



Annual Report 2023 - 2024



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Preface from Chief Officers

We are pleased to present the Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC) Annual Report for August 2023 to July 2024. This report reflects the unwavering commitment of our multi-agency partners to ensuring that Fife is a safe and supportive place for all children to grow and thrive.

Throughout the year, the Fife CPC has strategically focused on safeguarding children and young people, adapting to evolving community challenges. The dedication of staff across social work, health, education, police, the wider local authority, and the third sector has been crucial to our ability to adapt and improve child protection services. We have also made significant progress in embedding national guidance into our local practice and developing innovative approaches to issues such as contextual safeguarding, neglect, and early intervention.

Key highlights of the past year include:

- **Strengthening our partnership approach:** We have continued to foster closer working relationships between agencies to ensure that children at risk are identified and supported as early as possible.
- **Focusing on the voice of the child:** Our work has ensured that children's voices are central to decision-making processes, and we have seen improvements in how these voices are reflected in our assessments and plans.
- **Responding to complex challenges:** We have agreed a multi-agency approach to risks for children in the environment outside their home through our work in Contextual Safeguarding and are working to strengthen our reach into targeted approaches to address child poverty, cognisant of the indirect link between Poverty and Child Protection Systems.

As we look ahead, we recognise that there are still challenges to address. In particular, the ongoing effects of financial hardship and societal changes are creating new risks for vulnerable children. Despite this, we are confident that the steps outlined in this report, coupled with our collective commitment to child protection, will position us to meet these challenges head-on in the coming year. Together, we remain dedicated to making Fife a place where every child is safe, protected, and given the opportunity to reach their full potential.



Ken Gourlay
Chief Executive
Fife Council



Derek McEwan
Divisional Commander
'P' Division Police Scotland



Carol Potter
Chief Executive
NHS Fife



Foreword from the Independent Chair

As Chair of the Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC), I am pleased to present this annual report for 2023-2024. This report outlines the key activities, achievements, and challenges faced by the CPC over the past year. It highlights the dedication of our partner agencies in their work to safeguard children in Fife.

A key accomplishment has been the ongoing integration of the 'Six for Safety' framework into all aspects of our child protection work. This framework, informed by local learning reviews and national best practice, ensures that children's needs remain central to our efforts. Whether through assessments, plans, or interventions, we are committed to keeping children's welfare as our paramount concern.

In this reporting year, the Committee has also made strides in several key areas:

- **Embedding national guidance:** Following the introduction of updated national guidance for child protection in 2021, we have made considerable progress in tailoring this guidance to the local context, ensuring it is embedded in day-to-day practice.
- **Learning from reviews:** The Case Review Working Group (CRWG) has continued to ensure that lessons learned from significant cases are integrated into practice improvements. This reflective approach has strengthened our ability to respond effectively to complex cases and has enhanced multi-agency collaboration.
- **Contextual safeguarding:** Our Contextual Safeguarding Group has worked together to develop our approach, complementing existing processes to enhance our response to children at risk of harm outside their home.

Looking forward, we recognise that there are still challenges to address. However, I am confident that the strong foundations we have built, and the commitment of all agencies involved, will allow us to navigate these challenges effectively.

As we move into the next year, I look forward to continuing to work with all of you—our partners, practitioners, and the wider community—to ensure that Fife remains a place where children are safe, supported, and able to thrive.



Dougie Dunlop
Independent Chair

Vision, Values, Priorities, Role and Membership

Vision

The vision of the Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC) is to ensure that all children in Fife are safe and protected from harm. We strive to provide every child in Fife with the opportunity to thrive in a supportive environment that prioritises their safety and wellbeing. This vision is grounded in the national commitment that “It’s everyone’s job to make sure I’m all right.”

Values

The CPC’s work is underpinned by core values that reflect our commitment to children and families across Fife. These values guide our practice and inform every decision made within our child protection framework:

- **Children First:** We treat children as individuals, recognising their unique circumstances and needs.
- **Minimal Intervention:** We use the least intrusive interventions necessary to safeguard children while supporting family integrity.
- **Children’s Voice:** We actively seek and amplify the voices of children, ensuring they influence decision-making processes.
- **Strength-Based Approach:** We maximise the strengths within families and communities, utilising existing resources to support positive outcomes for children.

Strategic Alignment and Priorities

Fife’s CPC applies the ‘Six for Safety’ principles across all child protection work, ensuring alignment with wider community planning initiatives. Our work is informed by national frameworks, including Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), The Promise, and Trauma-Informed Practice, which guide our commitment to early intervention, strengthening family support, and ensuring that children’s voices are central to decision-making.

1. **Contribution to the Plan4Fife (2017–2027)** The Plan4Fife sets out the Community Planning Partnership’s goal of A Fairer Fife, ensuring children grow up in safe and nurturing environments. The CPC contributes by:
 - Promoting early and effective intervention to prevent crisis escalation.
 - Strengthening community-based responses to child protection.
 - Collaborating with partners to address the impact of poverty on family wellbeing.
2. **Alignment with the Children’s Services Plan (2023–2026)** The CPC plays a key role in delivering the vision of “Making Fife a place where every child and young person matters.” Our work directly supports:
 - **Health & Wellbeing:** Providing coordinated multi-agency support for children at risk.
 - **Children’s Rights:** Embedding children’s voices in policy and decision-making.

- **Supporting Families:** Strengthening early intervention strategies.
 - **Vulnerable Children & Young People:** Ensuring tailored responses for children facing significant risk.
3. **Child Protection and Anti-Poverty Approaches:** The Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC) recognises the strong correlation between poverty and child protection concerns. Through engagement with Fife's Poverty Implementation Panel, we ensure that interventions consider:
- The impact of financial hardship on parental capacity.
 - Barriers to early help, including stigma and accessibility.
 - Opportunities to integrate financial support into protection planning.
 - Collaborative approaches with housing, education, and welfare services.

Leadership

Governance and Strategic Partnerships

The Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC) is a strategic, multi-agency partnership responsible for leading and coordinating child protection activities across the partnership. The CPC plays a critical role in shaping and implementing local child protection policies, ensuring that national guidance is effectively integrated into local practice.

Governance and Strategic Partnerships

The Child Protection Committee is governed by the Chief Officers Public Protection Group (COPS), which provides strategic oversight and ensures accountability. This governance structure aligns with the national guidance set out by the Scottish Government, ensuring that child protection efforts are coordinated and effective.

The Fife CPC also collaborates with other strategic partnerships, including the Adult Protection Committee, the Violence Against Women Partnership, the Suicide Prevention Partnership, MAPPA, and the Alcohol and Drug Partnership. These collaborations ensure a holistic approach to safeguarding, addressing the interconnected issues that affect children and families in Fife.

Subgroups and Their Roles

The Fife CPC operates through several dedicated subgroups, each tasked with specific areas of focus to drive continuous improvement in child protection practice. These subgroups are essential in delivering on the CPC's strategic priorities and ensuring that the 'Six for Safety' framework is consistently applied.

The Case Review Working Group

Role and Purpose

The Case Review Working Group (CRWG) is a core sub-group of Fife CPC, responsible for overseeing and coordinating learning from case reviews at both a local and national level, ensuring that key lessons are identified and embedded into multi-agency practice. The group plays a quality assurance role, ensuring that recommendations from such reviews lead to tangible improvements in child protection practice across Fife.

Key Activities in 2023–2024

During the reporting period, the CRWG has undertaken a range of activities to enhance learning and continuous improvement in child protection, including:

- Conducting Local Learning Reviews and ensuring that recommendations were actioned and integrated into the CPC's improvement plan.
- Linking with National Learning: and reviewed national learning reviews and identified key themes relevant to Fife.
- Practical Changes to Practice: Learning from reviews has informed updates to Fife's CARM Protocol, Multi-Agency Chronologies, and Information-Sharing Guidance.

Next Steps for 2024–2025

Looking ahead, the CRWG will:

- Enhance practitioner involvement in learning reviews to ensure frontline perspectives shape recommendations.
- Develop a standardised framework for embedding learning across agencies.
- Strengthen follow-up mechanisms to assess how learning reviews influence long-term improvements in child protection outcomes.
- Continue to align with national learning review processes and evolving child protection policy.

Quality Assurance & Data Group (QA&D)

Role and Purpose

The Quality Assurance & Data Group (QA&D) is responsible for overseeing the monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement of child protection activity within Fife. The group plays a critical role in ensuring that evidence-based decision-making informs child protection practice by analysing data trends, overseeing multi-agency audits, and driving improvement actions based on learning from reviews and national developments.

Key Activities in 2023–2024

Key Achievements

- **Development of a Multi-Agency Audit Framework:** The QA&D Group adopted a comprehensive, structured framework to enhance the consistency, rigour, and effectiveness of child protection audits in Fife. It brings together national standards, CPC strategic priorities, and self-evaluation methodologies, ensuring alignment with:
 - National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021)
 - Protecting Children and Young People: Chief Officer Responsibilities (2019)
 - Care Inspectorate’s Quality Framework (2022)
- **First Implementation of the Audit Framework (May 2024):** The QA&D Group conducted its first audit using this framework, providing a structured approach to evaluating multi-agency practice in child protection.
- **Strengthened Data Analysis & Reporting:** The QA&D Group has ensured regular minimum data set reporting, allowing for trend monitoring and targeted improvements in child protection responses.

Next Steps for 2024–2025

- Monitor implementation of findings from the multi-agency audit work.
- Strengthen governance clarity on oversight of CARM and IRD data processes.
- Continue to refine the multi-agency audit approach, ensuring sustainable participation across agencies.
- Enhance workforce engagement through a structured self-evaluation calendar, integrating learning from audits, workforce surveys, and CPC Improvement Plan priorities.
- Continue to focus on the child’s voice to inform improvement.

The Guidance Implementation Group

The Guidance Implementation Group (GI Group) continues to meet regularly to progress key elements of the guidance, with the Lead Officer for Fife's Child Protection Committee actively drafting Fife's new child protection multi-agency guidance.

Key Activities in 2023–2024

- Extending the IRD Pathway:
 - An IRD will now consider the need for a Child Protection Planning Meeting (CPPM) for every referred child
 - A Care and Risk Management (CARM) Protocol is agreed in principle.
 - Updated single- and multi-agency guidance now reflects the revised Child Protection Planning Meeting, processes, language and structure.

Next Steps for 2024–2025

- Finalising comprehensive Child Protection guidance for the Fife partnership, ensuring alignment with national standards and multi-agency best practice.
- Formulating oversight and scrutiny processes for IRD, establishing robust quality assurance mechanisms to monitor effectiveness and consistency.
- Further developing our approach to vulnerable young people, ensuring that pathways, processes, and intervention strategies are fit for purpose and aligned with national guidance and best practice.
- Enhancing multi-agency training and workforce development, ensuring that staff across agencies have the necessary confidence, skills, and knowledge to implement guidance effectively.
- Continuing engagement with children and families to co-produce accessible resources that support understanding of key processes.

Contextual Safeguarding Group

Role and Purpose

The Contextual Safeguarding Group is responsible for formulating our multi-agency approach to Extra-Familial Harm within the Fife Partnership. Contextual Safeguarding ensures that risks in peer groups, schools, communities, and online spaces are effectively identified and managed. The group focuses on strategic development, multi-agency alignment, and workforce development to embed this approach within child protection practice in Fife.

Key Activities in 2023–2024

- Developing a Contextual Safeguarding Framework – A draft framework has been created, ensuring Fife’s approach aligns with national policy and is integrated with Child Protection and Care and Risk Management (CARM) processes.
- Gap Analysis & Data Development – A minimum data set has been established to improve understanding of extra-familial harm trends, and a gap analysis has been conducted to ensure the approach complements existing safeguarding processes.

Next Steps for 2024–2025

- Finalise & Implement Framework – Embed Contextual Safeguarding within Fife’s multi-agency processes.
- Develop Training & Workforce Development – Work with the Learning & Practice Development Group to ensure frontline staff have the necessary skills and confidence.
- Establish a Multi-Agency Response Model – Explore a pilot area to test process prior to full role out.
- Strengthen Engagement & Participation – Ensure young people’s voices inform the development of accessible resources and contextual safeguarding strategies.
- Ongoing National Collaboration – Continue working with national safeguarding networks to align with best practice and develop evidence-based approaches.

Learning and Practice Development Group (LaPDG)

Role and Purpose

The Learning and Practice Development Group (LaPDG) plays a crucial role in ensuring continuous professional development across the Fife partnership. It is responsible for coordinating, delivering, and evaluating multi-agency training to enhance skills, knowledge, and confidence in child protection practice. The group also supports the implementation of key CPC priorities, such as neglect, child sexual exploitation (CSE), and embedding the voice of children and young people.

Key Achievements in 2023–2024

- Establishing the LaPDG as a Core group of the CPC – The group met regularly, with growing engagement and commitment from partners.
- Terms of Reference Finalised – Clear governance and structure have been established, with the LaPDG name formally adopted.
- Strengthening Multi-Agency Training –
 - The Multi-Agency Child Protection Training continues to be well-received, with core agencies actively contributing to delivery.
 - Training has provided valuable reflective learning spaces, enhancing cross-agency collaboration and confidence in applying child protection processes.
 - The cascade model remains effective, but further consideration is needed on maximising in-training experiences for frontline staff.
- Improving Data Collection & Evaluation – A data collection process has been established to measure the impact of training and practice development activities, ensuring CPC can demonstrate its effectiveness.

Next Steps for 2024–2025

- Finalise and Implement the Learning & Practice Development Strategy – Ensure alignment with CPC priorities and secure resources to support effective delivery.
- Develop a Dynamic Workplan – Ensure training and development activities remain agile and responsive to emerging needs, including neglect, CSE, and strengthening the child’s voice.
- Expand Workforce Training & Impact Evaluation – Continue to deliver multi-agency training, with a focus on long-term impact measurement.

Engagement with Children and Families

The Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC) is committed to ensuring that children’s voices are heard and central to decisions that affect them. Engagement with children and families is embedded within our Quality Assurance & Data Group’s oversight, ensuring that lived experiences inform continuous improvement in policy, practice, and service delivery.

During 2023–2024, key engagement activities included:

- Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) Feedback Report – gathering insights from children and carers involved in joint investigative interviews.
- Contextual Safeguarding Consultation – incorporating young people’s perspectives into the development of extra-familial harm responses.
- Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPM) Review – ensuring that children’s voices are reflected in multi-agency decision-making.

Children’s Voices: Insights from the SCIM Report

The SCIM approach, introduced in Fife in March 2023, prioritises trauma-informed interviews, giving children choice, control, and a supportive environment when sharing their experiences. Feedback from children and parents/carers between January and July 2024 highlighted:

- Positive experiences with interviewers – 100% of children felt social work and police staff treated them well and explained the process clearly.
- Feeling listened to – most children felt they had been heard, with comments such as "They were really nice and friendly" and "I felt comfortable so I could share what happened."
- Choice and control – the majority of children felt they had a choice in whether they participated.
- Parental confidence – All parents/carers who provided feedback felt informed and reassured by the process, with one stating: "The team made an awful situation more bearable. Thank you for the care and compassion shown to us."

Next Steps for 2024–2025

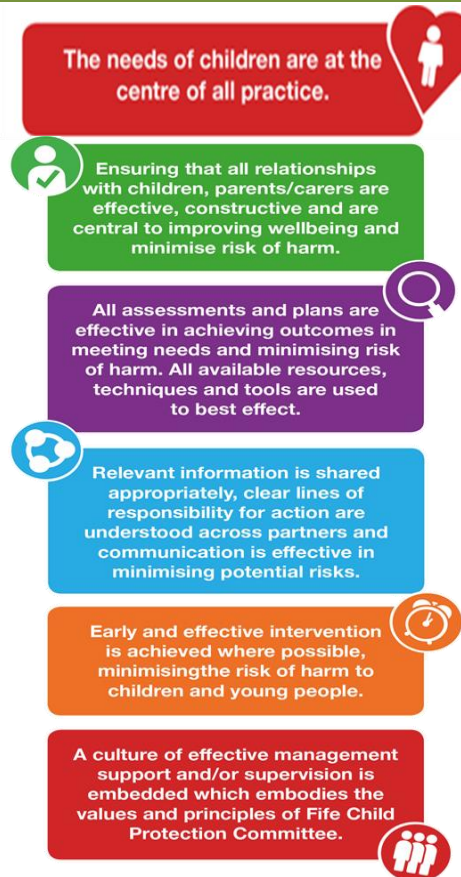
- Enhancing Co-Production – Developing child-friendly materials in partnership with children and young people.
- Expanding Accessibility – Addressing transport barriers and ensuring interview locations meet trauma-informed best practices.
- Improving Communication – Reducing investigation timescales and strengthening information-sharing with families.
- Supporting the Workforce – Embedding trauma-informed support for professionals conducting interviews.
- Embedding Learning – Strengthening the systematic use of children’s voices in CPC strategic planning.

The CPC Improvement Plan 2023 - 26

The ‘Six for Safety’ framework underpins the strategic priorities of Fife Child Protection Committee (CPC), ensuring that all child protection activities align with best practice and are driven by outcomes that focus on children’s safety and wellbeing.

Derived from national and local learning, the framework serves as the foundation for continuous improvement in child protection practices across Fife. The table below outlines progress against the ‘Six for Safety’ outcomes for the reporting period (August 2023 – July 2024).

Each outcome reflects the key drivers for improving child protection practices and is supported by specific actions from the CPC Improvement Plan.



National Context				
GIRFEC		UNCRC		Independent Care Review
The Plan for Fife <i>'A fairer Fife'</i>				
Opportunities for All	Thriving Places	Inclusive Growth & Jobs	Community Led Services	
Children's Services Plan <i>'Making Fife a place where every child and young person matters'</i>				
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 center 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.	Key Actions	Progress	Key Actions	Next steps
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.	In progress	A CARM Protocol agreed in principle. Any Unborn Baby and child meeting a threshold of risk of significant harm will be referred to an IRD where the need for a CPPM will be considered. The voices of children have been heard through their contributions to SCIM and Contextual Safeguarding.	Committee sign off for CARM Protocol. Incorporate aspects of local guidance into Fife CP guidance.
1.2	Develop a systematic approach to involving children and their families in the appraisal, review, and development of child protection policies and processes.	Completed	CPC has agreed the principal mechanisms in which we hear the views of children and their families through structured consultation and reporting as set out in our	See Action 1.5 for continued reporting approach. Close this action in the Improvement Plan.

			Communications and Engagement Strategy.	
1.3	Through the Quality Assurance & Data Group and individual service activity, assure key child protection processes, e.g., CPPM has the voice of the child at the center of decision-making.	In progress	Audit has identified achievements and areas for improvement.	Action plan to further improve. See Action 6.1 for Quality Assurance processes.
1.4	An advocacy service or a trusted adult is 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.	In Progress	This action has been updated to replace the CRIA with an Equality Impact Assessment. Alignment between committees is taking place to standardise approaches.	See Action 6.3 for policy alignment.
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.	Completed	CPC has agreed the principal mechanisms for hearing children and families' views through structured consultation and reporting as set out in our Communications and Engagement Strategy.	See Action 1.2 for reporting approach. Close this action in the Improvement Plan.
1.6	Opportunities for reflective practice are in place, and we are using these to best effect, including: - Supervision - Reflective practice forums - Partnership case review activity	Ongoing	Single Agency arrangements are in place for supervision. The Case Review Working Group continues to support Learning Review activity. Quarterly IRD Practice Development Sessions provide structured learning.	Close supervision action. See Action 6.6 for Learning Review guidance.

'Six for Safety' Statement

Ensuring that all relationships with children, parents/carers are effective, constructive and are central to improving wellbeing and minimise risk of harm.

Outcome 2

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.

No.	Key Actions	Progress	Key achievements	Next Steps
2.1	Continue to develop a multi-agency approach towards raising awareness and understanding the impact of childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences.	Contained within LaPD training plan/single agency procedures	Planning reflects trauma awareness.	Continued auditing evaluation. See Action 2.2 for trauma training details.
2.2	Ensure cognisance of the impact of Trauma and ACE within the delivery of all appropriate CPC training activities.	Ongoing	Trauma principles embedded into training scenarios and discussions.	See Action 6.5 for training evaluation.
2.3	Review all interagency training and practice guidance to ensure that significant adults form part of the assessment and planning for children.	Ongoing	Scenario-based discussions in training.	See Action 6.7 for reflective practice discussions.

'Six for Safety' Statement

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.

Outcome 3

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.

No.	Key Actions	Progress	Key Achievements	Next Steps
3.1	Support the development of an agreed approach to neglect and accumulating concerns.	In Progress	A Short Life Working Group has been formed to consider a neglect strategy.	See Action 6.3 for policy alignment.
3.2	Develop an integrated strategic response to contextual safeguarding.	In Progress	CPC has agreed in principle to trial this approach in a geographical area.	See Action 6.3 for policy alignment.
3.3	Embed and evaluate the implementation of the Care and Risk Management approach.	In Progress	CARM operational within the partnership.	See Action 1.1 for further integration and 6.1 for the development of oversight and scrutiny.
3.4	Work with FVAWP to embed and evaluate the Safe & Together model.	Ongoing	Training delivered; plans in place for evaluation.	See Action 6.5 for impact assessment.
3.5	Collaborate with the ADP to refresh multi-agency guidance.	In Progress	Supporting the ADP in their improvement plan.	See Action 6.3 for guidance updates.

'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.	Key Actions	Progress	Key achievements	Next Steps
4.1	Multi-agency partnership guidance for information sharing is completed and supports effective practice. Develop and deliver multi-agency training to support effective and timely information sharing. Quality assurance arrangements are in place to ensure that timely and effective information-sharing arrangements are embedded in practice.	In progress	A draft of the Multi-Agency Information Sharing Guidance is available.	Agree the guidance. Commission and deliver training. Clarify oversight mechanisms within single agencies that monitor information-sharing processes.
4.2	Develop further the use of social media and online activity to raise public awareness of child protection issues, including refreshing our CPC website.	In progress	A draft of the Communications and Engagement Strategy is available, setting out actions around social media.	See action 4.3. Finalise data input for the website. Agree on additional online activities and consider resourcing.
4.3	Develop further the use of social media, online, and direct briefing to communicate current initiatives within the partnership.	In progress	Committee agreement to produce a post-committee SWAY in accordance with the Communications and Engagement Strategy.	Publish the first SWAY in January 2025.
4.4	We develop effective IRD oversight processes, including where possible an E-IRD portal to support shared working. Quality Assurance arrangements for IRD processes are in place and reported to the CPC.	In progress	A Draft Terms of Reference has been agreed to progress oversight and scrutiny of IRD. Discussions continue regarding the development of an E-IRD portal.	See action 1.3. Agree the Terms of Reference, data sheet, and reporting mechanisms for IRD. Continue work towards an Electronic IRD portal or agree on a manual workaround.
4.5	Further enhance the range of local indicators to complement our Minimum Data Suite.	In progress	Additional indicators have been added to complement the Minimum Data Suite around SIMD.	Work is ongoing to consider adding local education and health indicators.

'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.	Key Actions	Progress	Key achievements	Next Steps
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.	Completed	CWP has been refreshed, and practice sessions are enabled.	Close this action
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.	In place	CWP has been refreshed, and practice sessions are enabled.	We will strengthen our partnership working with Children in Fife.
5.3	We will develop our work on integrated chronology across children's services.	In Progress	Agreement reached to incept a SLWG to support the rollout of the Fife Single and Multi-Agency Chronology	Agree members to the SLWG. Agree an implementation plan to support the rollout of the Fife Guidance.

'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

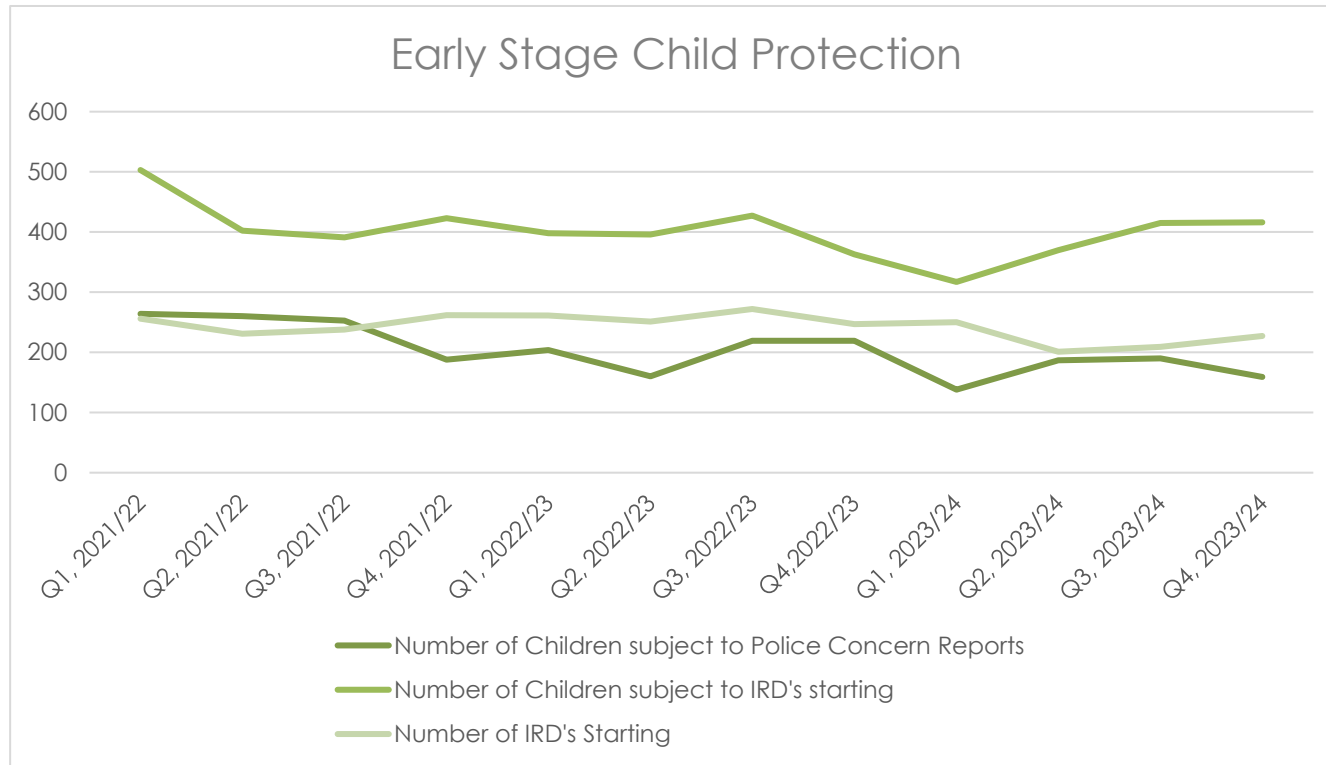
We draw on a range of sources including, national policy and legislation, research, local quality assurance, practice experience and Learning Reviews to inform our approach to local policy and practice development. Local leadership in child protection is effective in driving improvements in child protection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

No.	Key Actions	Progress	Key achievements	Next Steps
6.1	We employ effective Quality Assurance mechanisms to oversee and scrutinise partnership activity to develop best	In Process	Processes are in place to support effective Quality Assurance and	Develop formalised oversight and scrutiny processes for IRD, CARM and SCIM. Be

	multi-agency practice. Agree and undertake a program of audit, evaluation, and review activity taking into account findings from analysis of local and national management information and other emerging issues. Reporting findings and sharing learning as appropriate.		oversight mechanisms. A successful multi-agency audit has taken place, with findings reported to the committee.	cognisant of developments in MACC and Contextual Safeguarding.
6.2	Ensure representation at a National Level from the Fife Partnership. Embed feedback mechanisms from National Groups to the CPC and associated Groups.	Completed	Formal mechanisms have been developed to ensure that feedback from national groups is reported to the CPC.	This action can now be closed.
6.3	Continue our work to review and update our multi-agency policies, procedures, and protocols, ensuring these align with national guidance. Support all partners to review policies, procedures, and guidance to ensure they are underpinned by the Child Protection National Guidance 2021.	In progress	The CPC is working to ensure that all relevant policies and procedures are commissioned or updated.	See action 1.1. Agree at committee: CARM Protocol, Vulnerable Young Person's Protocol, and Fife Child Protection Guidance.
6.4	Develop a Learning and Development Strategy to meet the Learning and Development needs of the partnership.	In progress	The Strategy has been developed in draft.	This strategy will be shared for consultation and then agreed upon by the partnership and CPC.
6.5	Plan, deliver, evaluate, and review the annual multi-agency workforce learning and development program to support best practice in our workforce and in child protection activity.	In progress	A multi-agency training calendar has been planned and is being delivered.	Strengthen evaluation to link workforce development with measurable practice improvements.
6.6	Areas of learning and practice development that arise in Learning Reviews are helping inform the LAPDG Strategy and Workplan.	In progress	A draft strategy has been developed, aligning with the Learning & Practice Development Group work plan, reflecting key priorities from Learning Reviews.	Finalise and gain committee approval for the Learning & Practice Development Strategy. Strengthen integration of Learning Review findings into training and practice guidance.
6.7	Develop opportunities for ongoing professional development and ensure that both single and multi-agency child protection training is accessible. Provide opportunities for multi-agency partners to engage in reflective practice.	In progress	An IRD forum has been initiated, supporting reflective practice and ongoing improvements. All training is multi-agency and delivered in flexible formats.	Continue to develop the IRD forum and expand reflective practice opportunities. Evaluate training formats to improve accessibility and learning outcomes.
6.8	Ensure capacity is in place to respond to new and developing issues, including national and local practice reviews.	Completed	The CPC has responded proactively to emerging issues such as Bairns' Hoose and neglect through targeted working groups.	This action is now complete.

Key Statistics and Data

This section provides an overview of the key statistical trends in child protection in Fife for the period August 2023 to July 2024. The data presented here is based on Fife's **Child Protection Minimum Dataset**, complemented by local indicators and additional insights gathered by the **Quality Assurance & Data Group**. These statistics offer a snapshot of child protection activity and provide a foundation for evaluating the impact of interventions and safeguarding practices.



KEY FINDINGS FROM THE DATA

- **Police CP Concern Reports:** During the 12-month reporting period, a total of 719 children were subject to Police CP Concern Reports, a decrease of 10% (83 fewer reports) from the previous 12 months. This reduction does not necessarily indicate a lower incidence of concern but may reflect a shift in referral patterns, improvements in early intervention, and the impact of more targeted preventative efforts. Moving into the next year we will continue assess and consider.
- **IRD Data:** 1,518 children were subject to IRD, a 4% decrease (-66) from the previous 12 months. The number of IRDs started has dropped to 887 compared to 1,031 in the previous year.

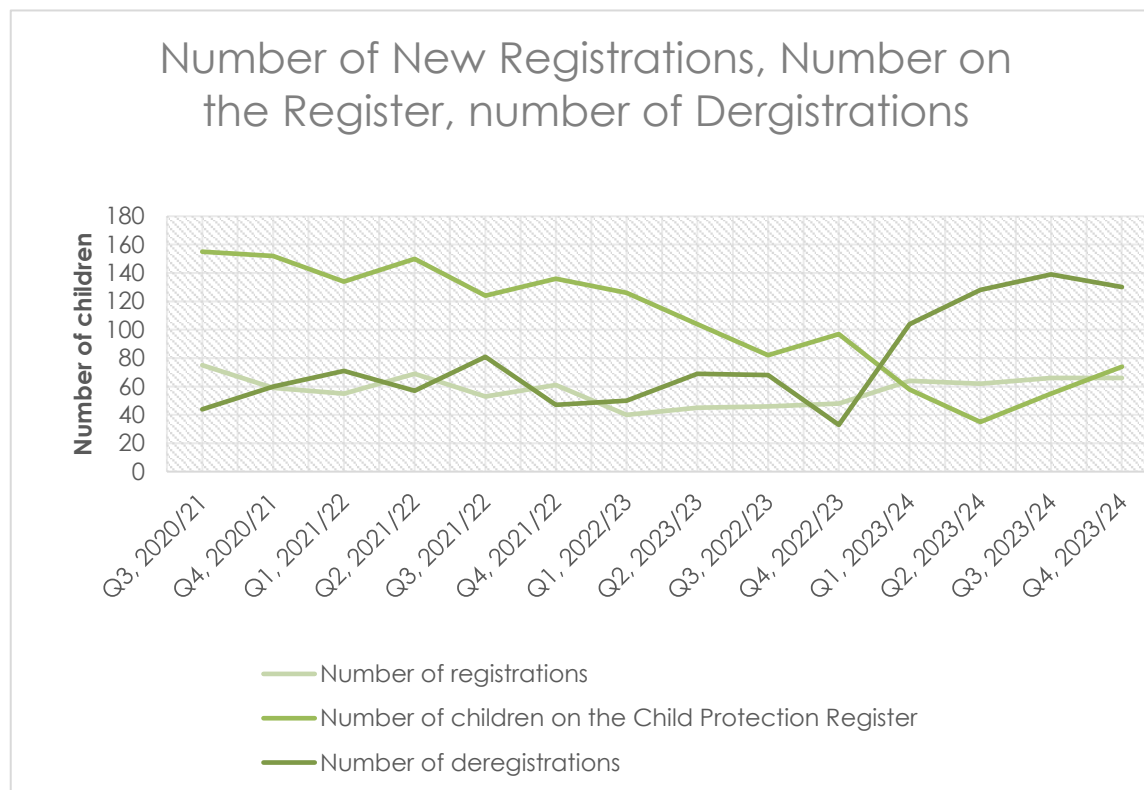
6.1 Child Protection Register (CPR) Data

The Child Protection Register (CPR) serves as an indicator of children at risk of significant harm who require multi-agency intervention. Over the reporting period, the following trends were observed:

- **130 children** permanently registered on **31/07/24**, a **34% increase** (+33) compared to the same period in 2022/23.
- **258 new registrations** during 2023/24, with **68 unborn babies** and **43 sibling groups**, accounting for **120 children**.
- **222 de-registrations**, including **34 sibling groups** (86 children total).

The rise in permanent registrations does not necessarily indicate an increase in risk but may reflect improved identification of concerns, enhanced multi-agency collaboration, and more effective early risk assessments. Further analysis will be conducted to determine if this trend is affected by the high number of **large sibling groups** and an **increase in de-registrations**.

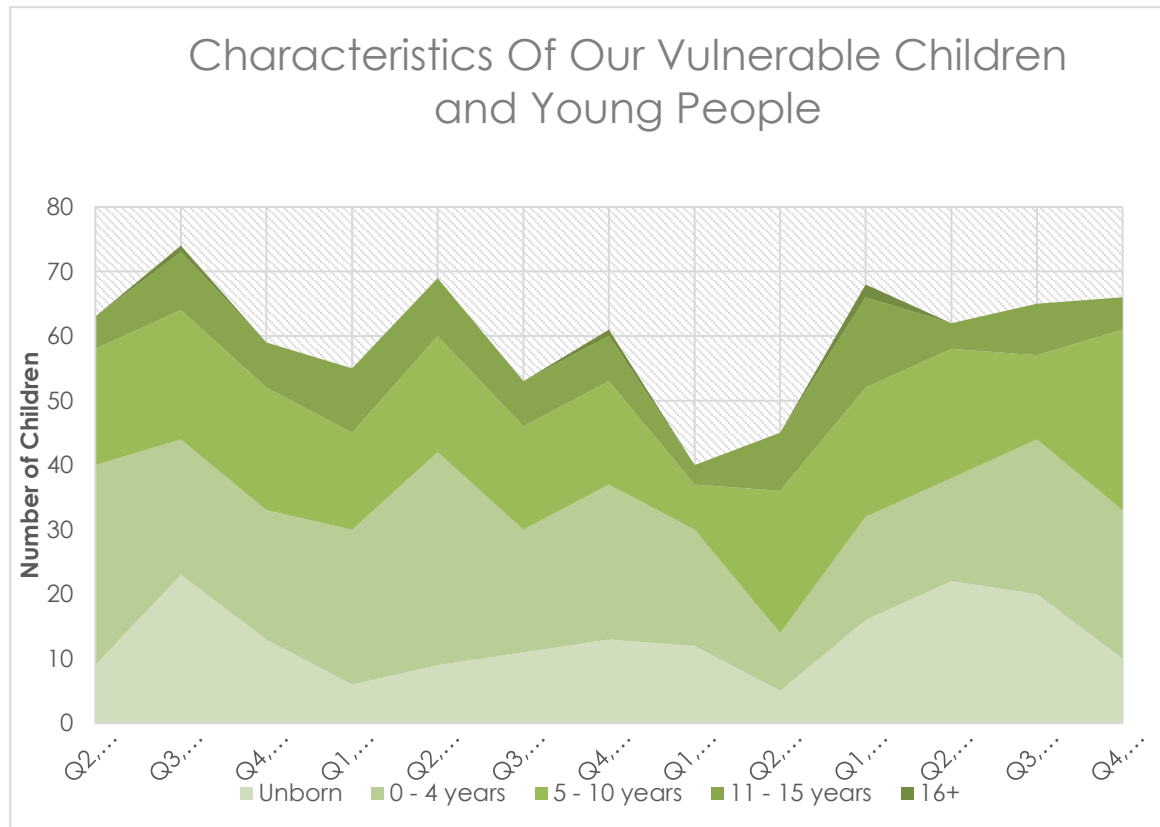
One key focus area for the Reviewing Service is the **length of time children remain registered**, ensuring timely interventions while maintaining a child-centered approach.



6.2 Age Trends

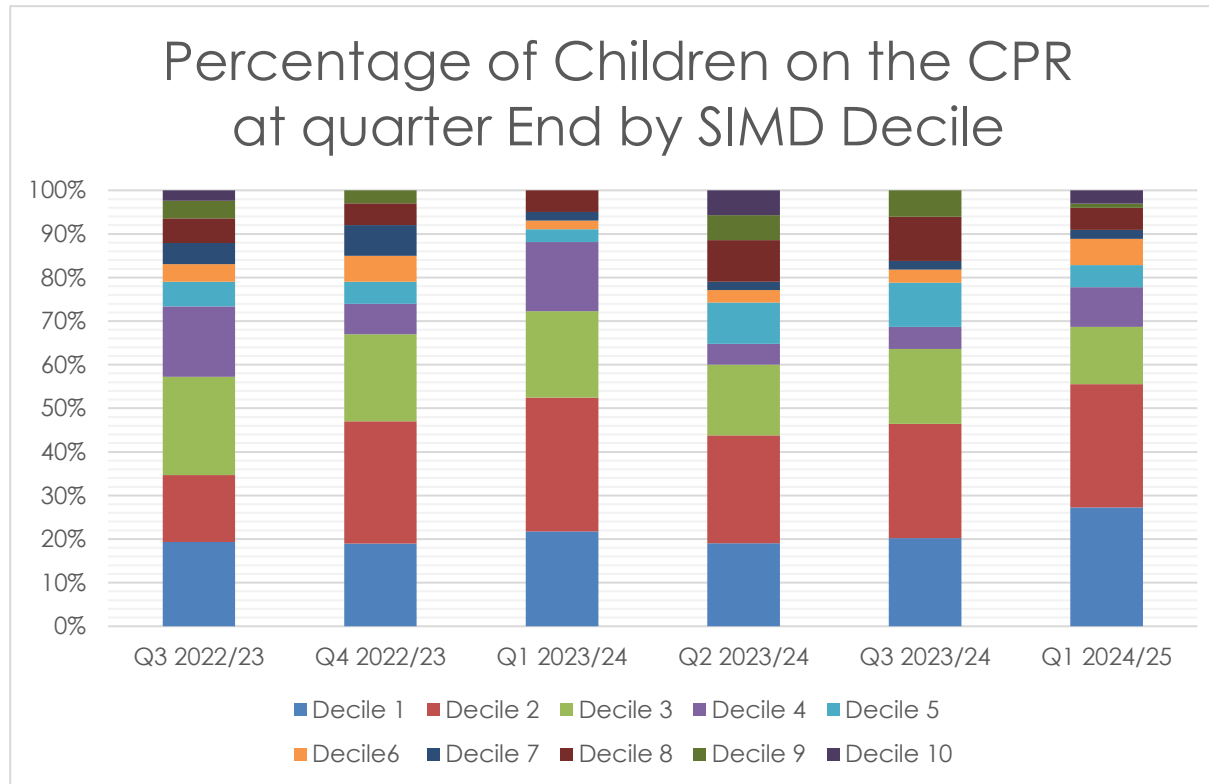
A breakdown of the age of children on the CPR shows the following trends:

- The **5–11 age group** remains the largest category at **31% (81 children)**, followed by **0–4 at 30% (79 children)** and **Unborn babies at 26% (68 children)**.
- The data remains consistent with previous years. However, **early intervention for the 0–4 age group** continues to be a focus. The CPC is working with **Health Visiting Services** and **SCRA** to explore how referrals for compulsory measures align with age demographics and whether earlier support could improve outcomes.



6.3 Demographics and SIMD Analysis

- Of the **130 children on the register as of 31/07/24**, **28%** lived in **SIMD Decile 2** (36 children), followed by **27% in Decile 1** (35 children). Only **3% (4 children)** lived in Decile 10.
- The correlation between **poverty and child protection concerns** is clear, with the majority of children living in areas of high deprivation (Deciles 1 and 2). This remains a **strategic priority** across child protection and anti-poverty initiatives.
 - The CPC continues to work closely with **Fife's Poverty Implementation Panel**



Conclusion

The data presented in this section underlines the need for continued **multi-agency collaboration, targeted interventions, and data-driven decision-making**. By strengthening early intervention, improving risk assessments, and ensuring the voices of children remain central to practice, the CPC aims to enhance outcomes for vulnerable children across Fife.

Looking Ahead

As we move into the next reporting period (2024–2025), Fife CPC remains committed to driving forward improvements in child protection practice across the partnership. Building on the progress outlined in this report, we will continue to focus on key strategic areas that align with the **'Six for Safety'** framework and national priorities. The **CPC Improvement Plan (2023–2026)** provides a strong foundation for this work, ensuring that multi-agency collaboration, data-driven decision-making, and the voices of children remain at the heart of our approach.

Key Priorities for 2025–2026

1. Strengthening the Voice of the Child

- Fully embed systematic approaches to capturing children's views within all child protection processes, ensuring their experiences inform decision-making. *(See Action 1.1)*
- Expand engagement activities, including co-production of resources with children and young people. *(See Action 1.6, 3.2)*
- Develop further mechanisms for analysing and reporting on children's voices to strengthen the CPC's ability to evidence impact. *(See Action 1.3, 1.4)*

2. Embedding a Trauma-Informed Workforce

- Continue multi-agency training that strengthens professional knowledge and confidence in trauma-informed practice. *(See Action 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)*
- Evaluate the impact of trauma-informed training across key agencies and ensure learning is embedded into guidance and procedures. *(See Action 6.5, 6.7)*
- Further integrate Safe & Together and trauma-responsive approaches in work with children affected by domestic abuse. *(See Action 3.4, 2.3)*

3. Improving Multi-Agency Responses to Risk and Harm

- Embed the revised **Care and Risk Management (CARM) Protocol**, ensuring a robust multi-agency approach to risk management. *(See Action 3.3, 6.3)*
- Progress the **Contextual Safeguarding Framework**, including piloting approaches in identified geographical areas. *(See Action 3.2)*
- Strengthen the **multi-agency neglect strategy**, ensuring early intervention and long-term support for families. *(See Action 3.1, 5.3)*

- **Enhance collaboration with the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) and the Violence Against Women Partnership (VAWP)** to ensure a more integrated response to substance use, domestic abuse, and coercive control within child protection processes. This will include structured joint planning and shared data analysis to strengthen risk identification and intervention. *(See Action 3.4, 3.5, 6.3)*

4. Enhancing Information Sharing and Digital Solutions

- Finalise and implement the **Multi-Agency Information Sharing Guidance**, providing clarity on processes and expectations. *(See Action 4.1)*
- Explore digital solutions for **electronic Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (E-IRD)** to improve efficiency and oversight. *(See Action 4.4)*
- Continue to develop and refine **multi-agency chronologies**, ensuring consistency in recording and sharing key information. *(See Action 5.3)*

5. Strengthening Public and Professional Communication

- Deliver on the **Communications and Engagement Strategy**, ensuring child protection messages reach professionals, families, and communities. *(See Action 4.2, 4.3)*
- Enhance the CPC website and digital presence to provide accessible, up-to-date resources. *(See Action 4.2)*
- Continue quarterly **CPC Sway briefings** to ensure practitioners and strategic partners are informed of key developments. *(See Action 4.3)*

6. Driving Learning and Quality Assurance

- Further embed **Quality Assurance mechanisms**, ensuring learning from **Learning Reviews, Case Reviews**, and audits informs continuous improvement. *(See Action 6.1, 6.6)*
- Evaluate the long-term impact of multi-agency training, ensuring learning translates into improved practice. *(See Action 6.5, 6.7)*
- Strengthen workforce development opportunities, expanding reflective practice sessions across agencies. *(See Action 6.7)*
- **Strengthen links between the QA & Data Group and the Learning & Practice Development Group (LaPDG)** to ensure that recurring themes from case reviews, audits, and practice evaluations directly inform training, guidance updates, and strategic planning. This will create a stronger feedback loop between all CPC subgroups, improving cross-agency learning and implementation of best practices. *(See Action 6.6, 6.3, 1.3)*

7. Responding to Emerging Challenges and National Developments

- Continue participation in the **Bairns' Hoose Pathfinder Programme**, ensuring alignment with national standards and best practices. *(See Action 6.8, 3.3)*
- Monitor the **impact of poverty** on child protection concerns and ensure this remains a strategic focus within the partnership. *(See Action 3.1, 5.1)*
- Prepare for any **updates to national child protection guidance**, ensuring Fife's policies and procedures remain aligned. *(See Action 6.3)*

8. Strengthening the CPC's Structure, Governance, and Improvement Methodology

- **Undertake a review of CPC governance and subgroup effectiveness**, ensuring that all groups have clear roles, contribute effectively, and align with an improvement methodology. (See Action 6.3, 6.8)
- Develop clear work plans for each CPC subgroup, ensuring accountability and strategic alignment with the 'Six for Safety' framework and improvement plan.

Conclusion

The next year presents both opportunities and challenges for child protection in Fife. By building on the strong foundations set out in this report, Fife CPC will continue to drive forward improvements in child protection practice, ensuring that every child and young person is safe, supported, and empowered. Our commitment to **multi-agency collaboration, evidence-based practice, and continuous learning** remains steadfast as we work towards a safer future for Fife's children.