

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

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Children's Residential Services – Care Inspectorate Activity

Purpose of Report:

To provide the IJB Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of Care Inspectorate activity in relation to directly provided Residential Children's Services in the City and update the committee on developments in the past year.

Background/Engagement:

The report customarily focuses on the activity in relation to the work of the Care Inspectorate and the regulation of the Children's Houses. This report focuses on the 9 most recent inspections for services.

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 ☒
 Children and Families Governance Group
 Social Work Professional Governance Board
 Not Applicable ☐

Recommendations:

The IJB Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
 a) Note the findings of this report in respect of care inspectorate grades awarded to provided children's houses;

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	b) Note the ongoing use of key question 7 to support inspection processes within children's residential services; and c) Note information relating to service developments and challenges, and future developments.
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Relevance to Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan:

Children's Residential Services are key to delivering the transformation programme for Children's Services, designed to strengthen the local infrastructure to deliver a preventative strategy in the City. The Children's Houses 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. They ensure that children and young people can be cared for away from home within the city boundary without the need for them to be placed in out of authority placements. Not only is this part of delivering the IJB Strategic Plan but a critical service in terms of delivering *The Promise* in Glasgow, which outlines the recommendations of the Independent Care Review.

Implications for Health and Social Care Partnership:

Reference to National Health & Wellbeing Outcome:	Outcome 1: People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer. Outcome 3: People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected 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 Outcome 7: People using health and social care services are safe from harm Outcome 9: Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services.
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Personnel:	None
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Carers:	None
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Provider Organisations:	None
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Equalities:	None
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Fairer Scotland Compliance:	None
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Financial:	None
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Legal:	None
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Economic Impact:	None
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Sustainability:	None
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Sustainable Procurement and Article 19:	None
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Risk Implications:	Inspections may highlight areas of weaker practice, impacting the quality of care or outcomes achieved for children and young people being supported within residential services.
Implications for Glasgow City Council:	Care Inspectorate gradings for children's houses managed by Glasgow City Council/Health and Social Care Partnership have a direct impact on the public perception of the Council, and consequently the Health and Social Care Partnership.
Implications for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde:	None.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To provide the IJB Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of Care Inspectorate activity in relation to directly provided Residential Children's Services in the City and update the Committee on developments over the past year.

2. Background

- 2.1. Glasgow City has 19 children's residential houses that care for 147 children and young people between the ages of 8 and 21. There are 454 care staff employed in the services.
- 2.2. This report focuses on the activity in relation to the work of the Care Inspectorate and the regulation of the children's houses from January to December 2024.
- 2.3. Inspections of Children's Residential Services are underpinned by the Quality Framework for Care Homes for Children and Young People and School Care Accommodation. The framework consists of 6 key questions:
- How well do we support children and young people's well-being?
 - How good is our leadership?
 - How good is our staff team?
 - How good is our setting?
 - How well is our care planned?
 - What is our overall capacity for improvement?
- 2.4. From 1st April 2022, a new key question 7 was introduced,
- How well do we support children and young people's rights and well-being?
- 2.5. Key question 7 has 2 quality indicators:
- Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life.

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- Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights.

2.6. This additional question was introduced:

- as part of the care inspectorate recovery plan, to ensure that annual inspections of services are undertaken
- to produce a more regulatory footprint
- to prioritise the quality of relationships experienced by children and young people in line with the aspirations of *The Promise*
- to support engagement with more children and young people by enabling more services to be inspected.

2.7. During the course of this inspection period, 9 inspections of children's residential services were concluded.

2.8. The Care Inspectorate has an allocated team of three inspectors for Glasgow's Children's Residential Services who have been overseeing activity in Glasgow City since April 2022. A new 4th Inspector has been introduced to the team and will commence inspections in 2025. Significant work continues to be undertaken between the Care Inspectorate and Children's Residential Services to strengthen relationships, and to improve consistency across inspection processes. This includes quarterly meetings between the inspectors, their line managers, and the residential service managers. In addition to this, the managers communicate monthly with their inspector to provide updates in relation to both young people and wider service developments.

2.9. A six-point scale is utilised to evaluate performance across all quality indicators during inspections:

Grade	Description	Definition
1	Unsatisfactory	Major Weaknesses - urgent remedial action required
2	Weak	Important weaknesses – priority action required
3	Adequate	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
4	Good	Important strengths
5	Very good	Major strengths
6	Excellent	Outstanding or sector leading

More detail on the inspection framework can be found at:

<http://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/inspections/new-inspections>

3. Care Inspectorate Grades & Analysis

3.1 The table below outlines the grades awarded by the Care Inspectorate for 9 residential services delivered by Glasgow City HSCP, where an inspection was concluded during the reporting period 1st January – 31st December 2024.

Date	House	Grade
26.03.24	Chaplet	6
17.04.24	Newlands	3
21.05.24	Plenshin	5
16.07.24	Wellhouse	5

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24.07.24	Broomfield	5
01.08.24	Dalness	5
24.10.24	Main St	5
27.11.24	Norse Road*	3 (*the maximum grade awarded in a follow up inspection, but CI noted several areas of very good practice)
13.12.24	Mosspark	5

- 3.2 Of the 9 inspections that took place, 7 services received grades of 'very good' or above, with Chaplet Children's House achieving a grade of 6 (excellence). The inspection at Norse Road Children's House was a follow-up inspection following a disappointing grade of 2 previously. Follow-up inspections are carried out to ensure that services have met requirements within the timescales given. *Where there is significant improvement within a service, the Care Inspectorate are able to increase the grade of a service by 1 grade.
- 3.3 A full report on the initial Norse Road inspection was presented to FASC in September 2024 (<https://glasgowcity.hscp.scot/publication/item-no-16-childrens-residential-services-care-inspectorate-activity>). During the follow-up inspection at Norse Road, it was noted that all requirements and areas of improvement had been met. In addition, significant improvements were noted that were commensurate with a grade of 5 (very good), and as such, the Care Inspectorate took the decision to re-grade the service to a 3, the maximum grade achievable at follow-up stage.
- 3.4 No requirements were identified in 8 out of the 9 services, with the themes from these reports reflecting the work undertaken by the services to improve and enhance support for children and young people living in the houses.

4. Key Themes from Inspection Reports

- 4.1 A number of key themes have emerged from inspections that are consistent across a number of services. These demonstrate the overall strengths within children's residential services, and readiness to deliver on *The Promise* agenda for change.
- 4.2 Key themes include; the delivery of consistent, relational and trauma-informed care; effective work with partner agencies that supported young people to achieve positive outcomes; effective work with families that supported positive relationships, and in some instances enabled young people to return home; prioritisation of young people's mental health; restraint reduction; and a strengthening of children and young people's voice and participation in the planning of their care.
- 4.3 Common themes also emerged in relation to areas of development for services. This includes the matching of children and young people into services; enhancing peer relationships and; further embedding the current model of care within all the services, ensuring that night-time carers are prioritised. Staffing ratios has also been highlighted as an area of development in a number of services and has been identified by the Care Inspectorate as a potential barrier to delivering positive outcomes for young people.

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- 4.4 In light of the challenges detailed above, the service has undertaken a review. This has included a review of the current staffing establishment, alongside HR, to ensure that the service has the required resource to ensure effective service delivery. The Health and Social Care (Staffing) Act 2019 which came into effect in April 2024, places a duty on services to ensure that they have the right number of highly skilled staff commensurate with the number and complexity of children and young people being cared for. Each services' compliance with the 2019 Act will be assessed during inspections moving forward.
- 4.5 Recommendations from this review have been presented to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration. Part of the review has also considered how the service can deploy staff more effectively, and a number of systems have already been developed to support this. This includes, the introduction of daily staffing briefings, and the appointment of a Senior Officer to ensure effective deployment of staff across the system to maximise the resource.

5. Key Service Developments and Challenges

- 5.1 The services typically operate at capacity in terms of numbers of registered beds. In order to provide a more sophisticated matching process in relation to young people's needs and the existing cohort being supported within each house, we will need to continue to work on reducing the number of young people accommodated so that there is capacity for matching.
- 5.2 The service requires to provide care for young people with increasingly complex needs in relation to neurodivergence, mental health, trauma, and young people who present a high risk to themselves and others. This is becoming increasingly challenging as the service seeks stability and continuity of care for young people with more complex needs. Also, the challenge is a positive consequence of less placement breakdown and as a result of fewer young people moving to placements out with the city.
- 5.3 Residential services continue to be a vital support in relation to looking after young unaccompanied asylum seekers who come to the city. Often the initial response to caring and assessing their needs is in a residential setting. In conjunction with the city's Asylum Team, assessment and support is currently provided to 9 unaccompanied children and young people. All accommodated on an emergency and unplanned basis.
- 5.4 To further support the planning for children and young people in care placements the independent review team continues to chair the reviews of all children and young people in provided residential placements. The introduction of the model of My Meetings has greatly enhanced both the voice and participation of children and young people in the planning of their care, and this is increasingly identified during inspections as a key strength.
- 5.5 The service continues to support the development and implementation of the *Nurture Framework* which is a trauma-informed model of care that emphasises the importance of relationships and secure attachments for healthy child development. This is an evidence-based model of care that has been utilised within schools in Glasgow for over 10 years. It has also been successfully implemented in residential and fostering and adoption services in other Local Authorities.

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- 5.6 Implementation of the model has been achieved with the support of partner agencies in Education and Glasgow Virtual School (GVS). This has involved a 4-day training course for all practitioners, and access to 6 weekly coaching sessions from colleagues in Glasgow's Educational Psychology Services (GEPS).
- 5.7 Implementation of the *Nurture* programme continued in 2024, with all new carers being prioritised for training and coaching. The Nurture @ Nights programme, which was developed for night-shift carers, was implemented across at 19 children's houses with the support of Senior Residential Practitioners and the services' Senior Learning and Development Officer.
- 5.8 The Nurture through Leadership programme continued with themes and concepts explored including containment, rupture and repair, boundaries and natural consequences. All of which support and prioritise the emotional needs of staff and those children and young people with whom they care for.
- 5.9 The service developed the Nurture Charter which is a self- assessment tool that supports services to evaluate, *How Nurturing are Our Children's House*, and are currently working on the Care and Support policy, which will further support best practice in relation to how services care for Glasgow's children and young people.
- 5.10 The service is currently caring for a significant number of children and young people who are either diagnosed or undiagnosed neurodivergent. External consultation and support from partners in Specialist Children's Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Glasgow Educational Psychology Service continues to be an area of priority for residential services, to ensure effective care and placement stability.
- 5.11 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the mental health, wellbeing and development of children and young people is evident in the cohort being supported within the children's houses. Moreover, the success of the transformational agenda in shifting the balance and the reduction in out of authority placements has increased the complexity and acuity of need within children's houses. As indicated, the profile of neurodiversity and complexity and containing that cumulative need within an eight bedded home has become both pronounced and a significant challenge.
- 5.12 This context is mirrored across the country, along with the marked reduction in the recruitment of foster carers. Dialogue both nationally and locally remains ongoing with the Care Inspectorate to not only articulate this challenging environment but seek contextual understanding for the complex operating environment. Annual leave and sick leave continue to present challenges around consistent staffing arrangements.

6. Development Updates

- 6.1 In November 2024, a decision was taken, in conjunction with the IJB, to close Hamilton Park Avenue Children's House. It is recognised that the building is not purpose built and no longer meets the needs of the children and young people who live there. The building is a traditional sandstone townhouse over 4 levels with high staircases and listed building status. The layout of the

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building presented challenges in relation to supervision and health and safety, with high costs associated with repairs.

- 6.2 The service is due to close before 1 April 2025, and the care plans of the remaining 2 young people are being carefully progressed in line with this timeframe.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 The IJB Finance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
- a) Note the findings of this report in respect of care inspectorate grades awarded to directly provided children's houses;
 - b) Note the introduction of a new key question to support inspection processes within children's residential services; and
 - c) Note information relating to service developments and challenges, and future developments.