

PUBLIC PROTECTION NEWSLETTER

Issue 02 / August 2024



UNCRC

Tuesday 16 July 2024 saw the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 come into effect. The Children and Families Social Work Team held a 'launch party' to celebrate children's rights and acknowledge the work already being carried out across the Council. Inputs were provided by Claire Carthy, Head of Children and Justice Services; Carolan Burnet, QIO within Education; David Walker, Swimming coordinator, EDLC; and Ashleigh Campbell a Senior Practitioner from Barnardos.

Practitioners were asked how they would ensure the UNCRC principles would be met and the majority fed back that while listening to the child's voice is important, acting on what they say is even more important.

We have also developed a seven-minute briefing relating to UNCRC, please get in touch if you would like a copy of this.



- UNRC
- Child Protection Activity
- Learning About Protection Investigation Processes
- ASP Activity
- Ensuring adults lacking capacity can access their rights



Protecting Adults In
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CHILD PROTECTION ACTIVITY



Over the last 18 months the Child Protection Committee has noticed a decrease in child protection activity generally. This relates to lower numbers of children being placed on the child protection register as well as lower numbers being referred to child protection processes. The Management of Information and Self-evaluation (MISE) Subgroup carried out various audits, and monitored local and national data and trends and are not concerned about this new lower-level child protection activity.

Some of the reasons include:

- Good support being provided at an early stage by universal services
- Partnership working and signposting by duty social workers
- Introduction of Education into Interagency Referral Discussion processes
- National decrease in child protection activity
- Potential impact of new Child Protection procedures.

This may be the new normal for us in East Dunbartonshire, watch this space!

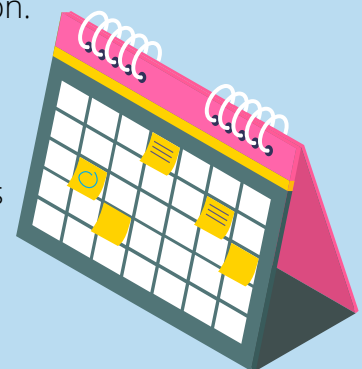
LEARNING ABOUT PROTECTION INVESTIGATION PROCESSES

The five-day Child Protection training course is usually aimed at Social Workers to provide them with the skills and confidence as lead professional in child protection investigations. In March 2024 we delivered an updated programme for the first time and invited a fully multi-agency audience to participate. The course was very well evaluated, and partners valued the opportunity to understand the investigation process from start to finish.

We continue to take a slightly different approach to introducing multi-agency partners to Adult Support and Protection (ASP) investigatory processes. Instead of inviting professionals from other services to attend the specialist five-day Council Officer training course, we offer a one-day course for Second Workers. Second Workers accompany Council Officers during ASP visits and

investigative interviews with adults, carers and staff, and other professionals are selected to act as Second Workers where their professional knowledge and expertise may benefit the adult and the investigation. Previous courses have been attended by the full range of health disciplines represented in our Care Home Support Team as well as Children & Justice Social Workers. Our approach to skilling up other professionals to play a key role in ASP investigations was praised in the recent Joint Inspection.

You can explore our multi-agency calendar for up-coming learning and development opportunities in 2024-2025 – please get in touch if you would like a copy.



ASP ACTIVITY

Work is underway to produce the Adult Protection Committee's 2024 Biennial Report for the Scottish Government. Further information will be included in the next edition of the newsletter, but early data highlights show that we are now carrying out 10.5 statutory inquiries per week in East Dunbartonshire, compared to nine per week before the pandemic; with 40% of those inquiries involving adults aged over 85, compared to 30% five years ago.

10.5

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ENSURING ADULTS LACKING CAPACITY CAN ACCESS THEIR RIGHTS



Between now and 17 October 2024, everyone has an opportunity to give their views on proposed amendments to Scotland's Adults With Incapacity (AWI) Act, which is now 24 years old. These amendments would modernise aspects of AWI ahead of full mental health and capacity reform over the next 10 years. Key proposals include a significant shift of focus towards following the adult's will and preferences instead of taking account of their views and wishes, and ensuring adults are supported to make and act upon their own decisions for as long as possible. Substantial changes are also proposed to increase the legal safeguards for adults who lack capacity and cannot consent to Deprivation of Liberty (DOL) situations in health and social care settings, which has implications for hospital discharge processes.

Other proposals will be of particular interest for ASP practitioners. One example is that Council Officers will take over responsibility from the Office of Public Guardian for investigating concerns about continuing (i.e. financial) powers of attorney (POAs). Another is the introduction of a new criminal offence for financial abuse of an adult lacking capacity. Concerns about potential financial harm are regularly reported but as colleagues are aware rarely result in criminal charges, with one recent case widely reported in the media being the exception. In a measure to support proper use of proxy powers, the Government is also suggesting that prospective POAs complete a training course to ensure they understand and will abide by the principles of the legislation as well as the exact powers the adult has granted to them.

CONTACT

Thank you for reading our latest newsletter. If you would like to find out more about anything you have read or would like to contribute to future editions please contact CPC@eastdunbarton.gov.uk or ASP@eastdunbarton.gov.uk