



Item No. 10

Meeting Date

Wednesday 4th February 2026

**Glasgow City
Integration Joint Board
Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee**

Report By: Karen Dyball, Assistant Chief Officer, Children's Services.

Contact: Liz Simpson, Head of Children's Services, Residential, Families for Children and Continuing Care and Aftercare

Phone: 0141 287 0499

Fostering, Adult Fostering and Adoption Services – Care Inspectorate Activity

Purpose of Report:

To inform the IJB Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee of the outcome of the inspection of Glasgow City HSCP's Fostering, Adult Fostering, and Adoption Services and the action plan created as a result of the inspection.

Background/Engagement:

Glasgow City HSCP Fostering, Adult Fostering and Adoption Services were subject to a short notice inspection which took place between 8th September and 3rd October 2025. The inspection was carried out by the Care Inspectorate.

Governance Route:

The matters contained within this paper have been previously considered by the following group(s) as part of its development.

HSCP Senior Management Team ☐

Council Corporate Management Team ☐

Health Board Corporate Management Team ☐

Council Committee ☐

Update requested by IJB ☐

Other ☒

Social Work Professional Governance Board

Not Applicable ☐

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Recommendations:	<p>The IJB Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Note the Fostering, Adult Fostering and Adoption inspection findings; andb) Note the Fostering and Adult Fostering service action plan (Appendix 1).
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Relevance to Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan:
<p>High quality fostering, adult fostering and adoption services are integral to the IJB's strategy for delivering high quality care and effective outcomes for the city's most vulnerable children and young people who need to be cared for away from home.</p> <p>Not only is this part of delivering the IJB Strategic Plan and priorities in relation to Strengthening Communities to Reduce Harm and Building a Sustainable Future but is a cornerstone in relation to the delivery of 'The Promise,' the outcome of the Independent Care Review.</p>

Implications for Health and Social Care Partnership:

Reference to National Health & Wellbeing Outcome:	<p>Foster care, adult fostering and adoption services contribute to some of the key national outcomes in terms of improving outcomes for children and young people by improving support for foster carers and adopters. This ensures that children and young people who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.</p> <p>Key to any improvements is to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and to deliver effective services that make efficient use of health and social care services. Such outcomes are aligned to the HSCP's transformation of children's services agenda and the desire to shift the balance of care, securing better outcomes for all children and young people living in the city.</p> <p>Outcome 1: People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer.</p> <p>Outcome 3: People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.</p> <p>Outcome 4: Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services</p> <p>Outcome 7: People using health and social care services are safe from harm</p> <p>Outcome 9: Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services.</p>
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Personnel:	Some staff may be asked to work differently to support the development of tests of change to explore approaches which are effective in meeting children, young people and carers' needs.
Carers:	Foster carers and adopters are key to the effective delivery of services and meeting good permanence outcomes for care experienced children and young people. This paper presents the outcome of recent inspection of the fostering, adult fostering and adoption services, and references proposals for improving the services, taking into account the findings of the inspection and feedback from children, young people, carers and adopters.
Provider Organisations:	None.
Equalities:	The report references current practice and outcomes, and proposals for next steps. As such an EQIA is not deemed necessary at this stage. The wider Children's Transformation Programme, of which the work detailed in this report is a part, has been subject to a recent EQIA. https://glasgowcity.hscp.scot/equalities-impact-assessments
Fairer Scotland Compliance:	The Children's Transformation Programme actively seeks to reduce inequalities and to support children, young people and carers to improve their quality of life and reduce the impact of health and social inequalities.
Financial:	Some of the requirements and recommendations made within the inspection reports may have financial implications which, if to be considered, require further scrutiny.
Legal:	Normal legal processes and procedures for Glasgow City Council will be followed in relation to developing practitioners' roles to support children, young people and carers in accordance with feedback about the service and continuous improvement of the service.
Economic Impact:	Providing children and young people with high quality care makes best use of resources, and helps to ensure positive long-term outcomes, thereby reducing future need for further specialist supports, including Adult Services.
Sustainability:	This work fully aligns with the Christie Commission report the principles of GIRFEC, the children's transformational change programme and the aspirations of 'The Promise,'

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	which emphasise the need to deliver the right high-quality support at the right time to improve outcomes. Given that the key point of leverage to deliver the transformational change programme is to develop practice at the frontline – at the point of interaction with children, young people and their families and carers – the current workforce represents a considerable resource in terms of its contribution to achieving sustainable change across all supports and services to ensure best outcomes.
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Sustainable Procurement and Article 19:	None.
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Risk Implications:	<p>Good support to foster carers and adopters ensures they feel valued. Should this not be provided there is a risk that foster carers will leave the service and either cease to foster or join private or third sector fostering agencies creating a financial risk to the service as well as a risk that care placements cannot be provided when needed.</p> <p>For adopters, if support is not provided then this could lead to adoption breakdowns which would be detrimental to all concerned.</p> <p>There is currently a national shortage of foster carers and a recruitment crisis. Glasgow has been significantly impacted by this.</p>
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Implications for Glasgow City Council:	None.
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Implications for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde:	None.
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1. Purpose

- 1.1. To inform the IJB Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee of the outcome of the inspection of Glasgow City HSCP's Fostering, Adult Fostering and Adoption Services and the action plan created as a result of the inspection.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Care Inspectorate gave notice on 28th July 2025 of their intention to conduct a short notice inspection of Glasgow City HSCP's fostering service, adult fostering service and the adoption service. The inspection took place between 8th September and 3rd October 2025 by two lead inspectors from the Care Inspectorate, assisted by four additional inspectors.

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- 2.2. In preparation, the inspectors reviewed existing information which included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the previous inspection.
- 2.3. In advance, the fostering, adult fostering and adoption services uploaded evidence to SharePoint folders, and issued questionnaires to staff, foster carers, adopters, other key stakeholders of children and young people.
- 2.4. While there are separate lead Inspectors and processes for each of the services, some provided evidence and inspection activity overlapped, for example in relation to permanence planning.
- 2.5. For the inspections, young people, foster carers and adopters were spoken with alongside staff, managers of services and external professionals.

3. Care Inspection Grades

- 3.1 Areas of inspection for the fostering and adult fostering services focused on four key Quality Indicators which are as follows:
- How well do we support people's well-being?
 - How good is our leadership?
 - How good is our staff team?
 - How well is our care and support planned?
- 3.2 The Care Inspectorate use a six-point scoring system where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent. The Care Inspectorate system selects the lowest score across the subheadings and awards this as the overall score for that Quality Indicator.

4. Fostering Service and Adult Fostering Service

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Children, young people, adults and their caregiver families experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 Children, young people and adults get the most out of life	4 - Good
1.3 Children, young people and adults' health and wellbeing benefits from the care and support they experience	5 - Very Good
1.4 Children, young people, adults and their caregiver families get the service that is right for them	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate

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How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
3.2 Staff have the right knowledge, competence and development to support children, young people, adults and their care giver families.	4 - Good
How well is our care and support planned?	2 - Weak
5.1 Assessment and care planning reflects the outcomes and wishes of children, young people and adults	2 - Weak

5. Adoption Service

5.1 The adoption service was only assessed on one key question:

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
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6. Key themes, recommendations, and Requirements

6.1 The key messages from the Care Inspectorate are:

- Children and Young people experienced enduring loving relationships with caregiver families.
- Staff were skilled and responsive to the support needs of caregivers.
- Quality assurance oversight and tools had improved and were supporting improved outcomes.
- There was a strong confidence in the leadership team to continue to develop and progress.
- Young people were able to remain with their fostering families beyond the age of 18 years

6.2 Inspectors can specify requirements (which are mandatory) and can also highlight areas for improvement. The fostering service and the adult fostering service have four requirements and three areas for improvement. These are the same for both services. The Care Inspectorate set a deadline for completion of 3 of the requirements as 31st January 2026 and one requirement for 30th June 2026 but with a recognition that work would begin but not necessarily be completed within that time frame.

6.3 The adoption service had no requirements with one area for improvement which is to update the current procedures and work is already underway with this.

6.4 A robust and detailed action plan has been developed and is being implemented to address identified requirements and areas for improvement across the fostering and adult fostering services and is attached at Appendix 1.

6.5 The Fostering, Adult Fostering and Adoption inspection reports are now published and available on the Care Inspectorate website.

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7. Key Service Developments and Challenges

- 7.1 Glasgow has been very successful in reducing the number of children and young people coming into care through investment in robust family support services. When children do require to come into care, their profiles are often complex with the prevalence of neurodiversity increasing.
- 7.2 There is currently a national crisis in relation to the recruitment of foster carers. The Scottish Government had a national campaign in 2025 to support local authorities with foster care recruitment, but this has had limited impact. Many of Glasgow's foster carers are nearing retirement age, raising the real prospect that the service may not be able to recruit and numbers of foster carers will continue to decline. This places increased demand on residential services, which has seen an increase in referrals for younger children. The current challenges also mean that foster carers are at times having to go over their registered numbers to manage the demand. This can often be challenging for carers when the complexity of need of children and young people is increasing.
- 7.3 The service has created a learning and development team which is a team covering children's residential services and fostering, adult fostering and adoption. One of the senior learning and development officers recruited has a specific remit and expertise within the field of neurodiversity. The implementation of the Nurture Framework within our children's houses has been transformational and this model will now be implemented across our fostering services to support foster carers to meet the increasingly complex needs of Glasgow's children and young people.
- 7.4 The introduction of the model of My Meetings is being implemented across the fostering services delivered by independent reviewing officers (IROs) with a dedicated IRO resource. The development and implementation of this model has been praised by the care inspectorate for its child centeredness and alignment with the aspirations of The Promise.
- 7.5 The payment structure to foster carers is being reviewed as this has not kept pace with annual increases. Foster carers report that the increase in the cost of living has significantly impacted on them and there is a need to increase fees in line with inflation. The Scottish Government does have recommended allowance rates, and the allowances have been increased within Glasgow in line with this.
- 7.6 The challenges experienced in Glasgow are being experienced across the country and the managers within Families for Children are working with their colleagues across Scotland to highlight the challenges and seek solutions.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The IJB Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
- a) Note the Fostering, Adult Fostering and Adoption inspection findings; and
 - b) Note the Fostering and Adult Fostering service action plan (Appendix 1).

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Fostering and Adult Fostering Inspection Action Plan 2025

How well do we support people's wellbeing? – 3 ADEQUATE		
Requirements (2)		
Requirement	Progress as at December 2025	Responsible
<p>1. By 30th June 2026, the provider must ensure that all young people over the age of 18 years are being cared for by caregivers who are assessed and approved to do so. To do this the provider must as a minimum:</p> <p>a) ensure that their processes meet the requirements of continuing care b) assess and approve carers looking after this age group as adult placement carers c) promote the young person's right to welfare assessments d) ensure carer registration accurately reflects the carers assessment and approval. e) develop an action plan to outline how many caregivers are still to be assessed and approved and how this will be achieved.</p> <p>This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).</p>	<p>1. a)(i) we have processes, guidance and paperwork specifically for our adult fostering panel and taking the learning from inspection, where it highlighted staff not feeling wholly confident around these processes, we have delivered 2 mandatory learning sessions specifically for staff in Families for Children on Continuing Care and Aftercare and what this means for the young people using our services. Feedback from these sessions has been positive with staff and managers advising they feel much more confident in this area of practice. We will review to ensure consolidation of this learning with future sessions being available if required.</p> <p>a)(ii) Engagement and participation from Families for Children Management in Citywide Pathways and Welfare Assessments learning and development session looking at how we improve this area of practice for all our young people who are care experienced to ensure we are consistently taking a rights-based approach, which we identify as an area of strength in Glasgow. Further sessions planned for 2026.</p> <p>b) we are identifying the young people and carers where we need to seek views, assess, and present to adult fostering panel to ensure their registration accurately reflects the care they are offering.</p>	Service Managers / Head of Service

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	<p>c) we will continue to work collaboratively with young people's social workers and their carers to identify need and promote their rights to their pathways and welfare assessments being completed with them.</p> <p>d) we will continue to support our Panel Chairs, panel members and co-ordinators to ensure that carers' registration accurately reflects the care they are delivering.</p> <p>e)(i) we have identified with workers and Team Leaders the young people who are between 18-21 within the fostering service, whose carers have not yet been registered as adult foster carers (we currently have 90 young people within this age range).</p> <p>e)(ii) we have identified of those young people, how many have pathways and welfare assessments completed, and where these have not been undertaken yet, we have scheduled discussions with the locality teams around progressing this piece of work.</p> <p>e)(iii) we have also identified those young people over the age of 21 and have begun scheduling dates throughout 2026 for Supported Care Panels so their carers registration accurately reflects the care they are offering.</p> <p>e)(iv) We have increased foster panel capacity from January 2026. Each panel will consider both fostering and adult fostering presentations and will ensure the carers registration accurately reflects the care they are providing.</p> <p>e)(v) Panel dates have been provisionally scheduled in the fostering and adult fostering panel diary and tracker to ensure quality assurance oversight.</p>	
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<p>2. By 31st January 2026, the provider must ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people. The service must ensure that there is a clear identification of a fostering family's ability to meet the needs of a child before the child joins this family. To do this the provider must, as a minimum:</p> <p>a) assessment should identify carers strengths and vulnerabilities in relation to meeting the needs of a specific child including any additional support required to ensure that children's needs are fully met.</p> <p>b) consider the needs of all young people living in a home.</p> <p>c) consider the need for reassessment of matching in the event of a change in circumstances such as, when a young person becomes a parent.</p> <p>This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011 / 210)</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19)</p>	<p>2. a) We are urgently reviewing the suite of paperwork required when matching, and placing a child within a fostering family, including the safer caring policy and risk assessment. The need for this comes both from the learning from Inspection and from our whole Service review phase 1 and 2 engagement sessions. The new iteration will include the strengths and vulnerabilities of a carer and identify the supports that will be offered to mitigate against any risk to the child or young person joining the household.</p> <p>b) The new iteration of paperwork at Families for Children will include the needs of all young people living in the home.</p> <p>c) We are holding a reflective session on 12/12/2025 specifically in relation to the recent baby death within the service, where the parent is currently care experienced. We will take the learning from this session forward to influence future practice in fostering, adult fostering and supported care households where a young person becomes a parent.</p>	<p>Service Managers / Head of Service</p>
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How well do we support people's wellbeing?		
Areas for Improvement (1)		
Area for Improvement	Progress as at December 2025	Responsible
<p>1. To keep children and young people safe the service should ensure that all caregivers have access to and complete training specific to the needs of those in their care. Recording systems of caregiver training attendance should support analysis for future needs. A detailed training needs analysis would be supportive of caregiver development in promoting improved outcomes for young people.</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14); and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11)</p>	<p>The Learning and Development (L&D) team have received significant investment and are currently undertaking a self-initiated review. Part of the review is understanding learning needs, and consultation with carers and social workers has already started as well as analysing foster carer review paperwork and historical training records. We anticipate that enough data will be available to allow a new strategic L&D plan for 2026 without the need for a 'detailed training needs analysis'.</p> <p>The new year will see a range of new learning opportunities for carers – online, face to face and through more direct, bespoke approaches. A recently recruited Senior Learning and Development Officer who has a speciality in neurodiversity will be training social workers Jan – April 2026 and then there will be a range of courses available for carers thereafter. She has already started consultation work with supervising social workers and supporting some direct work with carers.</p> <p>The team have developed a new recording system for carers training attendance. This will capture attendance at all L&D run events as well as completion of the new eLearning modules. The eLearning platform GOLD is now up and running with the following courses available – Introduction to Autism, Introduction to Attachment, Introduction to the PACE approach to Parenting and Understanding Window of Tolerance. Courses currently under development which will be ready for launch in the</p>	Service Manager / Head of Service

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	<p>new year are Adult Support & Protection, Child Protection, Introduction to the Secure Base Model, Introduction to ADHD and Introduction to Nurture. All carers have been invited to sign up for GOLD, and we will monitor engagement over coming months as we also continue grow the available content.</p> <p>There are a range of areas for development for the L&D team in 2026 and this will include a more robust approach to evaluation. Taking this approach will allow us to continue to understand the needs of our carers and ensure that we are meeting these needs through a dynamic and flexible approach to learning in its broadest context.</p>	
How good is our Leadership? – 3 ADEQUATE		
Requirements (1)		
Requirement	Progress as at December 2025	Responsible
<p>1. By 31st January 2026, the provider must ensure that there is reflection and clear learning points identified if an unplanned ending occurs within the service. To do this the provider must as a minimum:</p> <p>a) ensure there is a clear policy and procedure for unplanned endings, both permanent and interim, and that all staff and carers are aware of these.</p> <p>b) ensure that policies and procedures provide clarity of timescales and that these are adhered to</p> <p>c) hold reflective reviews which identify learning in all cases when children are moved between caregiver families on an unplanned basis.</p>	<p>1. a) new process has been developed to consider any unplanned endings for interim / short term placements – this has been shared with staff and management and this process will be audited and reviewed if necessary in 6months time.</p> <p>Unplanned endings process for permanent placements test of change has been completed and the learning from this is being taken into a wider, city wide forum with shared responsibility and oversight of this.</p> <p>b) unplanned endings processes will identify timescales for action and audit activity will ensure quality assurance oversight of this</p> <p>c) reflective practice is a thread throughout our</p>	Service Manager / Head of Service

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<p>This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) and (d) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011 / 210)</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).</p>	<p>unplanned endings process so that we are regularly learning and evolving our practice.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">How good is our Leadership? – 3 ADEQUATE</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Areas for Improvement (2)</p>		
Area for Improvement	Progress as at December 2025	Responsible
<p>1. The service should ensure that all care givers are reviewed annually, after a significant event or incident or when out with approval in line with best practice.</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice'. (HSCS 4.11)</p> <p>2. The provider should ensure that all panel members are provided with regular appraisals which inform training needs. All panel members should be provided with a range of learning and development opportunities.</p>	<p>1. Each foster carer should have an annual review and the vision for the service is that we continue to build on the progress of 2024/2025 so we can continue to provide evidence of improved tracking and oversight of reviews, as well as evidence that we are closer to achieving annual foster carer reviews.</p> <p>2. Appraisals for panel members have been scheduled throughout 2026 with the plan that this will form an annual cycle of appraisal as a minimum.</p>	<p>Service Manager / Head of Service</p>

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<p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are training competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their own practice and follow their professional and organisational codes'. (HSCS 3.14)</p>		
How good is our Staff Team? – 4 GOOD		
No Requirements No Areas for Improvement		
How well is our care and support planned? – 2 WEAK		
Requirements (1)		
Requirement	Progress as at December 2025	Responsible
<p>1. By 31st January 2026, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, the provider must ensure that robust plans are in place to support children in caregiver families. To do this the provider must, as a minimum:</p> <p>a) ensure that individual, comprehensive safer caring plans are in place for all children and young people.</p> <p>b) children and young people have appropriate assessments and plans in place which identify, assess and highlight strategies for the management of risk.</p> <p>c) safer caring plans and risk assessments are regularly reviewed and when circumstances change or after a significant incident.</p>	<p>We are urgently reviewing the suite of paperwork required when matching, and placing a child within a fostering family, including the safer caring policy and risk assessment. The need for this comes both from the learning from Inspection and from our whole Service review phase 1 and 2 engagement sessions. The new iteration will include the strengths and vulnerabilities of a carer and identify the supports that will be offered to mitigate against any risk to the child or young person joining the household.</p>	<p>Service Managers / Head of Service</p>

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<p>This is to comply with Regulation 4 (1)(a) and (d) (Welfare of Users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011 / 210)</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as my care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met as well as my choices and wishes' (HSCS 1.15).</p>		
No Areas for Improvement		

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