



**Fife Child Protection Committee**  
Improvement Plan 2023-26



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## Introduction

Welcome to our Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC) Improvement Plan, spanning from August 2023 to August 2026. Building on the foundations of our previous plans, this three-year strategy sets out our approach to our work, describing how we will achieve our aims within the partnership. It highlights the critical success factors and goals for the vision of the child protection committee in the next three-years. It will be reviewed annually each January, and the work will include an evaluation of our results against the previous year's aims. Any adjustments to the strategy as a result of progress, or amendments in response to societal or environmental changes can be mutually agreed. As we move forward, we are dedicated to our collective efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people across Fife.

This CPC Improvement Plan is aligned with the [Children's Services Plan 2023-26](#) and the [Plan for Fife 2017 2027](#). Fife CPC and partners are committed to continuous improvement through quality assurance and self-evaluation as demonstrated by this CPC Improvement Plan. This shared commitment is also demonstrated through our partnership CPC Business Model, CPC Self-Evaluation Framework and Programme, CPC Quarterly Dataset Reports, the CPC Annual Development Days, and our CPC Annual Report.

## National Context

The Scottish Government wants Scotland to be the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up so that they become: successful learners; confident individuals; effective contributors and responsible citizens and where children are loved, safe and respected, so that they can reach their full potential. The policy framework of Getting It Right for Every Child is now well embedded across the Fife partnership supported by key local policy frameworks such as the Getting it Right in Fife framework and the Child Wellbeing Pathway which promote early & proportionate intervention to address wellbeing and concerns across the continuum of need – whether universal, additional, or intensive.

The Independent Care review, commissioned in 2017, led to a root and branch review of Scotland’s care system resulting in the publication of The Promise in 2020. The Promise underlines Scotland’s aspiration for its young people, to grow up in nurturing, loving, safe and respectful homes and enabling them to achieve their full potential. The Promise Plan 2021 – 2024 further delineates five primary focus areas: the right to a childhood; whole family support; supporting the workforce; planning and building capacity. The five foundations of the Promise are central to the new Children’s Services plan, reflect the key principles of the Belonging to Fife Strategy and weave across our CPC priorities. They will help transform our systems, practice, and culture, ensuring that:

- **Voice:** children are listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care.
- **Family:** where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay there – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties they face.
- **Care:** where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.
- **People:** children that we care for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to be compassionate.
- **Scaffolding:** children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The ‘scaffolding’ of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.

## Fife Context

The [Plan for Fife 2017 2027](#) clearly describes how the Fife Community Planning Partnership will achieve its shared goal of A Fairer Fife. It focuses on four priority themes:

- **Opportunities For All** - is about ensuring that no one is left behind. We aim to ensure that everyone can access opportunities in education, training, jobs, and wider society, and have equal access to the support and advice they might need to support of a filling and decent life.
- **Thriving Places** - Thriving places are safe, well designed and maintained places that promote well-being, where people are proud to be, and where they have access to the services and facilities they need at. Different stages of their lives.
- **Inclusive Growth and Jobs** - Growth in the local economy should benefit everyone and shouldn't pass people by. We will therefore focus on improving investment, growth and participation by businesses, people, and communities, particularly in the mid 5 area. We aim to support businesses to grow and to make sure that communities benefit from new business investment.
- **Community Led Services** - Community LED services meant putting communities and service users at the heart of how we design services and building on strengths and assets we possess in our workforce and our communities in order to deliver valued services.

The [Children's Services Plan 2023-26](#) sets out its vision of ***'Making Fife a place where every child and young person matters'*** with priorities including, health and wellbeing, children's rights, supporting families and engagement with a focus on Fife's more vulnerable children.

The partnership's work is underpinned by a shared set of values:

- **Ambition:** Ensure that our work has a clear sense of purpose, underpinned by strong guiding principles.
- **Respect:** Supports our focus on collective leadership and empowerment, which are strong features of the work we carry out as a partnership.
- **Collaboration:** Underpin self-assessment of our collaborative working. This is an integral part of How Good Is Our Family Support Work Framework and pivotal to identifying common priorities and shared goals will stop.
- **Integrity:** influence the way we behave and work together.

## The Child Protection Committee

Key to the CPC's approach are three pivotal policy documents. These are the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 (Scottish Government: 2021), Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (Scottish Government: 2019), and A Quality Framework for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection (Care Inspectorate: November 2022). These documents form the cornerstone of the CPC's strategy, activity in child protection and evaluation methodology.

Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (Scottish Government: 2019) describes the functions of Child Protection Committees as:

- Continuous improvement
- Public information, engagement, and participation
- Strategic planning and connections
- Annual reporting on the work of the CPC

## The CPC Improvement Plan, August 2023 to August 2026

This CPC Improvement Plan, 1st August 2023 to 1<sup>st</sup> August 2026, presents a shared commitment among partners to a robust agenda of outcome driven improvement, evidencing our critical focus for ongoing development. As a plan of action, it is both broad in scope and high in aspiration, serving as our agreed plan for the continual improvement of services safeguarding children and young people in Fife.

Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC) has a clear vision for all children in Fife to be safe and protected from harm. As a partnership, Fife's Child Protection Committee exists to develop, implement, and improve child protection strategy and thread child protection work through all services agencies and the community of Fife. At the heart of this work is the national vision, ***"It's everyone's job to make sure I'm all right."***

## OUR VALUES

We will:

- Treat children as individuals.
- Ensure we use the least intrusive intervention needed.
- Hear children.
- Maximise strengths within families and communities.

Outlined below are our targeted areas of improvement for the period 2023-2027. The plan is designed to be adaptable, with room for additional developmental areas or enhancement opportunities as they arise.

In shaping this CPC Improvement Plan, we have acknowledged a range of national and local influences, including current and evolving legislation and policy shifts. Attention has been given to pre-existing and forthcoming improvement and scrutiny frameworks and insights from recent local quality assurance activity self-assessments, along with the lessons from Learning Reviews. All this learning has been integral in drafting a comprehensive, dynamic, and responsive improvement plan, streamlining actions into one overarching document.

Fife CPC continues to be influenced by the research conducted in Fife by Dr Sharon Vincent from Northumberland University (2017 and 2020) which identified six critical areas for practice improvement, which have been integrated into our initiative, 'Six for Safety'.

'Six for Safety' promotes best practice for everyone in Children's Services when working with children and families. Developed from analysis and learning from local and national Learning Reviews, these are day-to-day best practice principles of working to support and protect children and young people and improved decision-making.

- The needs of the **child are at the centre** of all practice.
- Ensuring that all **relationships with children, parents/carers** are effective, constructive and are central to improving wellbeing and minimise risk of harm.
- All **assessments and plans** are effective in achieving outcomes in meeting needs and minimising risk of harm. All available resources, techniques and tools are used to best effect.
- Relevant **information is shared** appropriately, clear lines of responsibility for action are understood across partners and communication is effective in minimising potential risks.

- **Early and effective intervention** is achieved where possible, minimising the risk of harm to children and young people.
- A culture of **effective management support and/or supervision** is embedded which embodies the values and principles of Fife Child Protection Committee.

### Oversight, Review, Achievements, Impact

- Each Action or Task is aimed at improving outcomes for children, young people, and their families.
- Ownership of this Improvement Plan rests with the CPC.
- The role of coordinating this Plan for the CPC falls to the Lead Officer for the Child Protection Committee.
- The CPC will collaborate closely with the CPC Working Groups and Strategic Leads. This collaboration aims to ensure a comprehensive understanding and therefore implementation of the Plan, establish clear accountability for the assigned actions and tasks, and provide support during its implementation.
- Activity will be supported by staff learning and development opportunities with follow-up quality assurance processes.
- The CPC is committed to routinely monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing the Plan supported by the CPC Quality Assurance and Data Working Group.
- The CPC will provide regular updates to the Chief Officers’ Public Protection Group.
- The CPC will produce an annual report on the progress of this plan for scrutiny.

National Context				
GIRFEC		UNCRC		Independent Care Review
The Plan for Fife <b><i>‘A fairer Fife’</i></b>				
Opportunities for All	Thriving Places	Inclusive Growth & Jobs	Community Led Services	
Children’s Services Plan <b><i>‘Making Fife a place where every child and young person matters’</i></b>				
Health and Wellbeing	Children’s Rights	Equity & Equality	Supporting Families	Our Most Vulnerable Children and Young People
Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC)				
6 For Safety				



## **Six for Safety Statement**

The needs of the **Child are at the centre** of all practice.

### **Outcome 1**

We ensure Children's voices are heard and are central in the decisions that affect them, and these voices influence how we support families.

No.	Actions	Strategic Lead	Timescale	Outcomes
1.1	Review child protection protocols and guidance to ensure that children's voices are actively sought, heard, and considered in all aspects of child protection work, including risk assessment and planning in line with good practice from the national guidance and principles of the Promise.	Lead Officer CPC	August 2024	Fife Child Protection Guidance has systems to gather the views of children and their families as an integral part of their arrangements.
1.2	Develop a systematic approach to involving children and their families in the appraisal, review and development of child protection policies and processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In conjunction with the strategic partnership groups leading on rights and engagement, develop the business activity.</li></ul>	Lead Officer CPC – in collaboration with wider partners	August 2024	The views of children and families are considered in relation to child protection issues that affect them and inform practice, policy, and service improvements.
1.3	Through the Quality Assurance & Data Group and individual service activity assure key child protection processes, for example, CPPM have the voice of the child at the centre of decision making.	Quality Assurance & Data Group	Ongoing	The CPC and wider partnership are assured that children and their families voices are being gathered, heard, and acted on.
1.4	An advocacy service or a trusted adult are available for children who may request this when being considered at Child Protection Planning Meetings.  Undertake Children's Rights Impact Assessments, when indicated, in all policy and practice developments.	All services  All services	Ongoing  Ongoing	Children have the opportunity to access an advocate or a trusted adult when involved in child protection processes.

No.	Actions	Strategic Lead	Timescale	Outcomes
1.5	Our guidance reflects our focus on hearing and responding to the voice of the child in all aspects of child protection, investigation, planning, and decision making, acknowledging the impact of high parental need and wider family dynamics.	Lead Officer CPC/ All services	Ongoing	We retain a focus on the lived experience of the child as the paramount focus in assessment, planning, and intervention.
1.6	Opportunities for reflective practice are in place and we are using these to best effect to ensure a continued focus on the needs of the child including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision</li> <li>• Reflective practice forums</li> <li>• Partnership case review activity</li> </ul>	All services	Ongoing	Review and reflective practice points are in place and used effectively, ensuring for example that we retain a focus on the child even when parental need is high.
<b><u>Six for Safety Statement</u></b>				
Ensuring that all <b><u>relationships with children, parents/carers</u></b> are effective, constructive and are central to improving wellbeing and minimise risk of harm.				
<b><u>Outcome 2</u></b>				
We develop and maintain constructive, positive, trusting relationships with children, their families and those significant within their life. We recognise the impact of Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences on wellbeing, welfare, and risk. We achieve this through having a confident and competent multi-agency workforce applying trauma informed intervention to establish positive engagement and relationships with children and families.				
2.1	Continue to develop a multi-agency approach towards raising awareness and understanding the impact of childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences.	Lead Officer for Trauma/All	Ongoing	Our workforces are trauma informed and our assessments are iterative, taking account of both current and past information and the child's developmental stage. Our parents and carers experience supportive, trusting relationships, improved capability for sustained change. (ACE and Impact of Trauma).
2.2	Ensure cognisance of the impact of Trauma and ACE within the delivery of all appropriate CPC training activities.	Learning & Practice Development Group (LAPDG)	April 2024	As above.

No.	Actions	Strategic Lead	Timescale	Outcomes
2.3	Review all interagency training and practice guidance to ensure that significant adults form part of the assessment and planning for children.	Lead Officer CPC LAPDG	August 2024	Assessment processes are strength based and include community and wider family assets.
2.4	Deliver training and review practice guidance to promote understanding of the need to retain the child at the centre, promoting professional understanding around the potential impact of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over optimism</li> <li>• parental capacity to sustain change.</li> <li>• Lack of professional curiosity</li> <li>• High parental need</li> </ul>	LAPDG for Training Lead Officer CPC for Practice Guidance	January 2025	Practitioners have an awareness of and understanding of how to challenge and identify concerns thereby ensuring that every action taken is in the best interests of the child.
<p><b><u>Six for Safety Statement</u></b></p> <p>All <b>assessments and plans</b> are effective in achieving outcomes in meeting needs and minimising risk of harm. All available resources, techniques and tools are used to best effect.</p>				
<p><b><u>Outcome 3</u></b></p> <p>Children and young people in need of care and protection are safer as a consequence of high-quality timely responses to concerns about possible or actual risk of harm. We have embedded complementary approaches to assessment - enhancing collaboration, streamlining procedures, and improving decision making.</p>				
3.1	Support the development of an agreed approach to neglect and accumulating concerns.	Short Life Working Group to be established.	December 2024	Services share an agreed approach to assessment, which is child-centred, and ensures that all aspects of risk and need are covered. Children and Young people who are subject to accumulating concerns and neglect are responded to timeously.

No.	Actions	Strategic Lead	Timescale	Outcomes
3.2	The partnership to develop an integrated strategic response to contextual safeguarding which addresses the needs of young people including CSE, Substance Use, and Criminal Exploitation.	Contextual Safeguarding Group	January 2025	Children who are at risk of extra familial harm are safeguarded.
3.3	Continue to embed and evaluate the implementation of the partnership's approach to Care and Risk Management for Young People whose behaviour places them at Serious Risk of Harm.	Guidance Implementation Group and Quality Assurance & Data Group	April 2024	Children and young people who present a serious risk to themselves and others are appropriately safeguarded and supported.
3.4	Working with FVAWP to embed and evaluate the implementation of the Safe & Together model to improve outcomes for children affected by domestic abuse and coercive control.	FVAWP Co-ordinator/ Lead Officer CPC	December 2024	Practitioners and managers have an understanding of the dynamics of domestic abuse and coercive control. Their interactions with children and families are effective in addressing the complexities of such situations.
3.5	Collaborate with the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) to refresh the multi-agency guidance within the partnership.	ADP Service Manager	December 2024	Practitioners and managers have an understanding of the dynamics of substance use and the impact on outcomes for children and young people.

#### **Six for Safety Statement**

Relevant **information is shared** appropriately, clear lines of responsibility for action are understood across partners and communication is effective in minimising potential risks.

#### **Outcome 4**

Our staff have access to high quality training and guidance to support decisions around the timely sharing of information. Our information sharing processes are robust, secure, and user-friendly enabling staff across the partnership to share information swiftly and securely. Children & Families benefit from multi-agency plans based on effective information sharing and includes chronologies.

No.	Actions	Strategic Lead	Timescale	Outcomes
4.1	<p>Multi-agency partnership guidance for information sharing is completed and supports effective practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and deliver multi-agency training to support effective and timely information sharing.</li> <li>Quality assurance arrangements are in place to ensure that timely and effective information sharing arrangements are embedded in practice.</li> </ul>	<p>Lead Officer CPC</p> <p>LAPDG</p> <p>Quality Assurance &amp; Data Group</p>	<p>April 2024</p> <p>August 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p>	<p>Staff across the partnership share information effectively to support the assessment of possible or actual risk of harm, in accordance with single agency procedures.</p>
4.2	<p>Develop further the use of social media and online activity to raise public awareness of child protection issues including refreshing our CPC website.</p>	CPC Team	January 2025	Our front facing information for children's young people and families is refreshed and user friendly.
4.3	<p>Develop further the use of social media, online and direct briefing to communicate current initiatives within the partnership.</p>	CPC Team	Ongoing	The partnership is well informed and kept up to date with the activity of the CPC.
4.4	<p>We develop effective IRD oversight processes including where possible an E-IRD portal to support shared working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality assurance arrangements for IRD processes are in place and reported to the CPC.</li> </ul>	<p>Guidance Implementation Subgroup</p> <p>Quality Assurance &amp; Data Group</p>	April 2024	<p>Children at risk of harm benefit from early and effective information sharing and planning to meet their needs.</p> <p>Services recognise and respond to children in need of protection in a timely and effective manner.</p>
4.5	<p>Further enhance the range of local indicators to complement our Minimum Data Suite.</p>	Quality Assurance & Data Group	August 2024	Proportionate and relevant information is shared between partners to support oversight and scrutiny activities.

**Six for Safety Statement**

**Early and effective intervention** is achieved where possible, minimising the risk of harm to children and young people.

**Outcome 5**

The partnership work across the continuum from wellbeing to protection within the 'Getting it Right for Every Child' framework ensures children receive appropriate assistance at the right time and when they need it.

No.	Actions	Strategic Lead	Timescale	Outcomes
5.1	Local guidance is in place to ensure that the interface between wellbeing and protection is effective. This guidance is supported by training and development activities.	Children in Fife and the Child Protection Committee	December 2024	Children's needs are responded to appropriately in Child Protection or GIRFEC/Child Wellbeing Processes.
5.2	Evaluation activity is undertaken around the use of the Child Wellbeing Pathway (CWP) and team around the child meetings identifying if services are adopting a GIRFEC approach in relation to earlier intervention and the interface with Child Protection.	Children in Fife and the Child Protection Committee	December 2024	Children's emerging needs are responded to in an early and preventative manner through Child Wellbeing Pathway.
5.3	We will develop our work on integrated chronology across children's services.	Children in Fife and the Child Protection Committee	December 2024	Integrated chronologies inform effective responses and planning for children and young people.

**Six for Safety Statement**

A culture of **effective management support and/or supervision** is embedded which embodies the values and principles of Fife Child Protection Committee.

**Outcome 6**

We draw on a range of sources including, national policy and legislation, research, local quality assurance, practise experience and Learning Reviews to inform our approach to local policy and practice development. Local leadership in child protection is effective in driving improvements in child protection practise and in improving outcomes for children and young people at risk of harm.

No.	Actions	Strategic Lead	Timescale	Outcomes
6.1	<p>We employ effective Quality Assurance mechanisms to oversee and scrutinise partnership activity to develop best multi-agency practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree and undertake a programme of audit, evaluation and review activity taking into account findings from analysis of local and national management information and other emerging issues.</li> <li>• Reporting findings and sharing learning as appropriate.</li> </ul>	Quality Assurance & Data Group	Ongoing	<p>Local leadership in child protection is effective and accountable in driving improvements in child protection practice and in improving outcomes for children and young people at risk, drawing on a range of quantitative and qualitative outcomes-based information.</p> <p>A calendar of activity is produced, agreed, and met.</p>
6.2	<p>Ensure representation at a National Level from the Fife Partnership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed feedback mechanisms from National Groups to the CPC and associated Groups.</li> </ul>	CPC Team	Ongoing	The Fife Partnership are represented at CPC Scotland and associated national bodies.
6.3	<p>Continue our work to review and update our multi-agency policies, procedures and protocols and ensure these align with national guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support all partners to review policies, procedures, and guidance to ensure it is underpinned by the child protection national guidance 2021.</li> </ul>	Guidance Implementation Subgroup/CPC Team	December 2024	Policy and procedures within the partnership are aligned with legislation, Statutory Guidance and National Guidance.
6.4	Develop a Learning and Development Strategy to meet the Learning and Development needs of the partnership.	LAPDG	July 2024	The partnership has a well-informed, highly skilled, and effective workforce. The CPC's Learning and Practice Development Strategy embodies local and national policy and practice developments, is agile and responds to emerging learning and practice development needs.

No.	Actions	Strategic Lead	Timescale	Outcomes
6.5	Plan, deliver, evaluate, and review the annual multi-agency workforce learning and development programme to support best practice in our workforce and in child protection activity.	LAPDG		There is a Learning and Practice Development Workplan in place that delivers an annual learning and practice development plan for Fife's Multi Agency partners.
6.6	Areas of learning and practice development that arise in Learning Reviews are helping inform the LAPDG Strategy and Workplan.	LAPDG		The LAPDG Strategy and Workplan can evidence what activities it has implemented that address multi-agency training needs in learning reviews and evaluation of these activities show that the workforce is more effective and confident in their practice.
6.7	Develop opportunities for ongoing professional development and ensure that both single and multi-agency child protection training will be accessible.  Develop opportunities for multi-agency partners to come together for reflective practice sessions to build their confidence and competence.	All services	Ongoing	A culture of effective management support and/or supervision is embedded which embodies the values and principles of Fife Child Protection Committee.
6.8	Ensure capacity is in place to respond to new and developing issues including national issues such as Bairns' Hoose or local issues emerging from practice reviews.	CPC/COPS	Ongoing	The partnership responds to emerging issues to maximise effective support to families.