

## 5.5 Participation of Care Experienced Young People

### Champions Board

Since its launch in July 2017, the Champions Board is now established and attended by CECYP and Corporate Parents. There are regular attendees from each and moving forward one aim is to increase the number of CECYP who attend and the range of corporate parents. The core group of care experienced young people who engage in the Champions Board have been central to its development and success and their commitment remains evident and their attendance is supported by Who Cares? Scotland, Action for Children and Moray Council's Placement services Team, with remit for supporting children and young people through and after care.

Working together with Findhorn Bay Arts Project, Who Cares? Scotland has supported the development of a group for younger CECYP, known as 'Little Fix'. The group have been meeting since October 2017.

At the October 2018 Champions Board Corporate Parenting event 14 Care Experienced Children and Young People took part in a key pad consultation. The consultation focussed on rating how they felt in relation to statements around each of the ten guarantees within the Corporate Parenting Strategic Group:

#### **Did they feel supported to be healthy and active, and felt able to access the services they needed to achieve this?**

- Almost three quarters agreed or strongly agreed.
- Of the remaining young people, half said they disagreed or strongly disagreed and half said their neither agreed nor disagreed.

#### **Did they feel supported with their learning in variety of settings such as school, college, university and/or training?**

- Almost three quarters agreed or strongly agreed.
- Of the remaining young people, half said they disagreed or strongly disagreed and half said they neither agreed nor disagreed.

#### **Did they feel supported to play an active and responsible role at home, school and in the community?**

- Just under half agreed or strongly agreed and a half of our young people disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- The remaining neither agreed nor disagreed.

#### **Did they feel accepted in the community that they live in?**

- Just under half agreed or strongly agreed and the same number disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- The remaining young people neither agreed nor disagreed.

The feedback received through the consultation has informed the action plans of the 6 pillar groups that report to the Champions Board and Corporate Parenting Strategic Group: the pillar groups are aligned to the columns of the Care Leavers Covenant.

## 6. Keeping Children Safe from Harm and Abuse

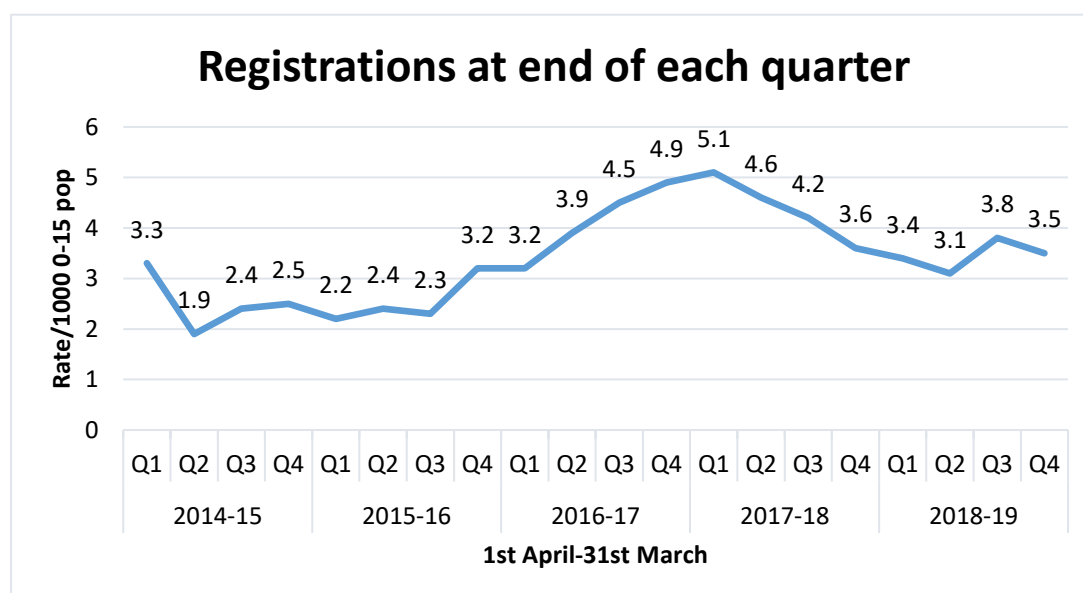
Child Protection Committees are the key local bodies for developing, implementing and improving child protection strategy across and between agencies, bodies and the local community. The Moray Child Protection Committee has a number of key functions in order to jointly identify and manage risk to children and young people, these are: continuous improvement, strategic planning, public information and communication.

### 6.1 Protecting Children

#### Children on the Child Protection Register

Child Protection Register (CPR) is a register of all children who are the subject of an inter-agency Child Protection Plan. The register has no legal status but provides an administrative system for alerting practitioners that there is sufficient professional concern about a child to warrant an inter-agency Child Protection Plan. The benchmarking statistics for 31st July 2017 placed Moray as the local authority with the highest proportion of children on the register per 1000 0-15yr old population (4.8). The published statistics at 31st July 2018 reported Moray having the fifth highest rate of children on the register. Given these statistics analysis was undertaken. Factors such as complex needs; need for ongoing intensive support and family size appear to have influenced the numbers of children who were subject to registration.

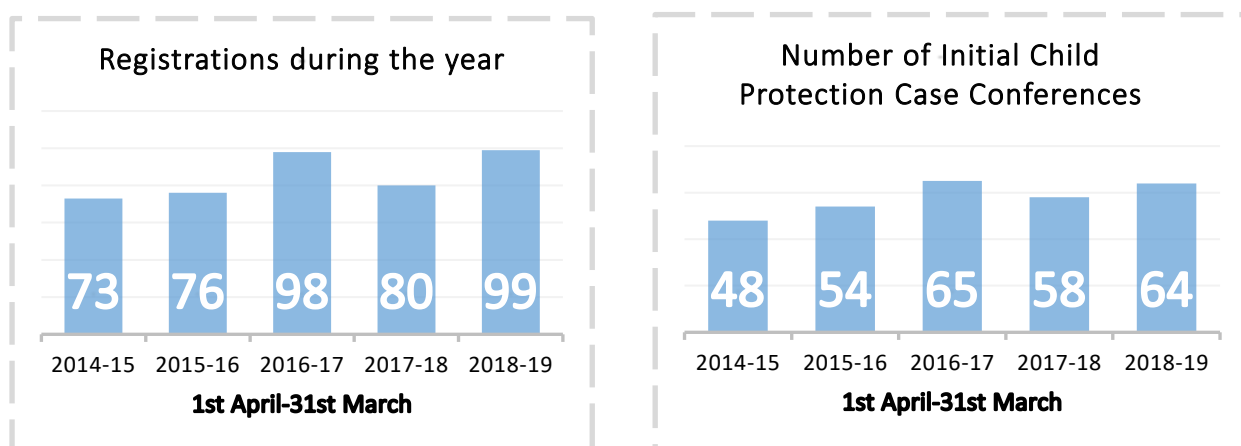
Since 2017 registration rates show evidence of decline, this is subject to ongoing analysis by the CPC.





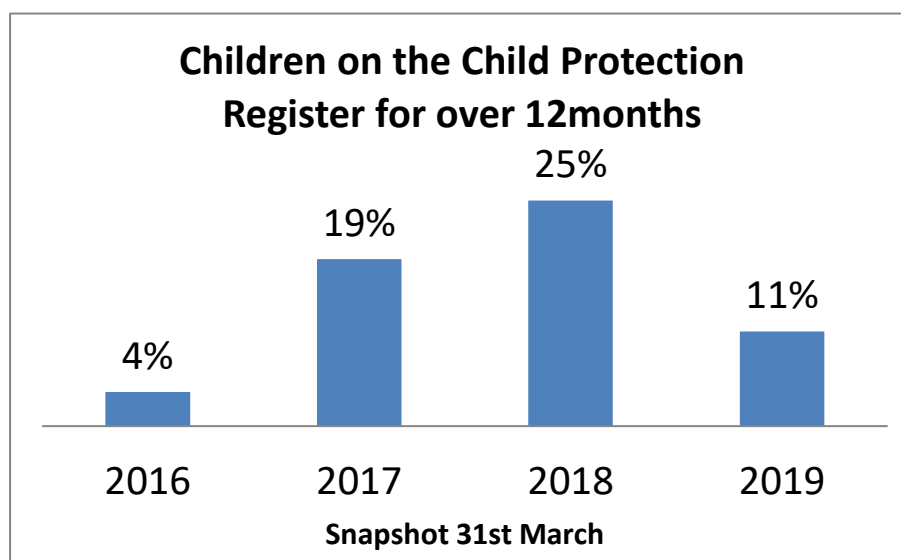
Confirmed in the Children’s Social Work Statistics 2017-18, Moray has the highest percentage of Initial Child Protection Case Conferences that result in registration.

The published children’s social work statistics (1st Aug 2017 -31st July 2018) show an average of 76.92% Initial Child Protection Case Conferences resulted in registrations across Scotland. Moray is the local authority area demonstrating the highest conversion rate i.e. 94.5% for this timeframe. Further analysis and audit from within the social work service will explore context and make recommendations to the CPC for action



### Length of Time on the Register

The National average for children on the register for over 12months in 2018 was 16%. Focused improvement work has been undertaken to review cases for children on the register for over 9months following a peak in the number of children on the register for over 12months during 2017/18.

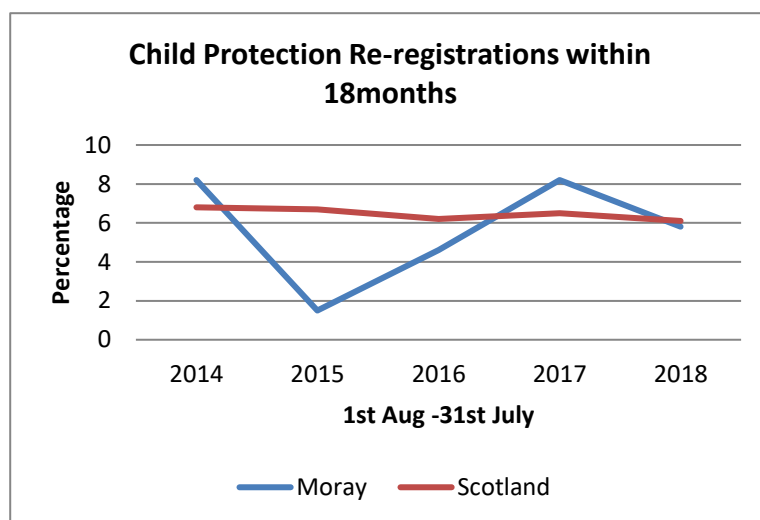


Moray has seen a reduction from 30.5% of children on the register for over 12 months on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 down to 11% of children on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 placing Moray below the previously published national average.

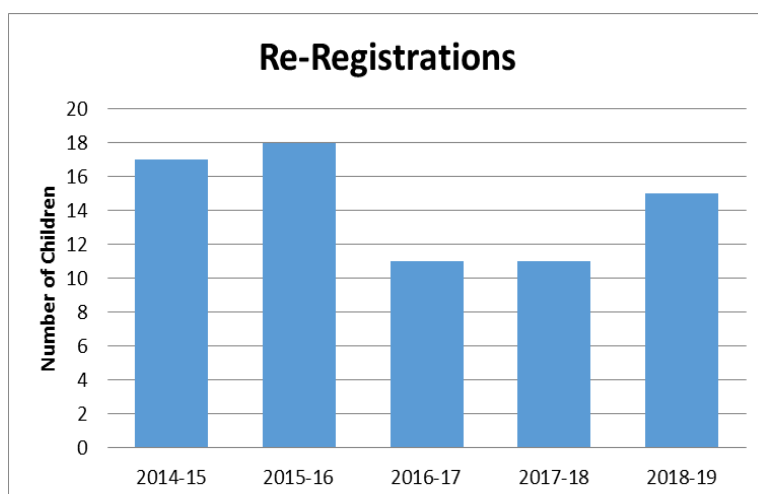
Analysis of this performance indicator will continue to be triangulated with practitioner and reviewing team feedback to shape ongoing developments, highlighted through case specific learning and/or that which applies to broader culture and practice.

### Re-registrations

As at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018, Moray was the 18<sup>th</sup> highest local authority out of 32 across Scotland for the proportion of re-registrations that were within 18 months of de-registration. It is important for Moray to continue to monitor this figure to ensure that the changes that are established in order to de-register a child are sustainable in the longer term.



Local data shows that between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, 15 of the children added to the child protection register in Moray had been registered at some point previously before. Whilst this number is higher than previous years, none of these children had returned to the register within 24 months of de-registration indicating an improving picture locally for re-registration timescales.



A local practice standard has been established through the Child Protection Committee to ensure that multiagency support is in place for all children removed from the register, in the form of two child's planning meetings post de-registration as a minimum.

## **6.2 Neglect and its impact on children**

The Moray Neglect Working Group (MNWG) was set up in 2017 by the Moray Child Protection Committee (CPC) as an initial response to the inspection findings, with a focus to develop a collective understanding and awareness around this complex area of work. The MNWG is chaired by the Specialist Nurse for Child Protection in Moray and the membership has multi-agency representation from across the Partnership.

The key function of the group is to develop an action plan to improve the initial risk assessment of, and response to, vulnerable children and young people at risk of or experiencing neglectful parenting and cumulative harm.

## Moray Care Profile

Based on national best practice, the decision has been taken to introduce a Care Profile in Moray as an evidence based tool to assess neglect. The Graded Care Profile Scale designed by Dr Leon Polnay and Dr O P Srivastava, Bedfordshire and Luton Community NHS Trust offers professionals a shared language in relation to neglect, taking away some of the challenges inherent in understanding and applying thresholds, ensuring neglectful parenting is more visible.

Development work is underway within the Neglect Working Group to establish multiagency practitioner guidance in preparation of a large scale roll out of the assessment tool. Feedback from parents and practitioners has shaped the content of this guidance to date, using improvement methodology to test the tool at different stages of support within Children and Families Social Work teams.

The broader application of the assessment tool within universal health visiting and education services is in the planning stages, with the aim to support families within the child's planning process to identify and make sustained positive changes at an earlier stage within the GIRFEC pathway.

## **6.3 Child Sexual Exploitation**

### Residential houses

As part of the Child Protection Committee's plan to proactively raise awareness of and address Child Sexual Exploitation, a number of activities have progressed within residential care provision for Looked after Children in Moray. Staff have received training and annual refresher sessions are part of the process of ensuring that staff feel confident and competent in identifying when CEYP may be at risk of CSE.

In addition to the staff group and their training, there are dedicated Police Liaison Officers for each of the residential houses in Moray and this involves regular sharing of concerns, better and more informed decision making between the houses and Police, and crucially the involvement of children and young people in these areas.

### Licensing

In June 2018, in partnership with the Moray Licensing Board, all 323 licensed taxi drivers operating in Moray received the newly developed Child Sexual Exploitation awareness raising leaflet as part of a broader event that provided an opportunity to raise awareness of CSE and how to report concerns. This was positively received by the taxi drivers who verbally fed back they have a greater understanding of their community responsibility and that they may see early signs of CSE before statutory or support services do. As part of the Licensing Board, Child Sexual Exploitation awareness raising information was distributed to all Community Councils in Moray and the members of the Moray Federation of Village Halls & Community Associations.

## 7. Delivering High Quality Services for children, young people and families

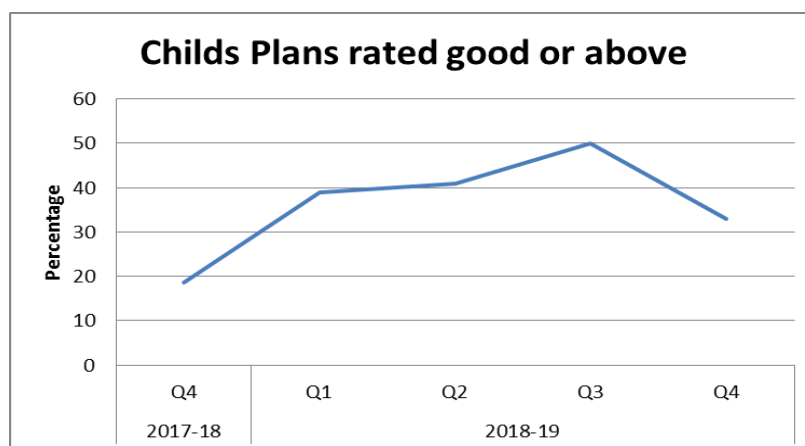
*“Partners had demonstrated considerable commitment to and investment in developing new approaches to improve standards of operational practice. A revised suite of multi-agency procedures was providing clearer direction and guidance to staff. This had been supported by a refreshed programme of learning and development, to help staff understand and implement these changes.”*

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### 7.1 Intervening Early

#### Child’s Planning Process

Child’s Plans that are submitted by the Named Person alongside a request for social work involvement are audited weekly by the Multi Agency Practice Hub. Child’s Plan audits undertaken during 2017 indicated the challenges Named Persons faced in completing child plans during the early stages of noting concerns. Direct support, training and peer support has evidenced an overall improvement in this area.



An evaluation of the Child Planning Process was undertaken by the GIRFEC Strategic Group as part of the group’s improvement priorities, this included feedback from professionals, children, young people and their families. This feedback indicated that although there were strengths in the approach there were significant revisions needed in the Child’s Plan and in the process.

These revisions were taken forward by the group as a test of change in the Buckie and Forres localities, up scaling across all areas in Moray commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

## 7.2 Assessing and responding to risk

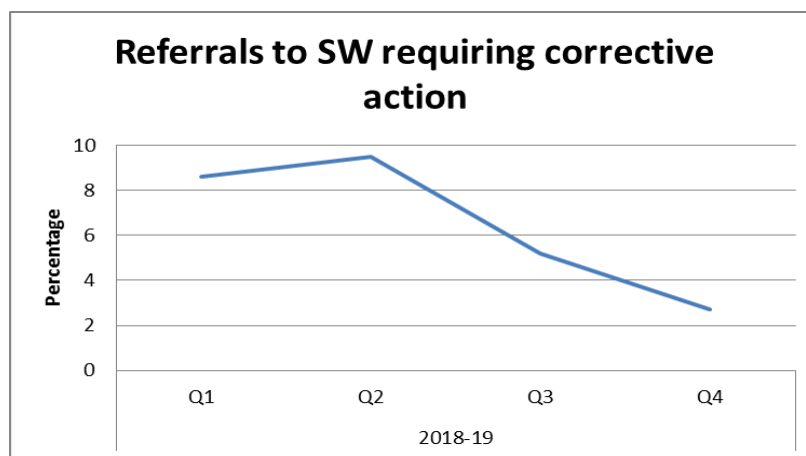
*“The revised inter-agency referral discussion process was helping to ensure a more consistent response to concerns when they were identified. The national practice model and risk assessment framework were both being used more consistently to support the assessment of children and young people.”*

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### Referrals to Children and Families Social work

Moray’s Multi-Agency Practice Hub (MAPH) was set up in June 2017 as a forum to review the quality of all referrals into social work and the subsequent initial social work response. The MAPH continues to meet on a weekly basis, with all agencies represented. The MAPH has enabled the Partnership to utilise resources in a more targeted way to improve the consistency and quality of referrals and therefore meeting the needs of children and young people at the earliest opportunity:

The workings and analysis of MAPH serves to ensure staff remain alert to the early identification of neglect and cumulative harm, so children and young people receive the help they need at the time they need it.



### Practitioner Survey Feedback:

**81%** of staff felt more confident in recognising the signs when a child or young person may need help or protection from harm or abuse caused by neglectful parenting.

**80%** of staff felt more confident in reporting child protection or child welfare concerns which may arise due to neglectful parenting.

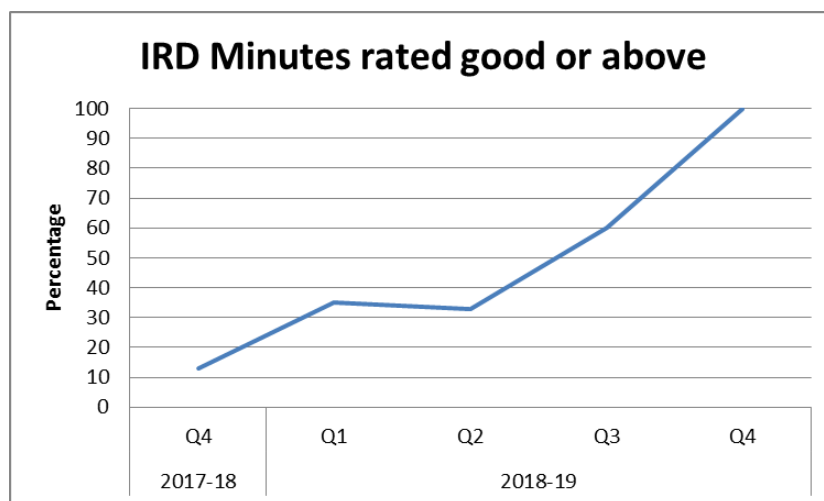
**80%** of staff receives helpful advice from designated staff within their own agency when they have concerns about children and young people who may be experiencing neglectful parenting.

**88%** of staff agree that guidance for reporting child protection and child welfare concerns is clear and unambiguous

### Initial Referral Discussion Protocol

In order to improve the IRD record and subsequent decision making, the Moray Initial Referral Discussion Protocol was revised in Aug 2018 informed by learning from MAPH and consultation feedback. The IRD minute template was also updated to better promote inclusion of all relevant data and assessments. MAPH has since dip sampled IRD minutes to continue to feedback practice improvements for this process.

As part of the review of IRD procedures in 2018, the pathways into child protection processes were analysed. Concerns were highlighted around the early identification of cumulative harm. In order to improve this, the current IRD process has been amended so that all concerns, including cumulative harm and neglect, are escalated through an IRD to determine whether a child protection investigation or other measures are required. Timescales for IRD have now been tightened to two hours from point of an IRD being requested (five days for an unborn). This ensures that decisive action is taken to reduce the risk of children and young people experiencing emotional harm or neglectful parenting.



The Partnership is confident that the IRD procedures now in place are clear and unambiguous, and that IRDs are reaching the right outcomes for children and young people. IRD procedures and IRD outcomes will continue to be monitored through Multiagency Practice Hub audits

## Joint Interviews

Following the review of Child Services in Moray, it was agreed between Police Scotland and Moray Social Work Services to look at the Joint Investigative Interviews of children and the training around the subject. A minimum of two joint interviews are reviewed and observed in each month. Learning is fed back to practitioners and incorporated into JII training content.

### **7.3 Planning for Individual Children and Young People**

#### Social Work Assessment

The Partnership recognised that there was need for the assessment of risk to be more robustly applied in a meaningful way to ensure that decisive action could be taken timeously. Social work led on the development of social work assessment tools/templates that better capture and articulate partnership concerns around risk, drawing on National Risk Assessment Framework (NRAF). These enhanced tools, with integrated chronologies, provide a common language through which to explore risks, working alongside families and the team around the child.

The Reunification Assessment and the Parenting Capacity Assessments were developed as it was acknowledged that there was a need for targeted, outcome focused assessments which would highlight need and avoid drift for children. The assessments have been embedded into processes and practice across the Social Work Teams. The assessments are recognised by practitioners as important tools to promote timely planning for children. The assessments incorporate an assessment of the child's needs with an appraisal of risk; the outcome of the assessment feeds directly into the child's plan. The next stage in this process involves the testing of a targeted Child in Need assessment.

#### Child Planning –Post De-registration

Arrangements are in place to monitor children's progress following deregistration from Child Protection Register to ensure relevant and appropriate supports continue where required. Practice standards have been set with reporting arrangements for 2018-19 in place to allow partnership monitor improvements in this area going forwards.

### **7.4 Involving Children and Young People**

#### Practitioner Survey Feedback:

**74%** of staff surveyed agreed that children and young people are well supported to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes to have their views listened to and considered

#### Champions Board Evaluation

To measure the progress of Champions Boards, the Life Changes Trust commissioned Social Value Lab in 2016 to undertake an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Boards using a Partnership Scorecard. The Scorecard gathered views about how care experienced young people, members and stakeholders felt their Boards were progressing. In total 34

respondents involved in the Moray Champions Board completed the survey, representing a 28% response rate, of which four were young people (a response rate of 10%)'

The survey responses demonstrate that:

- The Champions Board has led to the empowerment of care experienced young people: they have developed positive relationships; they have become more active in their communities; they have increased their confidence and skills to influence policy; and they are better understood by the Council and Corporate Parents.
- There has been some progress in achieving outcomes for individual care experienced young people, such as employability, housing, education, safety and health and wellbeing. However, in most areas (particularly education) a significant number of respondents are unclear about progress.
- There is also still work to do to address the perception that communities and the general public have of care experienced young people

#### Child Participation in Child Protection Processes

A focus group led by Children and Families Social Work conducted a self-evaluation focusing on the participation of children over 5 years old within Moray's child protection processes. As part of a Scotland wide scoping survey conducted by the Centre of Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland, the focus group highlighted areas of good practice and recommendations for improvement to the CPC.

In particular the involvement of Children 1st advocacy services is viewed as an effective way to ensure child participation, often including creative methods in which children's views are presented during conferences. A small scale 'buddying' pilot is underway in partnership with Children 1st to support and develop practitioners, as chosen by the child, to support them and facilitate their participation during child protection processes. Whilst at an early stage, initial feedback from those involved in the project is positive.

The practice of including children's views appears to be more consistent during case conferences. It was noted that the child's voice is less consistently present at core meetings where discussions tend to be more adult led.

Following the scoping survey findings, an audit is now underway led by integrated children services to establish baseline data for child participation levels in child protection processes. The findings of this audit will provide Moray CPC with useful information in order to inform CPC improvement actions and reporting formats going forwards.



## 8. Impact on Staff

*“A comprehensive review of staff supervision arrangements had been completed, with staff having engaged well in the development and testing of new approaches.”*

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### 8.1 Supervision

Following the Care Inspectorate feedback, supervision was highlighted as an improvement priority. A number of staff within social work were interviewed and surveys carried out, to ascertain staff views on supervision; what worked well and what needed to improve. Supervision training for Service Managers and Team Managers was delivered by a consultant expert in supervision and later rolled out to a cohort of Senior Social Workers. Following this training the 4x4x4 Model of supervision was adopted within Moray Council Children’s Services and a review of the Supervision Policy now supports the changing culture necessary, to make the improvements. The Supervision Policy and guidance provides supervisors and supervisees with a range of recording tools, to support the development of supervision locally.

The Partnership recognises the importance of multi-agency supervision for staff. A wide range of opportunities have been provided for staff to participate in practice discussions. These include Locality Networks, Team around Child Reviews, Initial Case Reviews, Significant Case Reviews, Multi-agency Practice Hub, Files Audits and PRISM events

Feedback from staff during the recent staff survey demonstrates an increase in reported understanding regards shared practice and implications for improved outcomes for children and young people.

#### Practitioner Survey Feedback:

**89%** know what standards of practice managers expect from them and are working to these

**93%** have an up to date working knowledge of local multi-agency child protection policies and procedures

**70%** benefit from high quality; reflective supervision that supports, challenges and quality assures their practice and decision making

**70%** agree that their manager gives them helpful, regular feedback on the quality of their work

**76%** feel optimistic about their work and ability to overcome barriers to achieving the best for children and young people

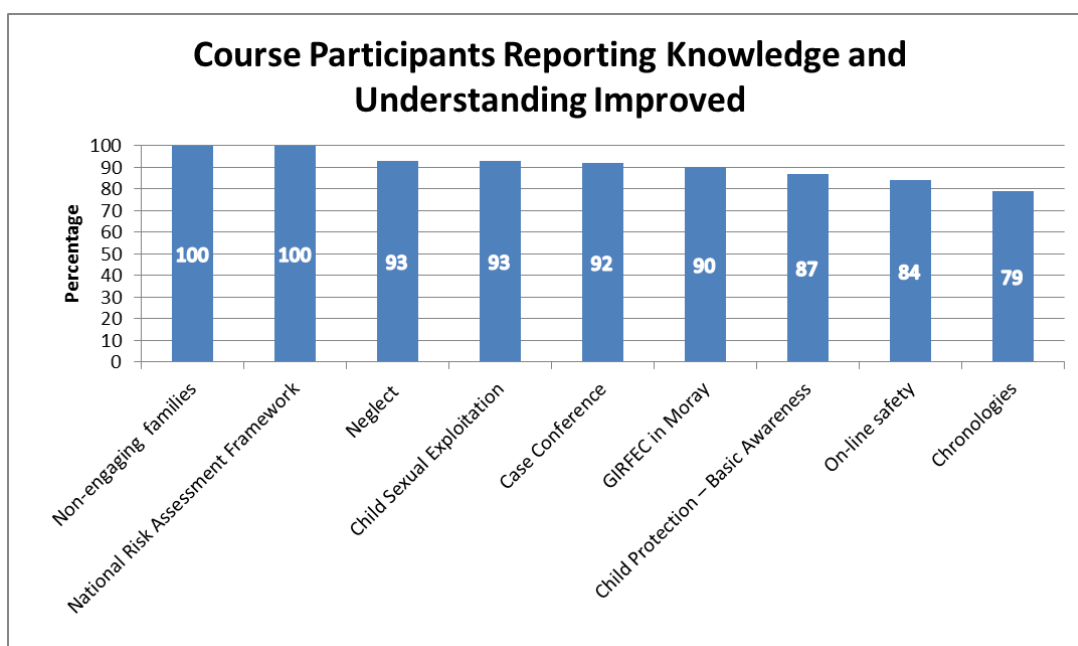
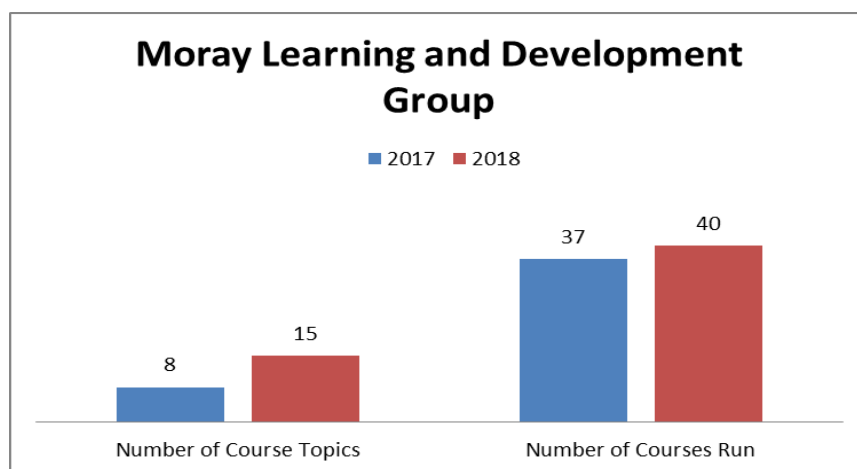
**81%** agree that the training they have participated in during the last 2 years has improved their knowledge, skills and confidence

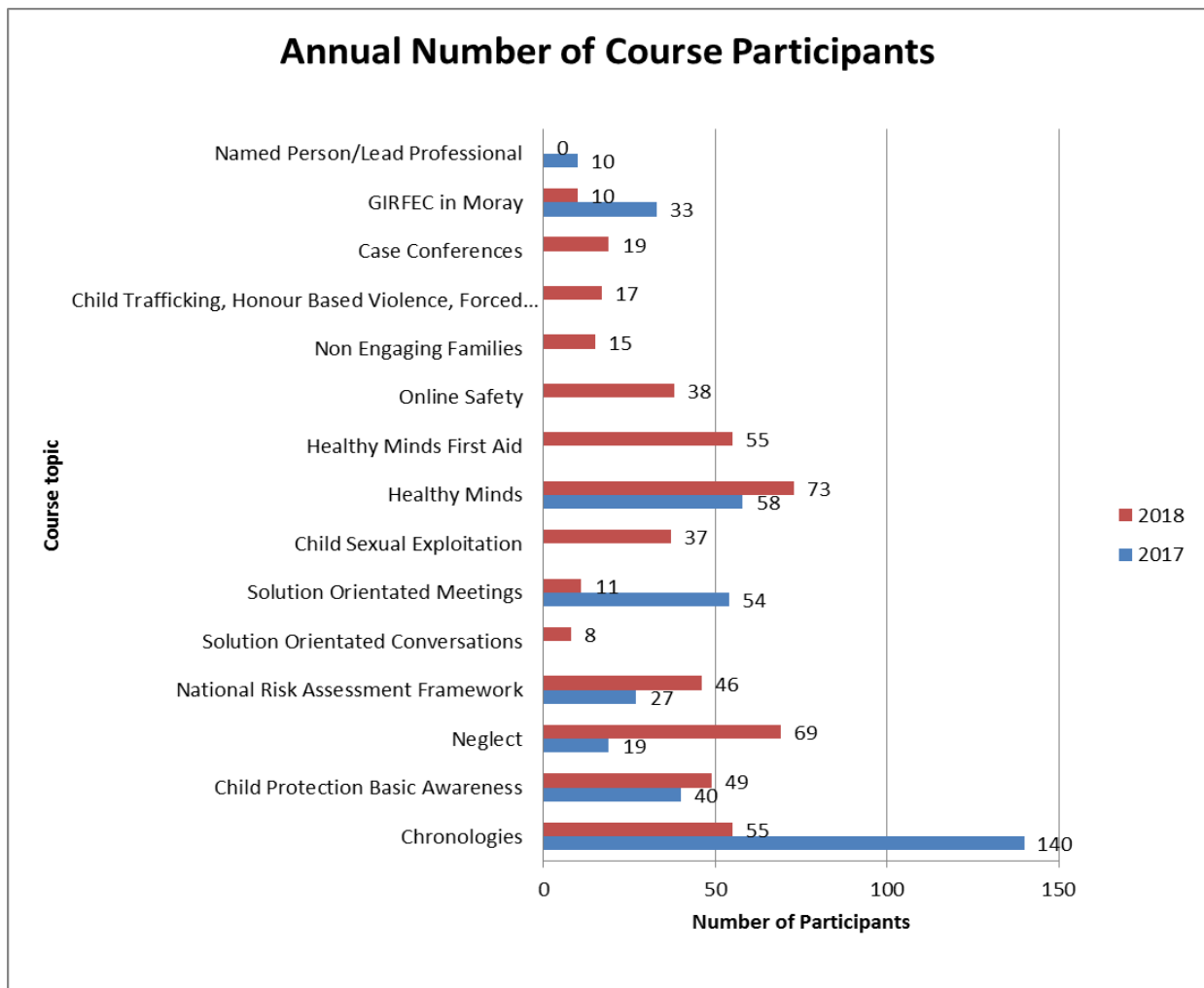
**77%** agree that they have a clear understanding of their role and contribution in the child’s plan

## 8.2 Moray Learning and Development Group

The Moray Learning and Development Group (MLDG) was established in 2015 to coordinate training opportunities in Child Protection, GIRFEC, Early Years and Corporate Parenting for practitioners within the Community Planning Partnership. Priorities for 2018 were identified by the Executive Leadership Group through the findings of the Care Inspectorate Children Service Inspection in 2016. These were Neglect, Chronologies, the National Risk Assessment Framework, and Child Sexual Exploitation and on-line safety. Other courses were delivered based on practitioner feedback and in support of the Name Person Service.

In the reporting period April to December 2018 there were a total of 40 courses delivered to 494 practitioners, an increase in the total delivery from the previous year where 43 courses were delivered to 381 participants for 8 courses.





MLDG developed and delivered a range of new courses from 2018, including case conferences, non-engaging families, online safety and a combined course consisting of Child Trafficking, Honour Based Violence, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation.

The work of the MLDG is currently being reviewed against the National Framework for Child Protection learning and development in Scotland 2012, to revise the strategic planning of multiagency workforce development in Moray, to design a delivery model that applies to general contact, specific contact and intensive contact workforce.

### 8.3 Practice Reflection Improvements Short Module (PRISM)

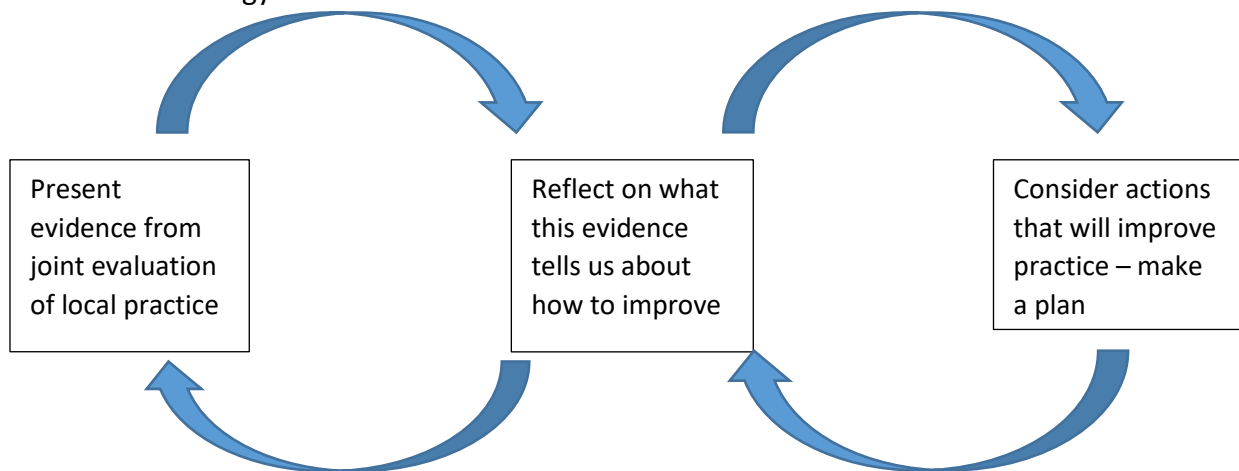
PRISM was launched as a vehicle for sharing evaluation of local practice with staff and facilitating multi-agency reflection. PRISM is an open learning event where the evaluation of local practice that is undertaken by the local Child Protection Committee Significant Case Review Group, is shared and discussed with a multi-agency group of practitioners, small group reflection is then supported and consideration is given to how local practice can be improved

The first PRISM event was held on 6 September which was attended by 95 staff from across the partnership. 58 participants filled in an evaluation form following the event with 90% showing an increase in knowledge and understanding of practices issues,

chronologies, and neglect. The second PRISM event was held in Forres on 22nd of February and attended by 40 staff. 18 participants completed an evaluation with 95% reporting an increase in their knowledge and understanding.

Over the two sessions held to date, an average of 93% participants have reported an increase in knowledge and understanding of practices issues, chronologies, and neglect

PRISM Methodology:



#### 8.4 Leadership of Improvement and Change

*“Leaders and senior officers had taken the findings from the joint inspection in 2016 very seriously. They had made a firm commitment to work more closely together and raise their collective aspiration for improving services to children and young people.”*

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#### Practitioner Survey Feedback:

**71%** of staff agree that their organisations vision for children and young people is recognised and understood by partners and is being used to inform the way in which they work together.

**70%** agree that their organisations Children's Services Plan gives focus and direction to work across services

**68%** of staff feel confident that leaders are making the changes necessary to improve outcomes for children and young people in Moray.

**56%** of staff agree that leaders are highly visible and communicate regularly with staff at all levels

**39%** of staff agree that change is managed well across the partnership

#### Moray Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO)

A new Chief Social Work Officer was appointed in August 2018 to oversee decision making and governance within Children's Social Work, with the role covering both children and adult services.

In September 2018 the first Social Work Core Leadership Group met to discuss and agree the approach to be taken across Children's and Adult Services. A Social Work Leaders Meeting took place in November 2018 when Social Work Service Managers came together to discuss a draft Improvement Plan for social work, and in December 2018 two sessions were held for all social work staff. A revised Practice Governance Board was established in Children's Services, with an initial meeting before the end of the calendar year. The Practice Governance Board meets monthly and is attended by managers with responsibility for Social Work and Social Care in Integrated Children's Services, in order to drive improvements and raise standards of practice across teams.

#### Moray Significant Case Review Group

The Moray Child Protection Committee established the Moray Significant Case Review group in 2017 to consider all Initial Case Review referrals from staff where the National Significant Case Review criteria has been met. This group reports back to Moray Child Protection Committee and the Care Inspectorate when there is a requirement for an Initial Case Review (ICR). The group promotes dialogue with practitioners across the partnership, supporting an active learning culture. The group meets monthly, and has considered four ICRs in 2018, all of which had neglect as a core issue. Learning from each review is disseminated to practitioners and informs the focus of PRISM events. A Significant Case Review is currently underway in Moray.

## 9. Our capacity for improvement

*“Chief Officers had demonstrated a clear commitment to continuous improvement through their investment in joint self-evaluation, quality assurance and supervision. Following the joint inspection in 2016, they created the quality assurance, performance and planning team (QAPPT) to lead and co-ordinate the quality assurance agenda across children’s services. Initially set up on an interim basis, this resource, including a new team manager post, was being jointly resourced by partners on a permanent basis. Reporting directly to the executive leadership group, and aligned with each of the four strategic planning groups, this had created a more consistent approach to joint self-evaluation and shared learning across children’s services.*

*The framework to support joint self-evaluation and quality assurance was developed after the inspection and was being implemented. Partners were using a range of approaches and methodologies to inform their joint self-evaluation work. Single and multi-agency practice audits and reviews of individual children’s cases were helping partners identify areas of practice where further improvement was required. Staff and first-line managers were receiving helpful feedback on the learning from this work.”*

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