



# **Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2023/2024**

**A child protection  
community working  
together to keep  
children safe.**



**If you have a concern about a  
child or young person, please contact**  
**01738 476768**  
**or**  
**childprotection@pkc.gov.uk**



***Protecting Children and Young People: It is Still Everyone's Job***

## Contents

<b>Preface by the Public Protection Chief Officers Group .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction by the Independent Chair of Perth and Kinross CPC .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Our Local Context .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Our Vision .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Management Information and Performance Outcomes .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders? .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Introduction of Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) and Bairns' Hoose in Perth and Kinross .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPMs): Continuing Improvement Work</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Involvement, Engagement and Participation with Children, Young People and their Families .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>How good is the delivery of our services for children, young people and families and our operational management? .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Practice Guidance and Development .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>How good is our leadership? .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<i>Perth and Kinross Public Protection Chief Officers' Group (COG) .....</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Perth and Kinross Protecting People Coordination Group (PPCG) .....</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Perth and Kinross Children, Young People and Families Partnership (CYPFP)...</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC).....</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Central and North Scotland CPC Consortium.....</i>	<i>62</i>
<b>What is our capacity for improvement? .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Key Abbreviations &amp; Acronyms Used .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Appendix 1 – Performance Management Graphs and Additional Details .....</b>	<b>65</b>

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## Preface by the Public Protection Chief Officers Group

The Chief Officers of the public sector organisations in Perth and Kinross, Elected Members of Perth and Kinross Council, Tayside NHS Board and the Command Team of Police Scotland's Tayside Division, are once again pleased to support the Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC) Standards and Quality Report 2023/2024

The Children, Young People and Families Partnership (CYPFP) continually strives for excellence in our children's services and continues to provide strong and robust collective leadership, governance, challenge and support to the work of the CPC. Our individual and collective commitment to the protection of unborn babies, babies, children and young people in Perth and Kinross is strong and consistent.

It is our firm belief that **safeguarding, supporting** and **promoting** the **wellbeing** of all children and young people and protecting them from harm, abuse and exploitation is **everyone's job**.

We take this responsibility very seriously and we are committed to **enabling all children and young people to be the best they can be** and to achieving our shared, ambitious and compelling vision that our **children and young people will have the best start in life and Tayside will be the best place in Scotland to grow up**.

We are committed to a whole of life, whole of family approach to Public Protection and we continue to strengthen and consolidate this approach to ensure that unborn babies, babies, children, young people and adults are supported to be as safe and well-cared for as possible. Bringing together our Public Protection Partnerships, to build on this approach, will be one of our priorities in 2024/25.

This report demonstrates that our child protection services, across all our services and agencies, continue to strive for excellence in safeguarding. We are proud that we have a committed workforce who are dedicated to ensuring that families have every opportunity to thrive.

In this digital age, there are new and emerging threats to the safety of children, young people and adults and there is no room for complacency. We will continue to work together to provide strong leadership and direction to ensure that our services and agencies continue to learn, improve and develop to meet the needs of our communities.

We commend and endorse this CPC Standards and Quality Report for 2023/2024.

**Thomas Glen**  
Chief Executive  
Perth and Kinross Council

**Dr Pamela Johnstone**  
Medical Director  
NHS Tayside

**Nicola Russell**  
Chief Superintendent  
Police Scotland – Tayside Division

**Lisa Sutherland**  
Locality Reporter Manager  
Scottish Children's Reporter Administration

## Introduction by the Independent Chair of Perth and Kinross CPC

Welcome to our CPC Standards and Quality Report 2023/2024. This report covers the period from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024.

This report presents a high-level overview of our multi-agency activity for the past year and reflects the work of services and agencies across our partnership to keep unborn babies, babies, children and young people as safe and protected from harm as possible.

During 2023/2024, we have continued to work to fully embed and implement the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 – updated 2023](#) and supported the implementation of other new areas of practice, such as the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) and to establish the Bairns' Hoose model in Tayside. The strong working relationships between services and agencies, fostered through the Child Protection Committee, have supported these initiatives. We have produced and published guidance documents to support vulnerable young people and continued to deliver on our improvement plan.

It has been pleasing to see the impact of changes commenced in 2022 which offered a broader range of early intervention to families. Numbers of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) remain comparatively low and as will be seen in the next section, the very significant increase in demand for services seen in 2022/2023 has not been replicated in 2023/2024. Nonetheless, levels of need have remained high.

The Child Protection Committee has experienced a number of significant changes in its membership in 2023/2024 including the retirement of Ross Drummond, Child Protection Inter-agency Coordinator, after 14 years in the role. At our Development Day in April 2024, we considered these changes and the importance of ensuring we have a shared vision. It was important to take stock, acknowledge the impact of the changes and plan to move forward together. This has enabled the CPC to retain its focus on continuous improvement throughout this transition, promoting best practice and supporting our workforce to provide the best service possible for unborn babies, babies, children and young people.

Going forward, the Child Protection Committee has an ambitious improvement plan in place for the continuous improvement of our services and to take forward learning from our self-evaluation and audit activity. We will continue to be alert to emerging threats for children, young people and their families through social media and digital technologies and to work with partners to reduce risk and minimise harm.

Building on our strong existing relationships, we will continue to develop our role within Perth and Kinross' Public Protection Partnership, with the intention of fully embedding a Whole Family Approach to care and protection for our communities. We look forward to working even more closely with all our multi-agency partners to this end.

All members of the Child Protection Committee recognise the importance of the hard work, commitment and dedication of all our staff. On their behalf, I would like to recognise the continued determination and effort of first line staff and managers to ensure unborn babies, babies, children and young people are supported and kept safe and their families are supported.

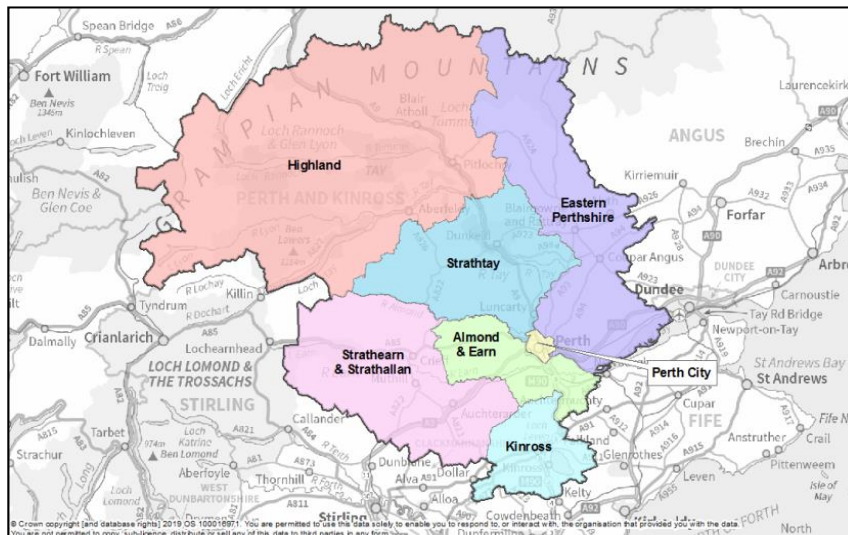
**Bill Atkinson**

**Independent Chair of Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC)**

**Date: 25 September 2024**

## Our Local Context

Perth & Kinross covers a large geographical area with a mix of rural and urban communities. The map below illustrates the size and diversity of the county with suggest some of the challenges that are involved in delivering services in the area.



### Area



**5286 km<sup>2</sup>**

5th largest area by land mass in Scotland

### Population



**153,810**

mid-year population estimate, NRS, 2021



**18% 0-17 years old**



**12** Electoral wards

**40** Councillors

Community planning local action partnership areas

Perth City      East Perthshire  
Kinross-shire      Strathtay  
Almond and Earn      Highland  
Strathern and Strathallan



**NHS Tayside**

commissions health care for residents across Tayside

- 3 major hospitals
- community hospitals
- >60 GP surgeries
- local health centres



**Police Scotland**

Tayside division

**7500 km<sup>2</sup>**

area covered by Tayside command

## Our Vision

The Child Protection Committee has a clear vision for its work in Perth & Kinross, strongly aligned with the [Tayside Plan for Infants, Children, Young People 2023 – 2026](#) and its five priorities:

- 1. Our children will have the best start in life**
- 2. Our children, young people and families will achieve and make positive contributions to communities**
- 3. Our children and young people will enjoy good physical and mental health**
- 4. Our children and young people will have their rights protected and their voices heard**
- 5. Our children and young people will be safe and loved**

### National Context

The care and protection of children and young people in Scotland is set within the wider policy context of [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\)](#). An exciting development this year has been the incorporation the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) into Scottish law on 16 July 2024, ensuring that the rights of babies, children and young people are now fully protected.

The [Independent Care Review: The Promise](#) (2020) clearly set out Scotland's Ambition for children and young people – *we grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential*. [The Promise: The Plan 2021 – 2024](#) set out the five priority areas – **the right to a childhood; whole family support; supporting the workforce; planning and building capacity**. The Promise [Plan 24-30](#) continues to build on these areas and sets out five foundations: **Family, Care, Scaffolding, Voice and People**.

### Local Context



#### It's still everyone's job...

Within Perth and Kinross, **safeguarding, supporting** and **promoting** the wellbeing of all children and young people and protecting them from harm, abuse and exploitation is **everyone's job and everyone's responsibility**.

We consider this to be a shared responsibility for all practitioners and managers working across the public, private and third sectors, in partnership with all our citizens and communities.



## Child Protection Committee (CPC)

The work of the [Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee \(CPC\)](#) in protecting children and young people from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation and in keeping them safe, is fundamental to realising our vision for improving wellbeing and ensuring better outcomes for our most vulnerable and at risk children and young people. The work of the CPC is articulated in [CPC Improvement Plan 2023 – 2026](#), which is aligned with, and supports, the [Tayside Plan for Infants, Children, Young People and Families 2023 - 2026](#).



## Management Information and Performance Outcomes

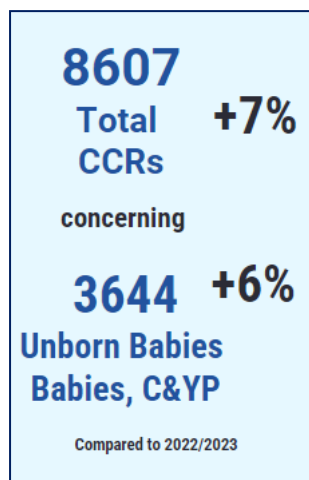
The CPC has a pivotal role in gathering and analysing management information on the care and protection of unborn babies, babies, children and young people within Perth & Kinross. The intelligent use of data is key to recognising and responding to trends within our local area.

A key function of the CPC is monitoring performance information in relation to Child Protection processes. The CPC's subgroup, the Quality Assurance Working Group, has responsibility for interrogating the data relating to these processes. It meets 6 times per year and, each time, it reviews the data and highlights any issues of concern or interest for the full CPC meeting that follows. This year, we have presented our data differently, but the full data set of graphs, trends and further detailed information are appended to this report and can be accessed quickly by clicking the Control button and this link: [Appendix 1 – Performance Management Graphs and Additional Details](#)

The following pages document the trends in our key child protection processes over the course of 2023/2024. A visual comparison is shown with 2022/2023's statistics with an 'Overall Trend' section at the bottom of each setting out this year's data in the context of the last five years.



## 1. Child Concern Reports (CCRs)



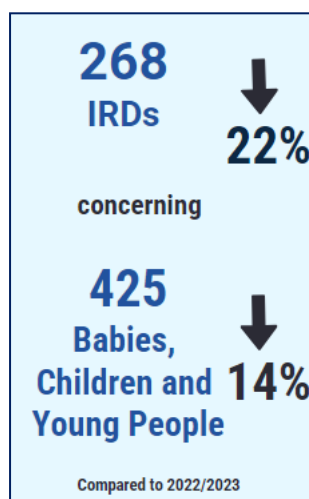
A CCR is generated when a service, agency, or individual contacts Children and Families Social Work to raise a concern or an issue regarding an unborn baby, baby, child, or young person. In 2023/24, 85% of CCRs received were from the statutory services of Police, Health and Education.

Partner services and the Child Protection and Duty Team (CPDT) triage CCRs to ensure that Child Protection concerns are addressed without delay and action is taken to safeguard the baby, child or young person. For example, colleagues from the CPDT and Police Scotland have a discussion every morning regarding concerns that have come in overnight and need to be urgently progressed through the Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD) process.

As with previous years, the age groups of 5 -10 and 11 – 15 years are the largest in terms of CCRs received, with the latter age group continuing to increase and become more prominent in the data since 2020.

**Overall Trend:** CCRs received have continued to increase year on year since 2019/20. However, this year has seen a **slowing of the rate of increase**, at 7% for the number of CCRs received and 6% number of children referred compared with increases of more than 20% for both indicators last year. This may indicate that the refocusing of resources and Service Level Agreements in 2022 towards early intervention is beginning to have an impact.

## 2. Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs)



The number of children and young people subject to IRDs has fallen again this year, and the number of IRD discussions taking place (which may involve more than one child or young person) shows similar trend. This may be linked to the implementation of earlier support for families as referenced above, preventing an escalation to child protection concerns.

IRDs are recognised as good multi-agency Child Protection practice. A single IRD may consider more than one baby, child or young person. Equally, a baby, child or young person may be considered at more than one IRD in response to new or escalating risks. IRDs were the subject of the CPC multi-agency audit in 2022 and since this time, considerable improvement work has taken place to ensure our IRDs are robust and that our interim safety planning is effective. This is where a plan is put in place to

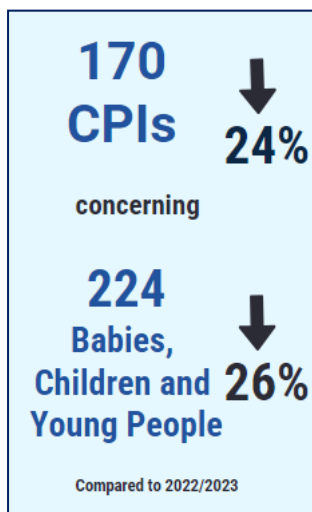
safeguard the baby, child or young person whilst inquiries are made. Possible outcomes from IRDs include:

- A single agency response to support the baby, child or young person
- A joint child protection investigation in which social work and police work together to establish what has occurred. This may involve a joint investigative interview and/or a medical examination depending on the needs of the baby, child or young person. These are discussed in more depth below.
- A referral to the Reporter to the Children's Hearing to consider compulsory measures of supervision.

- An application to Sheriff Court for an emergency Child Protection Order to ensure the immediate safety of the child.

**Overall Trend:** IRDs have **decreased** over the last 2 years from a peak of 529 IRDs being held in 2021/2022. The figures are now roughly equivalent to those of 2019/2020. The peak in 2021 is believed to have been linked with the lockdown provisions of 2020 and 2021 and may also have been linked to the implementation of the [Children \(Equal Protection from Assault\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#) which came into force in November 2020. Considerable improvement work has been undertaken on a multi-agency basis to ensure that IRDs are being consistently and proportionately convened.

### 3. Child Protection Investigations (CPI)



A CPI may be initiated at an IRD and as detailed above, may include a Joint Investigative Interview and/or a Medical Examination. CPIs require close multi-agency working and cooperation to ensure that the needs of the baby, child or young person are met, and they are safeguarded throughout the process.

**Overall Trend:** In line with the decreasing number of IRDs, the number of CPIs continues its **downward trend** towards pre-pandemic levels, following significant increases in 2020/2021 and 2021/2022, when numbers peaked at 324 CPIs for 249 individual babies, children and young people. It is likely that the reasons behind the decrease will be in line with IRDs due to the direct correlation.

### 4. Joint Investigative Interviews (JII)



A JII usually takes place as an action from an IRD – it is an interview of a child or young person conducted jointly within a trauma-informed environment by a police officer and social worker who are specially trained.

The aim of a JII is to enable the child or young person to disclose concerns regarding any alleged harmful behaviour towards them. It also aims to achieve best evidence for the Justice system, if required, for children and young people who have been victims of crime.

**Overall Trend** The number of children and young people who have been jointly interviewed has fallen again following the highest level in recent years being reached in 2021/22 at 272 children and young people and a **decreasing** number since. The current total of

136 children and young people is significantly lower than the 2019/2020 figure of 183 children and young people. Again, this decrease is in line with the decrease in IRDs and joint interviews and the reasons are likely to be similar.

## 5. Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPMs)



CPPMs were previously known as Child Protection Case Conferences with their name being updated last year; as directed within the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 - updated 2023](#)

CPPMs are multi-agency meetings which are only convened when it is believed that an unborn baby, baby, child, or young person has been significantly harmed or may be at risk of

being significantly harmed. A CPPM is the mechanism through which an unborn baby, baby, child or young person's name may be added to the Child Protection Register (CPR), which is discussed further below. A Child Protection Plan is put in place for any unborn baby, baby, child or young person whose name has been added to the CPR.

The proportion of unborn babies, babies, children, and young people who are considered at CPPMs and go on to have their names added to the CPR remains high at 91% for babies, children and young people, and 93% for unborn babies. This high conversion rate offers reassurance that the decisions made to consider the circumstances of an unborn baby, baby, child, or young person at a CPPM are being made robustly. Importantly, it shows that the unborn baby, baby, child or young person and their families are not being referred to this intensive process unnecessarily.

**Overall Trend:** The number of babies, children, and young people being considered at CPPMs continues to show a **general downward trend**, which has been consistent over the last five years. There has been a small increase this year in the number of unborn babies considered at a CPPM.

## 6. Child Protection Register (CPR)

The Child Protection Register (CPR) is a register held securely by Police, Health and Social Work of all unborn babies, babies, children and young people who have Child Protection Plans in the local authority area. Access to the names on the Child Protection Register is strictly regulated to maintain the confidentiality of the families involved.

On 31 July 2024, there were 45 unborn babies, babies, children and young people, on the CPR, a decrease of 8% from the same date last year.



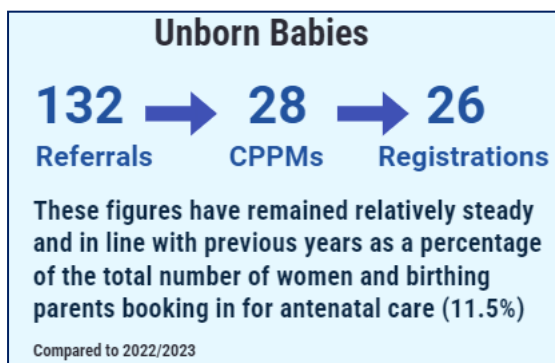
The number of new registrations on the CPR has also remained steady this year, which offers further reassurance that only those unborn babies, babies, children, and young people who are deemed to be at the highest level of risk of harm are having their names added to the CPR. This ensures that focus of can be retained on the small number of unborn babies, babies, children, and young people living with high levels of risk.

All unborn babies, babies, children, and young people whose names have been added to the CPR become subject to a Child Protection Plan which is progressed to keep them safe, in

partnership with their parents or carers. This is a multi-agency plan, coordinated by the Lead Professional, who will be a Children and Families Social Work. The Child Protection Plan is contributed to by all relevant partner agencies as well as the child, young person and their parents or caregivers. The Child Protection Plan will be in place until such time as risks have reduced and it is possible to remove the unborn baby, baby, child, or young person's name from the CPR. For most unborn babies, babies, children and young people, the period of registration will be less than 12 months. As seen last year, the number of unborn babies, babies, children, and young people who are on the CPR for more than 12 months continues to gradually decrease. The increased vulnerability of unborn babies, babies, and toddlers to harm, means that the under-five age group is the most represented age-group on the CPR.

**Overall Trend:** The number of unborn babies, babies, children and young people on the CPR has been **decreasing** over the last 5 years. The number on the CPR at 31 July 2024 is the lowest level since 2013, following a peak of 97 in 2020, which was COVID-19 related. This figure dropped to 66 in 2021, 51 in 2022 and 49 in 2023, so the number has been relatively steady over the last two years within the downward trend. The percentage of re-registrations has been **reasonably consistent** over the last five years, with a sharp dip in 2020/2021 correlating with the peak of registrations retained during the pandemic. The length of time that unborn babies, babies, children and young people's names are on the child protection register has also **decreased** steadily since a peak in 2020/2021; again, this is aligned with the pandemic period.

## 7. Referrals regarding Unborn Babies



Following a significant increase in 2022/23, the number of Unborn Baby referrals received this year has stabilised. The increase may have been due to the unique stresses on families because of the Covid pandemic and the challenges it presented for social connection, mental health and support from services. The birth rate has remained relatively stable over this period of time.

Most Unborn Baby referrals continue to be made by NHS Tayside. Referrals regarding Unborn Babies can and should be made by any individual, agency or service who has concerns for an Unborn Baby. Consent is required from the mother or birthing parent to refer an Unborn Baby to Children and Families Social Work where concerns are at a wellbeing level. Child Protection concerns for an Unborn Baby do not require consent from the parent, but good practice is always that the parent/parents should be advised that a referral is being made and their views sought wherever possible.

**Overall Trend:** Referrals regarding Unborn Babies remain fairly consistent as a percentage of the overall birth rate at 11.5%. There are variations year to year in terms of the actual numbers referred but the evenness of the rate as a percentage of the whole is steady.

## 8. Referral to Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) and Legal Measures.

All agencies and services try to work with unborn babies, babies, children, young people and their families on a voluntary basis, in accordance with the 'no order' principle of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. However, where risks are significant and immediate or where statutory measures are indicated for the baby, child or young person's *care, protection and treatment* legal orders are sought through either the Children's Hearing or the Sheriff Court as the route depends on the urgency. This section considers the referrals made for such orders.

### A note about data

The data in the section is for the period 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024, which is a change from last year's reporting period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. This makes discussion around trends more complicated but does align the SCRA data with the rest of the data in this report, ensuring more accurate comparisons in future years.

## 9. Referral to the Reporter

Where any person considers that a baby, child or young person may need the care, protection and treatment of a Compulsory Supervision Order, they can make a referral to the Reporter to the Children's Hearing. It is the Reporter's decision whether a Hearing should be convened based on the information that they then request and assess.

### Referrals made by Services

Children referred on non-offence grounds by source	01-Aug-22 to 31-Jul-23	01-Aug-23 to 31-Jul-24	% change
<b>Perth &amp; Kinross</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>3.9%</b>
Education	19	37	94.7%
Health	7	7	0.0%
Other	9	9	0.0%
Police	9	4	-55.6%
Social Work	66	55	-16.7%

As the table shows, there has been a **small increase** of referrals to the Reporter of 3.9%. Of note is the increase in referrals from Education by almost 95% whilst Police and Children and Families Social Work referrals have decreased by 55.6% and 16.7% respectively. The Child Protection Committee will explore the

reasons behind these relatively significant changes further through its Quality Assurance Working Group.

### Type of Referral

Children referred by type	01-Aug-22 to 31-Jul-23	01-Aug-23 to 31-Jul-24	% change
<b>Perth &amp; Kinross</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>-6.6%</b>
Non-offence	102	106	3.9%
Offence	52	38	-26.9%

This table shows that there has been a **decrease** of 6.6% in referrals to the Reporter overall and a drop of almost 27% for offence grounds. The majority of referrals to the Reporter are regarding a lack of parental care (S.67(2)(a) of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011).

## 10. Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs)

These are orders made by the Children's Hearing in respect of a baby, child or young person and cause the legal status of individual becomes 'looked after'. This may be at home or away from home in kinship, foster, residential or secure care. Babies, children and young people who have CSOs are regularly visited by their Social Worker and their Child or Young Person's Plans are reviewed at a minimum of a six-monthly basis to ensure their needs are being met.

Children with CSOs made	01-Aug-22 to 31-Jul-23	01-Aug-23 to 31-Jul-24	% change
Perth & Kinross	27	48	77.8%

There has been a significant increase in children and young people who are the subject of Compulsory Supervision Orders – an **increase** of 77.8%. Some of this will

be attributable to an increase in the number of larger sibling groups who have needed the care, protection and treatment provided by a CSO. Reviewing previous data (taken within the financial year), it appears that last year's small number of CSOs made may have been anomalous. In 2019/2020, there were 51 new CSOs made, 38 made the following year and 50 made in 2021/2022. This year's figure may therefore represent a return to a more 'normal' level. The increase is, however, not mirrored in Dundee and Angus in which the number of new CSOs made has reduced by 14% and 28.6% respectively.

## 11. Child Protection Orders (CPOs)

A CPO is only sought where there is evidence of *significant and immediate risk* of harm to a baby, child or young person. An application is made to Sheriff Court and, if granted, an emergency order is made such that the baby, child or young person must be removed to a place of safety. The order must be reviewed by the Children's Hearing on the second working day after it is granted.

Children with CPOs	01-Aug-22 to 31-Jul-23	01-Aug-23 to 31-Jul-24	% change
Perth & Kinross	16	10	-37.5%

There has been a **decrease** of CPOs by 37.5%. This mirrors reductions across Tayside with Dundee's use of CPOs reducing by 23.1%. Information from

previous years, based on the financial year, indicates that there has been a **general downward trend** in CPO numbers since 2020/2021. It must also be borne in mind that the numbers of CPOs are small and therefore, percentage differences can seem much more significant than they might in terms of numbers.



## 12. What is the data telling us?

Our figures of Child Protection Registration, Re-Registration and rate of Children on the Register are ***closely aligned with national statistics***.

	Local	Scotland
<b>Child Protection Register</b>		
<b>7:</b> Rate of Registrations per 1,000 children aged 0-17	3.0	3.2
<b>8:</b> Rate of Re-Registrations (within 24 months) per 1,000 children aged 0-17	0.2	0.2
<b>9:</b> Rate of Children on the Register per 1,000 children aged 0-17	1.8	2.1
<b>10:</b> Rate of De-Registrations per 1,000 children aged 0-17	3.1	3.1

This table shows our local statistics against National benchmarks (source: CELCIS 11.09.2024).

This provides reassurance that our processes and their outcomes are in line with other areas of Scotland.

Overall, the data for 2023 – 2024, when compared with preceding years is encouraging. It may suggest that the re-focus of resources towards early intervention in 2022 is supporting what seems to be becoming a **longer-term general downward trend** in the numbers of babies, children and young people who require intervention at a child protection level. Close partnership working, delivered at an earlier point in families' journeys of needing additional support, appears to be improving their wellbeing and safety through preventing escalation to higher levels of need and risk.

However, further exploration of data and trends are needed to confirm this hypothesis, as it is likely that there will be a range of factors underpinning these downward trends. For example, it may be that after the exceptional events of 2020 and 2021, that figures are simply stabilising back towards pre-pandemic norms.

The CPCs Quality Assurance Working Group will be considering the data contained within this report and whether further exploration or targeted audit activity is required.



## How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

This section describes the **impact** we are having on the **wellbeing** of children and young people; how we are striving to keep them safe from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation and the extent to which their lives and life chances have been enhanced. It describes the **impact** on families and the extent to which family **wellbeing** is being strengthened. It describes the **impact** on staff and recognises the extent of their motivation, involvement and contribution. It also considers the **impact** on the wider community.

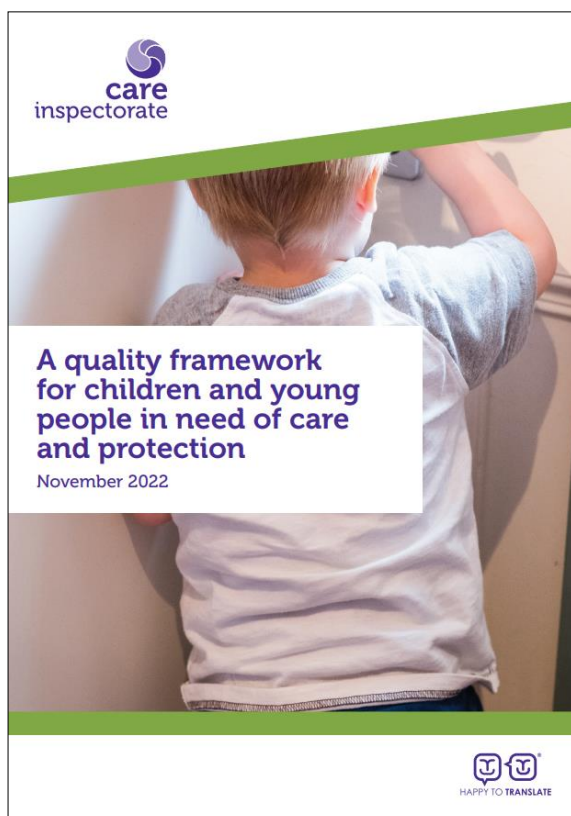
### Quality Improvement Framework

Quality Assurance and Self-Evaluation are central to continuous improvement and based on a model developed by the [European Foundation for Quality Management \(EFQM\)](#). The EFQM model is widely used across local authorities, other bodies and by CPCs.

Quality Assurance and Self-Evaluation are neither bureaucratic nor mechanical processes; they are ongoing reflective processes to measure performance, improvement and outcomes.

Underpinning the quality assurance and self-evaluation work of the CPC and its partners, are recognised quality improvement frameworks.

Collectively, they continue to provide a framework of quality indicators to support quality assurance and self-evaluation which leads to improvement across services for children, young people and families.



They place the child at the centre and are applicable to the full range of services which contribute to the wellbeing of all children, young people and their families. These frameworks are designed to provide a complementary approach to robust quality assurance, self-evaluation and independent scrutiny. Using the same set of quality indicators reinforces the partnership between internal and external evaluation of services.

The current quality assurance framework, used by the Care Inspectorate, in terms of their external scrutiny and inspection role, is the [Quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection](#) (November 2022) and this underpins the CPC's quality assurance, self-evaluation and improvement planning work.

## Impact on Children, Young People and Families

**Evaluation: We are listening carefully to, understand and respect children, young people and their families and we are helping them to keep themselves safe. A range of early intervention and family support services are improving children and family wellbeing.**

### Quality Assurance Activity 2023/2024

One of the key functions of the CPC is continuous improvement. Audits are a key part of benchmarking the standards of practice across the partnership, identifying both strengths to promote and areas to develop.

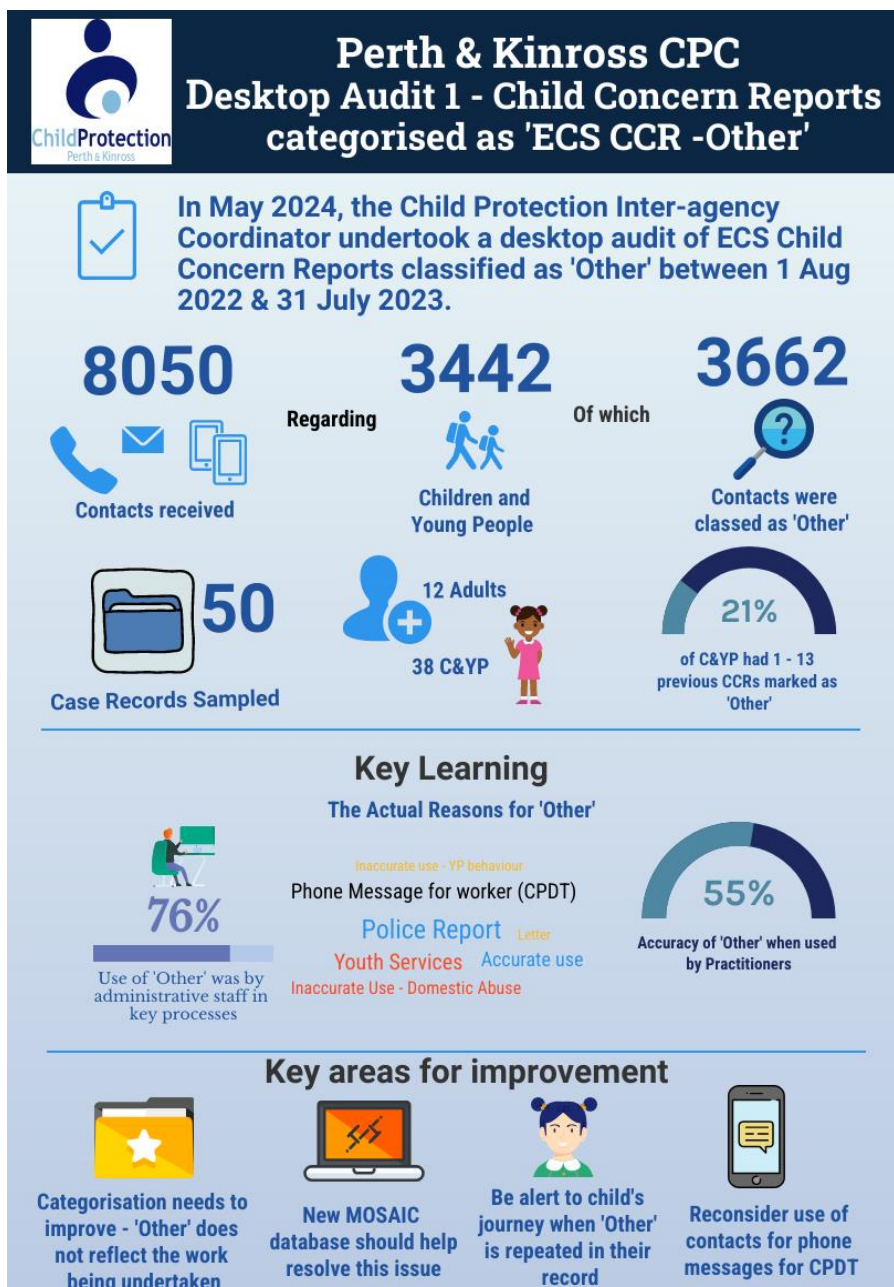
In a new approach this year, the Child Protection Inter-agency Coordinator (CPIC) has undertaken three desktop audits to explore different aspects of child protection work. The three audits are discussed in turn below:

#### Desktop Audit 1 – Classification of Child Concern Reports as ‘Other’

Last year’s report noted that a high proportion of CCRs to Children and Families Social Work were being categorised as ‘ECS – CCR – Other’ rather than the specific reason for contact being made with the service regarding an unborn baby, baby, child or young person. This was not helpful as it obscured the actual reasons and their prevalence for unborn babies, babies, children and young people – for example, domestic abuse or neglect.

This audit found that there were several reasons for this being the case, primarily a systemic issue in terms of how CCRs are logged on to the Children and Families Social Work CCM database.

Children and Families Social Work is transitioning to a new database for recording – MOSAIC in the near future and it is envisaged that this will address some of these issues. The CPIC will repeat this audit in once the new system is established and operational to check the impact of the improvements that are in progress.

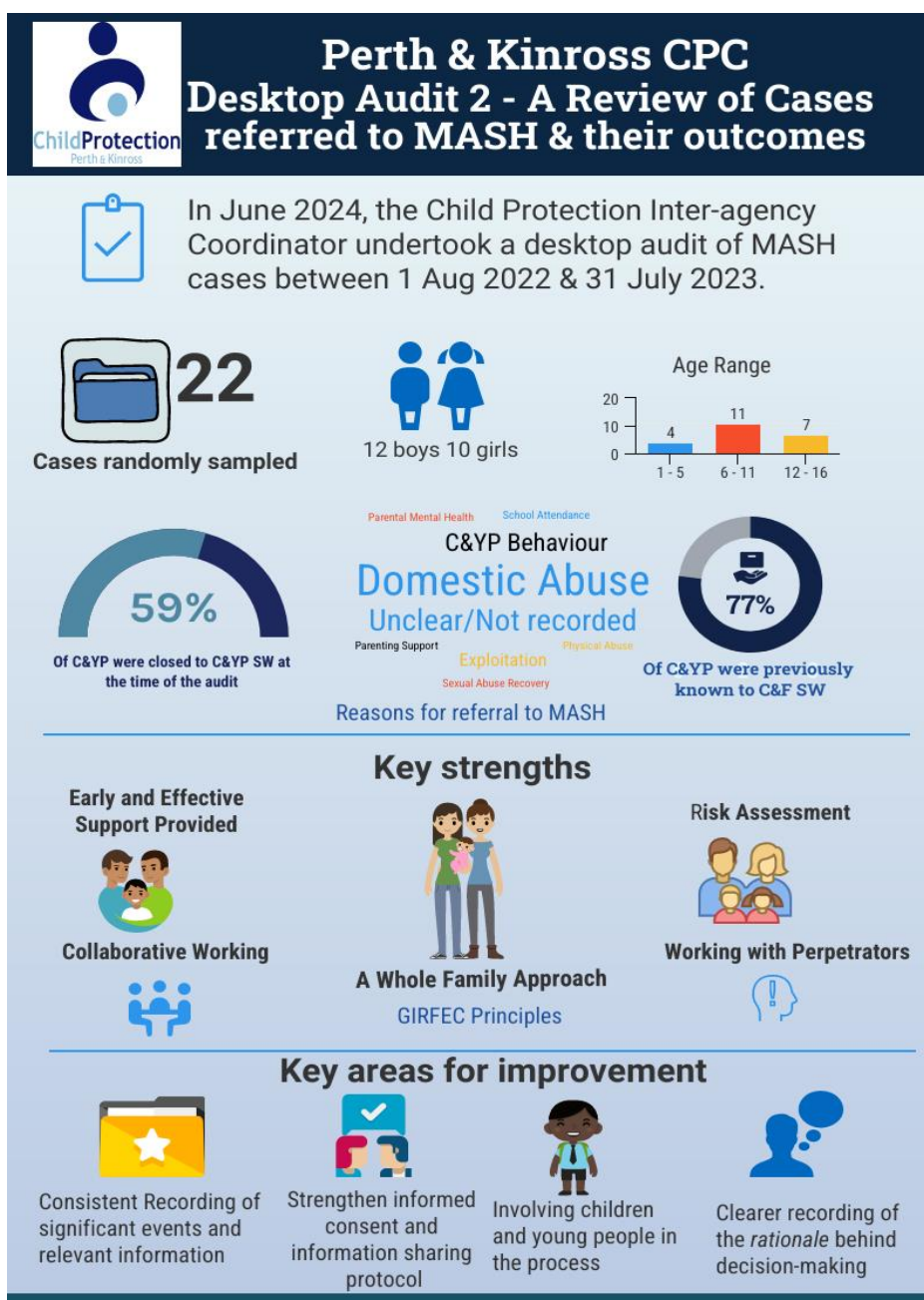


## Desktop Audit 2 – A Review of Cases Referred To MASH and their Outcomes.

The Multi-Agency Screening Hub (MASH) is a weekly meeting hosted by Children and Families Social Work and attended by a range of agencies and services who can offer support and advice to families at an early or earlier stage. Currently, families in need of some additional support at a lower level still require to be referred into MASH through the CPDT in Children and Families Social Work Services. Work is underway through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Programme Manager to ensure that families can self-refer for lower-level support in the future, but this is likely to take some considerable time to develop; given the complexity involved.

Some key strengths identified in the audit were that MASH is firmly embedded within a *Whole Family Approach* and [GIRFEC](#) principles, providing early and effective intervention for families. Areas for development included ensuring more consistent recording and involving children, young people and their families in the process.

Children and Families Social Work are taking forward these improvement actions.



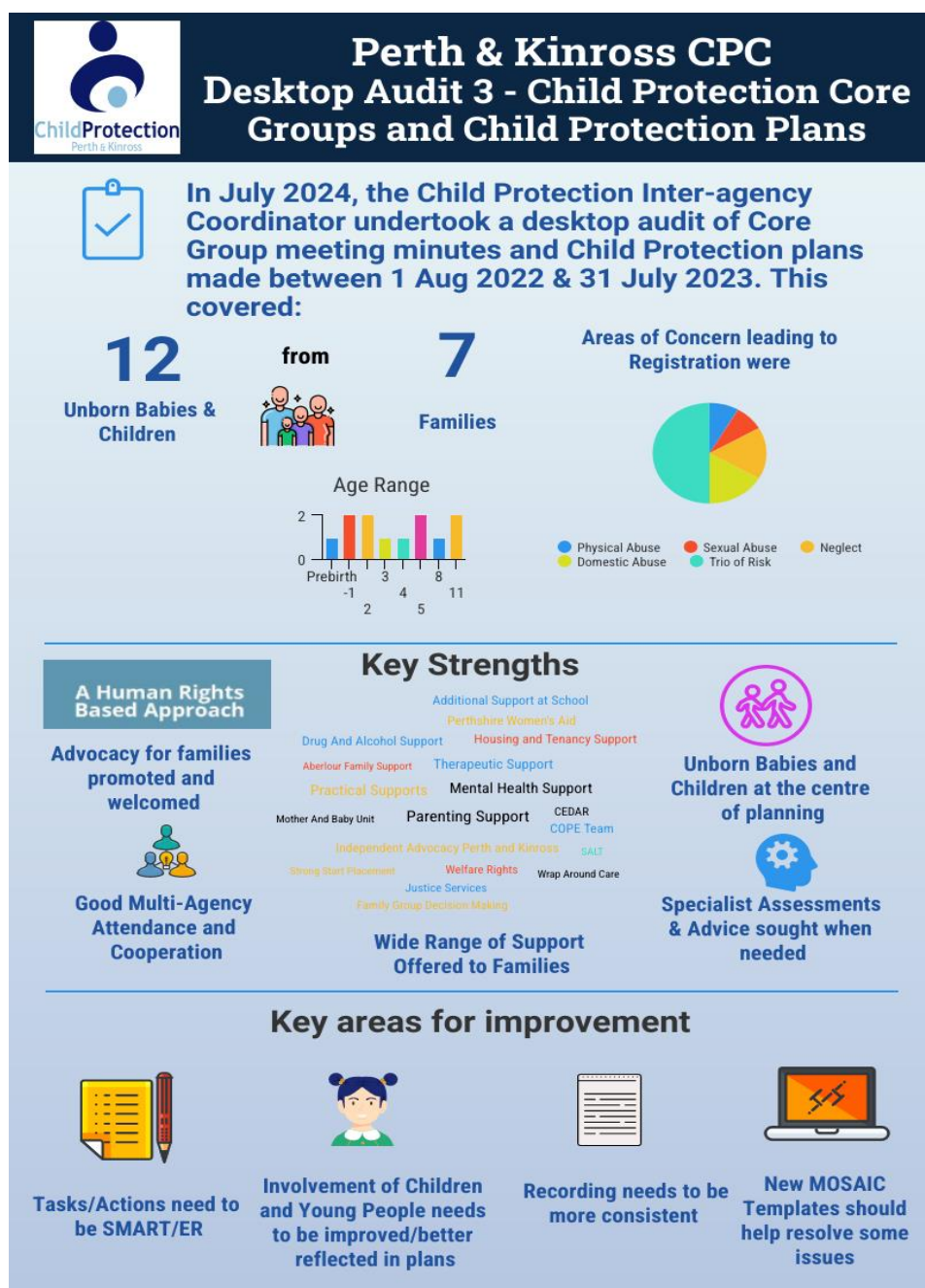
### Desktop Audit 3 – Child Protection Core Group Meetings and Child or Young Person’s Plans

Child Protection Core Groups and Child Protection Plans are an integral part of keeping unborn babies, babies, children and young people safe after their names have been added to the CPR. Child Protection Core Groups are attended by the child or young person, if safe and appropriate, their parents or carers, their social worker, their allocated health worker and the relevant person from their school or nursery. Other professionals who are involved with the family, like Justice or Drug and Alcohol workers will also attend.

Significant strengths were identified including a strong focus on the unborn baby, baby, child or young person during meetings, a rights-based approach with encouragement for parents or carers and children to access independent advocacy. There was good attendance at most meetings from different services or agencies and evidence of a wide range of supports being offered to support families.



Areas for development included a need for tasks/actions to be in a SMARTer format, and for minuting of the meetings to be more consistent. The involvement of children in their plans requires to be further evidenced. Children and Families Social Work will be progressing improvement work in this area. As with Desktop 2, the implementation of MOSAIC will enable Child Protection Plans to be recorded differently and it is envisaged that this will be beneficial.



## **Annual Multi-Agency Audit**

Due to the change in CPIC in April 2024, it was not possible to organise the multi-agency audit for May 2024 which is the usual time of year that this major audit activity takes place. Due to the imminent end of the 2023 – 2024 school session, it was agreed that the audit would be delayed until September 2024 but that it would review practice consistent with the timescales in the rest of this report – 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024.

It had been identified through interrogation of data that a significant proportion of young people referred to Children and Families Social Work had been the subject of multiple CCRs, and it was important to explore why this was the case and whether the young people received an appropriate response which met their needs and kept them safe.

### **Responses to Young People aged 11 -18 who were the subject of 3 or more Child Concern Reports in one calendar year.**

#### ***What is a Child Concern Report?***

A CCR is generated when a concern is received by Children and Families Social Work regarding a concern about the wellbeing or safety for an unborn baby, baby, child, or young person. The concern itself may be in a written format such as a report from Police Scotland may be received by telephone. 85% of CCRs are made by Police Scotland, NHS Tayside, or Education. 2% are internal referrals within Perth & Kinross Council and the remaining 13% are from members of the public and third sector and independent organisations.

#### ***What case files were reviewed?***

This was a qualitative audit to consider the circumstances of young people to evaluate the response they received from services. A small sample was required to facilitate an in-depth review from a much larger group.

439 young people had been identified in the period as meeting the criteria for the audit and there were 2457 CCRs in respect of this group. Working on the premise of 4 pairs of reviewers, 16 files were selected at random to be reviewed, however, due to the complexity of some case files, only 14 Young People's records could be reviewed in the time available. The number of CCRs for the 14 young people totalled 121, with the lowest number being 3 (the minimum for inclusion) and the highest number being 36.

#### ***What form did the audit take?***

The audit took place over two days on 4 and 5 September 2024 at the Letham4All building and was undertaken by nine practitioners from the following services:

- Police Scotland
- Education
- Children and Families Social Work
- Justice Services
- School Health Nursing
- Integrated Drug and Alcohol Recovery Team

### ***How did the reviewers evaluate practice?***

The Care Inspectorate six-point scale was used to benchmark practice against the following Quality Indicators:

- Quality Indicator 2.1: How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders? *Impact on Children and Young People*
- Quality Indicator 5.1: How good is our delivery of services for children, young people and families? *Recognition and response to initial concerns.*
- Quality Indicator 5.2: How good is our delivery of services for children, young people and families? *Assessing risk and need.*
- Quality indicator 5.3: How good is our delivery of services for children, young people and families? *Care planning, managing risk and effective intervention*
- Quality indicator 5.4: How good is our delivery of services for children, young people and families? *Involving individual children, young people and families.*

The Quality Indicators and the scale are contained within the [Quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection](#). The scale ranges from 6 which is excellent down to 1 which is unsatisfactory.

### ***What did the Review team find?***

Overall, the practice in the 14 cases was graded at 4 on the six-point scale, which is **Good: with important strengths, with some areas for improvement**. There were areas of excellence and strong performance seen, particularly in the Quality Indicators concerned with immediate responses and information sharing. This evaluation activity provides reassurance that our partnership working arrangements are strong and positive, that partners work well together and communicate pro-actively with each other.

### ***What strengths were identified?***

*Immediate Responses, Information Sharing and Relationship-based Work:* As well as immediate responses ensuring safety and effective information sharing, noted above, there were good examples of relationship-based work, particularly with parents and caregivers, who were consulted and communicated with regularly.

*Record-keeping and Practice focused on Risk and Need:* Records, for the most part, were commented on as being made contemporaneously and providing a good account of what was happening and why. Practice was widely considered to be focused on the young people's needs and managing risks to them.

*IRDs, Safety Planning and Legal Measures:* IRDs were seen as a crucial part of the coordination of ensuring young people were safe, bringing practitioners together to share information and plan to reduce immediate risks. Safety planning, both prior and subsequent to IRDs, was robust and flexible, moving to meet the young person's needs, and legal measures were taken, where needed, to secure young people's care and protection.

**Summary:** This self-evaluation exercise demonstrates that initial responses to concerns are strong, are undertaken collegiately as a multi-agency group and, as far as possible, are predicated on working cooperatively with young people and their families.



### ***What do we need to improve?***

*Planning:* Whilst immediate responses were deemed to be strong, what was seen was that longer-term planning and review for young people was not as robust, unless they were subject to legal orders or had had their names added to the CPR. A pattern noted throughout this audit was the need to strengthen our approach to having a child or young people's plan in place timeously and recording this in the IT system. There were a few cases in which the frequency of involvement of workers, from across disciplines, was observed to not be particularly effective, so although multi-agency working would be described as positive, its impact was not. This links with the lack of an effective planning process – it was not clear that workers had a shared goal to work towards. This mirrors some of the findings from CPC Desktop Audit 3 (above) which looked at Child and Young Person's Plans and noted several areas for development to ensure that the plans were focused, SMART and incorporated the voice of the child or young person.

*Earlier Intervention and Assessment.* In a few instances, reviewers questioned whether what they were assessing in the period could be viewed as *initial* concerns as they occurred in the context of a much wider period of recurrent CCRs regarding the young people. There was a sense that chronic difficulties had not been prevented from becoming acute leading to intervention becoming necessary. Therefore, although the initial response to this year's set of concerns was good, the reviewers questioned whether earlier involvement may have prevented escalation towards the intense intervention which was later required. The absence of chronologies was noted in both these cases and across several more and their important role in assessment was underlined.

*Meaningfully including young people.* There was evidence of seeking of views of young people's views, albeit these weren't reflected in planning and decisions. Seeing young people and spending time with them to understand their lived and living experience is integral to assessments and needs to be prioritised.

*Losing focus on the young person:* It was noted, in several cases, that the voice of the young person in records and processes was effectively silenced by the competing needs of the people around them, whether by a sibling or a parent. This risked losing the focus on young person and their needs.

The infographic below shows a summary of the key points of the audit.



## Introduction of Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) and Bairns' Hoose in Perth and Kinross

An exciting development in the last year has been partnership work towards creating a *Bairn's Hoose* within Perth and Kinross as part of wider Tayside arrangements and the implementation of the SCIM Team. This work is under the governance of the Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative.

### What is the Bairns' Hoose?

The Bairns' Hoose is a model for meeting the needs of children and young people who have been victims of, or witness to, abuse and for children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour may have caused harm. The Bairns' Hoose approach is based on the Icelandic 'Barnahus' model, with both names meaning the 'Children's House'.

The Bairns' Hoose prioritises supporting the child or young person's recovery in a safe and trauma-informed environment. Bringing together Child Protection, Health, Justice and therapeutic services in one setting, a key aim of the Bairns' Hoose is to prevent or reduce the need for the child or young person to have to tell and re-tell their story. This can be re-traumatising for children and young people. The Bairns' Hoose [standards](#) set out the principles of the approach.

In Tayside, Seymour House in Dundee has been designated as the main base for the Tayside's Bairns' Hoose – particularly for *forensic medical examinations* due to the specialised nature of the equipment needed. However, each authority has its own base, with Almondbank House being the location for Perth and Kinross. Physical alterations are underway to ensure that children and young people arriving there for a JII are immediately welcomed into a trauma-informed environment.

Children and young people are at the heart of the Bairns' Hoose. [Here](#) is an information leaflet provided to children and young people who need to use the service.



## What is SCIM?

SCIM is part of the Bairns' Hoose model, providing a trauma-informed, consent-based approach to interviewing children and young people who have been victims of, or witness to, abuse, neglect or exploitation. SCIM was developed in response to the recommendations within the Evidence and Procedure Review; Child and Vulnerable Witnesses Project (2015). The two main goals of SCIM are:

- To remove the need for children to give evidence in Court and to instead have their JII used as 'Evidence in Chief'
- To be trauma informed, reducing the risk of children being re-traumatised during the interview itself and during subsequent processes.

SCIM aims to both provide the best opportunity for children and young people to tell their own story in their own words and to ensure that the best evidence is gathered for Justice purposes. If you would like to know more about SCIM, please click on [here](#) for a 7-minute briefing setting out the main aspects of the model.

Every child who has been a victim of, or witness to, harm, is offered the opportunity to take part in a JII which is carried out by a Police Officer and a Social Worker who have been extensively trained in the model. A Tayside approach, through Police Scotland D Division, enables SCIM trained Social Workers and Police Officers from Dundee, Angus and Perth and Kinross to travel to support SCIM interviews across the region.

SCIM has been live in Tayside since May 2024. One of the key parts of SCIM is *Planning for the Interview*. The allocated Police Officer and Social Worker will gather information from those who know the child or young person to ensure that their needs are met and kept central throughout the interview process. They will also consider the crime(s) that may be disclosed through the interview process, based on the information that led to a JII being arranged. Planning for breaks is an important aspect of interviewing, both for the comfort and wellbeing of the child or young person **and** to ensure that the interviewers have an opportunity to review what has been shared and determine what other questions may need to be asked or approaches may need to be used.

### Putting children, young people and families at the centre.

A safe, warm and comfortable environment for the JII to take place is very important. The SCIM interviews take place in Almondbank House in a discrete wing, with a private waiting room for families with space to make hot drinks and snacks. This is particularly helpful for a parent or carer who may have other children with them.



**The Family Waiting Room**

## An Interview Room



**Consent and Rights.** SCIM is a consent-based model in line with a rights-based approach. Children and young people are given lots of information, and crucially, more time, to consider whether they want to give consent to being interviewed. They are informed of the possible outcomes from the interview process and therefore, if they choose to take part, they can give informed consent to the process. Second interviews are arranged if needed, but again, children and young people's choices are paramount – they may wish to, as one young person has chosen recently – take a longer break between the interviews.



**Evaluation.** SCIM is very new in Tayside and is in the process of formal evaluation. The team routinely seek feedback from each child or young person and their parents or carers following each interview. To date, children, young people and their families report feeling informed and supported during the planning process and interview. The workers undertaking SCIM report a qualitative difference from their experience of undertaking JIIs under the old model and that information gained is richer and more detailed. They are confident that there is a positive impact on children and young people who are being interviewed using SCIM because of better information, clear and informed consent and the environment in which SCIM is taking place.

### ***Impact on Children, Young People and Families***

Children and young people who have been harmed or witnessed harm are benefiting from a trauma-informed, child-centred approach. When a child, young person or adult has been subjected to, or witnessed, abuse, they can feel powerless. This is why making sure children and young people are given choices, their rights are respected and a welcoming, comfortable environment in which to share their story is vitally important. As evaluation progresses over the next year, we anticipate being able to share more fully the impact that SCIM and Bairns' Hoose is having on children and young people who need this level of intervention in 2025.

### **Working together to keep unborn babies, babies, children and young people safe and protected.**

Across our partnership, a range of professionals and volunteers work closely together to ensure the care and protection of unborn babies, babies, children and young people within our communities. This includes Housing Officers and Support Workers, Social Workers and

Social Care Workers, Midwives, Health Visitors, School Health Nurses, Youth Workers, Community Link Workers, Teachers and other school staff, Police Officers, Community Safety Wardens and many others in diverse roles across our voluntary, third and independent sector organisations. What follows is a snapshot of the difference that volunteers make in our Child Protection Community. Aside from those highlighted below, there are many other organisations whose volunteers are making a significant difference to the lives of families and the CPC extends its thanks to them all.

## The Role of Volunteers

### Children's Panel Members



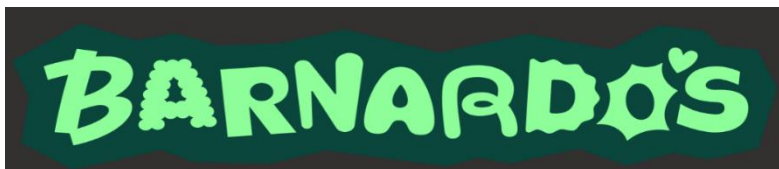
Many people are unaware that **Children's Hearings** rely on volunteers who apply to become panel members. This is an important role in keeping babies, children and young people safe. Panel members make the decision about whether a legal order requires to be made to ensure a baby, child or young person receives the care, protection and treatment they need. Within Perth and Kinross, there are 46 Panel members from all walks of life with a range of suitable skills and experiences who are making life-changing

decisions for Perth and Kinross's children. Several of the local Panel community have been volunteering for over 15 years and one of Panel members has volunteered for over 30 years at the Perth Hearing centre. Whether Panel members are new or very experienced, their commitment and time they give up to help keep children safe is valued and appreciated. It is not an easy job to volunteer for but here is what some panel members say motivates them:

- ***"I felt that I had a responsibility to use the skills and experience I've developed over the last 30 years, to really support children and families in the community."***
- ***"I became a Panel Member in order to help support families be the best that they can be in challenging life circumstances."***
- ***"I was wanting to give something back to the local community I live in and knowing how my own family background as a child growing up made me want to help others."***



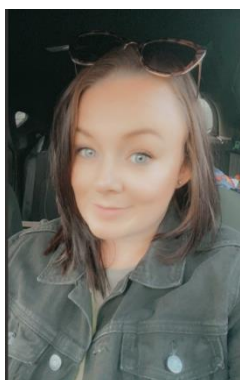
**Early intervention and support** provided by a range of organisations and their volunteers can make all the difference to vulnerable families and prevent babies, children and young people from becoming involved with the child protection system. Within our partnership, we have numerous organisations who benefit from volunteers and the support they can give families. Here is an example:



Barnardo's Space4U service is funded by Perth and Kinross Children and Families Social Work services to provide Whole Family supports to children and families impacted by parental substance use, mental health, and domestic abuse. The service works to improve family wellbeing and reduce risk for children and young people to remain safe within their family. Space4U have recruited a small pool of trained volunteers as befrienders and parent/carer buddies who are supported by the volunteer co-ordinator. Volunteers often play a pivotal role in helping children, young people and parents/carers build confidence to access their community, try new activities or provide a listening ear. They can also help families build on and sustain the progress they have made following a period of support from workers.

#### ***What is the impact on families?***

*"I really like my befriender, she always turns up for me when she says she will, we do fun things like go to the park, go out for walk, draw, paint. She listens to me. She is great"* Young Person



***"Volunteering with families and young people is essential! It is not only worthwhile and rewarding for me as a volunteer, it's an opportunity to learn from young and inspiring children. Children who may have not had chances to grow and learn independently of schools, family or friends, and experience safe and engaging friendship. The growth that everyone gains is irreplaceable and for some, a lifeline. Nonjudgmental care linking those in need with additional support"*** Eilidh Grant, Volunteer at Space4U

***"I got the impression over the last six months that the young person really valued our time together and I saw a growth in him in terms of confidence and maturity. It has been a great chance for him to have new experiences out with the family home and was fast becoming a thoughtful young man with many talents"*** Volunteer Befriender

***"What is also lovely to see is that not only do our children and young people benefit from the volunteer support, but the volunteers have a rewarding experience no matter why they are volunteering."*** Volunteer Co-ordinator.



## Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPMs): Continuing Improvement Work

In 2023, the name of Child Protection Case Conferences was changed to *Child Protection Planning Meetings* (CPPMs) in accordance with the implementation of the [National-Guidance-Child-Protection-Scotland-2021-updated-2023](#).

CPPMs are a core feature of multi-agency working to protect unborn babies, babies, children and young people. CPPMs bring practitioners, services, agencies and families together to share information regarding risks and needs, as well as the family strengths and protective factors which may mitigate them. Staff from Children and Families Social Work arrange, chair and minute CPPMs on behalf of the partnership.

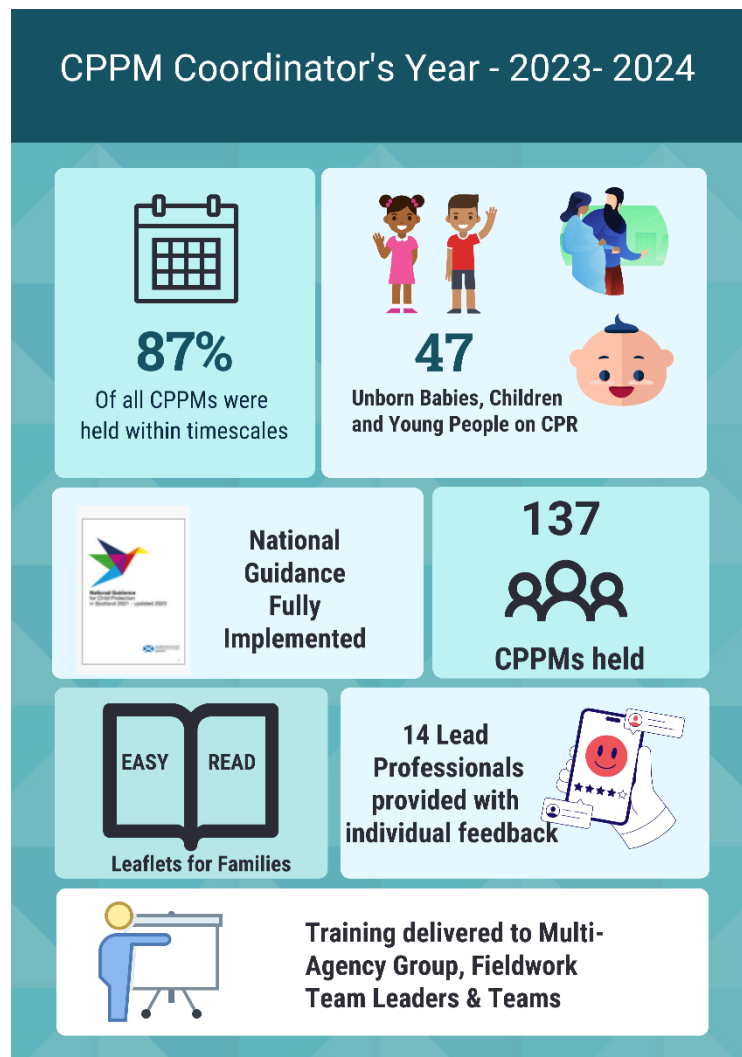
CPPMs are non-statutory meetings and have no legal status. Legal orders to protect babies, children and young people can only be obtained through the Children's Hearing or Sheriff Court. The primary purpose of CPPMs is to consider whether an unborn baby, child or young person is at risk of significant harm and if so, to determine whether, or not, their name should be added to the CPR. The CPR is a register of all unborn babies, babies, children and young people who have Child Protection Plans within a given local authority area. In Perth and Kinross, the CPR is held securely by designated individuals within Children and Families Social Work, Health and Police colleagues. Outside of normal working hours, the CPR can be accessed through the Out of Hours Social Work Service by professionals with an urgent need to know if an unborn baby, baby, child or young person has a Child Protection Plan.

### Child Protection Planning Meeting Coordinator Role

In May 2021, Children and Families Social Work created a full-time, dedicated CPPM Coordinator position. This was achieved through temporary funding, initially for a period of two years until 2023. Given the success of the role, it has been further extended until 31 March 2025. This demonstrates a significant financial investment and commitment to the continuous improvement of our multi-agency child protection arrangements.

### What is the impact for unborn babies, babies, children and young people and their families?

Children, young people, parents and carers frequently report that they prefer to have the same chair for meetings, such as CPPMs, in which highly confidential and sensitive information about their family is shared. Having a consistent Chair, through the CPPM Coordinator role, provides families with a known face - a person who already knows their family's story and can track progress throughout the period of registration. From a trauma-informed perspective, this is essential – both people who use our services and research are clear that telling and re-telling their stories can be re-traumatising for children, young people and their parents or carers. Having the same, well-prepared Chair for each CPPM a family experiences means that families do not have to do this and appears to reduce levels of stress and distress. For example, no parent or carer has been asked to leave a CPPM due to aggressive or disruptive behaviour over the year. This is significant as it shows that the emotional containment created by a consistent Chair within the CPPM process is supporting families to take part and participate. The CPPM Coordinator works hard to create a safe and calm environment for all participants.



The above information is taken from the CPPM Coordinator's Annual Report. There was an improvement of 14% in 2023 – 2024 of CPPMs held within schedule, rising from 73% to 87%. Numbers of unborn babies, children and young people on the CPR have remained low.

A combination of MS Teams, Hybrid and in-person meetings appear to support the attendance of professionals and parent(s) and carer(s). The CPPM Coordinator sought feedback from parents and carers, the majority of whom advised that they preferred to attend meetings via MS Teams as they did not have to travel, arrange for childcare or risk meeting the other parent, before, during or after the meeting.

As planned last year, [Easy Read Leaflets](#) are now available for children, young people, parents and carers invited to attend a CPPM.

### What's next?

For 2024 – 2025, the coordinator will be exploring Easy Read Minutes for children, young people and families. This is because children, young people and their parents or carers need to fully understand the reasons that Child Protection Registration has been necessary and the steps they need to take, along with the professionals working with their families, to keep everyone safe and ensure that the period of registration is as short as possible. A short, accessible and easily understandable minute will help this process.



## Involvement, Engagement and Participation with Children, Young People and their Families

The CPC, partner services and agencies, strive to involve and engage children, young people and their families in their work; ensure they can participate in our work; have their voices heard and influence service provisions and service design. The following is a high-level snapshot of **only some** of this ongoing work:

### [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

*“The UNCRC is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world and sets out the specific rights that all children have to help fulfil their potential, including rights relating to health and education, leisure and play, fair and equal treatment, protection from exploitation and the right to be heard”* (Scottish Government)

The incorporation of the [UNCRC](#) into Scottish law on 16 July 2024 means that public bodies now have a legal obligation to act in a way which is compatible with UNCRC rights where the function comes from an Act of the Scottish Parliament. This places significant limits on the extent of the compatibility duty for local authorities as many functions are from UK, rather than Scottish, legislation. However, the incorporation should support a cultural shift which will encourage public bodies to take account of the needs and rights of babies, children and young people, in everything that they do. All public bodies should be working towards having a baby, child and young person's rights-based approach in delivering their services.

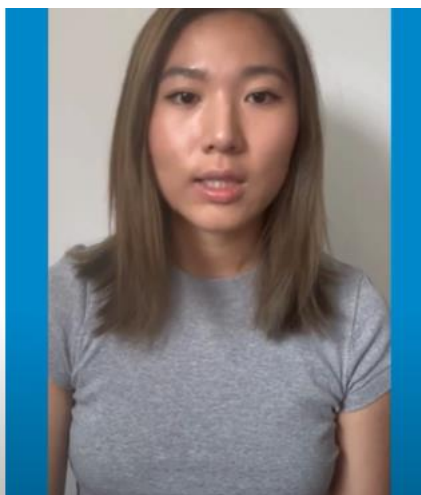
Preparations have been underway for some time both locally and across Scotland to ensure that staff were ready for the incorporation of UNCRC. Initiatives such as Rights Respecting Schools and the cascading of information to children and young people and across staff groups have been ongoing for several years.

The CPC continues to work with partners on ensuring that the rights of babies, children and young people are fully respected and considered in all aspects of our work. As can be seen from the illustration on the following page, the rights of babies, children and young people to be protected from exploitation and sexual abuse are enshrined in the [UNCRC](#), so it is absolutely fundamental to the work of the CPC and its partners in our single and multi-agency child protection processes and practices

Listening to children and young people, hearing and respecting their voices, is an essential aspect of safeguarding.



## Why does Incorporation matter?



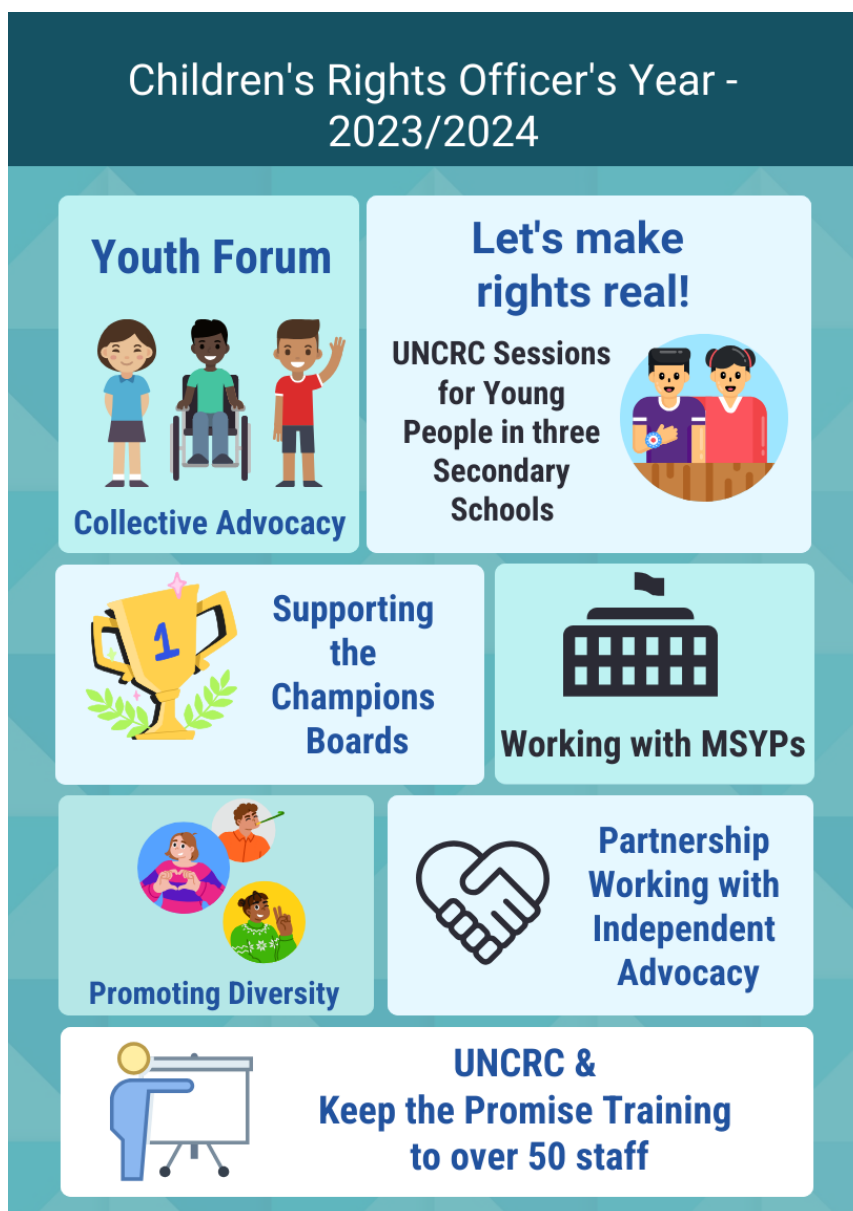
Click on the link below to hear from present and former members of the Scottish Youth Parliament about the importance of the incorporation to them and what it means to Scotland's children and young people and for the future.

[Scottish Youth Parliament Members & UNCRC](#)

## Services for Children, Young People and Families – Promoting Participation

In December 2023, Heather McKenzie took up her post as the **Children's Rights Officer** for Perth and Kinross. Heather is based within Services for Children, Young People and Families and works predominantly with young people aged between 12-26.

Heather's role focuses on **collective advocacy** for young people as a means to ensure that their voices are heard, and their views are taken into account by decision-makers. Heather's work is integral to developing the Youth Forum and Champions Boards as discussed below. She is also pivotal in training others about children and young people's rights, the UNCRC and Perth and Kinross' commitment to keeping The Promise.



## **Perth and Kinross Youth Forum**

The Youth Forum was instituted two years ago but has taken some time to become fully operational due to changes in staffing, service restructure and young people moving on. Developing the Youth Forum has been, and continues to be, an iterative process which has needed dedicated time and attention from all involved.

The inaugural meeting of the Youth Forum took place in February 2024 and a further four meetings have now taken place. Due to the size of Perth & Kinross and the different working and studying arrangements of the young people, finding suitable times and venues that work for them has been a matter of trial and error. The Team continues to work on recruitment to the Youth Forum and its accessibility for the young people – a mix of online and quarterly in-person sessions are being considered.

### ***What's the aim of the Youth Forum?***

The Youth Forum allows for the voice of young people across Perth and Kinross to be heard and to influence the policy and practice direction of all our work. The Youth Forum reports directly to the Children, Young People and Families Partnership (CYPFP). This enables links to be developed and maintained with other strategic groups and partnerships.

The Youth Forum aims to provide a way for services and agencies across Perth and Kinross to consult directly with young people. The Youth Forum will also focus on the Youth Strategy (discussed below) and have a key role in making sure that its actions are progressed.

### ***Who is on the Youth Forum?***

The Youth Forum has 25 members aged 12-26 from various organisations, including: CASA (Children Alone Seeking Asylum – PKC Services for YP), Champions Board of young people with Care Experience (PKC Youth Services), PKAVS Young Carers, PKAVS Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub, Perth Autism Support, KYTHE, LOGOS (Auchterarder and Crieff), AYP, CAYAG, YMCA and Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament. Breathe (Aberfeldy) and SKYD (Blairgowrie) will soon be joining the forum.

To ensure wide representation and a feedback loop for the young people, an arrangement has been made that the representatives liaise between the Youth Forum and their local Voice Groups. This is important as the young people involved need to know that their voice is making a difference and to be kept informed about the impact of their interventions.

The Youth Forum fully recognises the need to reflect the diversity of young people and of their lives. Efforts are ongoing to link with organisations that will enable the voices of a wide range of young people to be heard. These will include the LGBT Scotland's local Youth group, Children's Hospice Association Scotland in Kinross, Veterans First Point and young people from the travelling communities.

## **The Youth Strategy**

At the first meeting of the Youth Forum in February 2024, Linda Richards, Service Manager for Resources, Children and Families Social Work, led a session on the [Youth Strategy](#). This consultation confirmed that the Youth Strategy and its key identified actions are relevant to the needs and wishes of young people.

The Youth Strategy outlines the supports available to young people and sets out the vision to ensure that young people get the help and support they need, when they need it.



## Champions Boards

In line with our commitment to keep The Promise, Heather McKenzie, Children and Young People's Rights Officer, has been working closely with Youth Workers and supporting the development and co-ordination of the Champions Boards.

### ***What are Champions Boards?***

The Champions Boards support and empower care experienced young people to influence change and work alongside those who make decisions about the care system. They provide spaces for young people to be themselves, connect with others who have similar experiences, and receive support from a dedicated youth worker. The Champions Boards support skills development, promotes positive role modelling, wellbeing and inclusion, creating positive memories and access to a variety of opportunities.

Perth and Kinross Council has supported a central Champions Board since 2015, known as the Fun Young Individuals (FYI). However, due to being held in central Perth, the group was not accessible for those living in rural communities. To address this, in October 2023, Champions Boards were set up in secondary schools and this model has proven to be successful. Each secondary school has a designated Youth Worker, who facilitates a weekly Champions Board over one school period.

### ***What are the aims of the Champions Boards?***

Having been in place for less than a year, it is pleasing that 9 out of 11 secondary schools have established Champions Boards and that more than **one-third** of young people with care experience in secondary schools are taking part. The young people have chosen to refer to themselves as 'Champs'.

To ensure that the Champions Boards retained a clear purpose and direction whilst enabling the fluidity and creativity of the group, there has been considerable work behind the scenes by Heather McKenzie and the team of Youth Workers within the schools. Young people are supported to take ownership of their group and are involved in all planning to ensure activities are meaningful to them. Therefore, each school Champions Board has selected different activities to raise the profile of care experience and of the role of Corporate Parents. In Blairgowrie, for example, the Champions Board created Promise Posters to present to their guidance teachers. In Perth Grammar and Perth High Schools, the Board members created quiz questions for all the school staff on Corporate Parenting. This piece of work was beneficial as it supported young people to learn about their rights and the responsibilities of corporate parents.





***Learning about The Promise – Poster made by the Champs***

Over the next academic year, the groups plan to build on these foundations and will be working on projects of their choosing in line with the Promise. This will include inviting Corporate Parents in to support this. Services for Children, Young People and Families plan to showcase and celebrate all the Champions Board projects. All the young people will receive certificates for their contributions and will be able to nominate Corporate Parents for awards too.

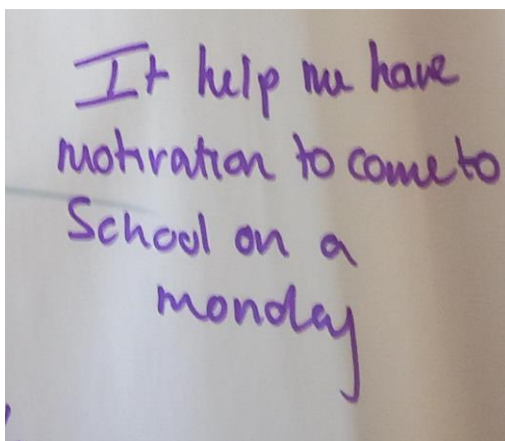
### ***What else have the Champs been doing?***

The Champs enjoyed a varied summer program which included a range of outings and activities from Go Karting, visiting the new Perth Museum, to visiting the Edinburgh Fringe and meeting at Scott Street for toasties or pizza. In partnership with Falkirk, Stirling and East Dunbartonshire, a Summer Champs event was put in place with lots of activities to try and take part in, from decorating cupcakes through to film-making. This was a special event as for many young people, as it was the first time they had been able to meet others with similar experiences outside of their immediate group.

The Champs celebrated the end of summer with a trip to Dundee Tenpin Bowling and Lasertag. This was well attended with 34 young people attending from across 8 of the secondary schools, CASA and FYI. This was such a lovely event where young people were able to connect and enjoy themselves. This was incredibly special for some young people who were able to see other young people with whom they used to live in foster care with and others, who had moved school, had an opportunity to see their Champ friends.

Champs were also supported to give their feedback on a variety of topic areas which will inform the new PKC Corporate Parenting Plan. The feedback has been shared with the PKC Promise Delivery Group. This will be drafted and shared with Champs to ensure the plan is designed in partnership and reflects their feedback accurately.

### ***What do the Champs tell us about their experience of being involved with the Champions Boards?***



***We realise there are others who have had similar experiences, so we do not feel alone***

- ***I felt heard when I was talking about my care experience and what was bad and what should be better***
- ***We've learned so many life skills that will help our future***
- ***It's been great being able to come together to talk about our lives***
- ***Looking forward to the trips in the summer as I usually just spend the summer in my room***

### **Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA)**

RRSA is an award, delivered by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), which recognises schools who can evidence that the [UNCRC](#) is placed at the heart of their policy, planning and service delivery. While schools can provide written evidence of their work, the focus of the assessment is on the impact on the child.

RRSA was recognised as an effective way to work with and support schools to consider their current mechanisms for pupil voice, learner participation and individual advocacy and how these might be strengthened.

In the last school session, a working group consisting of central and school staff, has drafted a Learner Participation Framework. This Framework will provide guidance and set clear expectations for incorporating UNCRC into a values-based approach in school. The Framework will be finalised and implemented this school session.

Some key achievements since August 2023: 7 schools have achieved Bronze: Rights Committed, which means they have evidenced how they plan to embed the [UNCRC](#) into their practice; 6 schools have progressed to Silver: Rights Aware and 5 schools have achieved Gold: Rights Respecting status.

## The Gannochy Trust Youth Panel

In early 2023, The Gannochy Trust launched a new Youth Panel Fund for Perth and Kinross. Twelve young people, aged between 14-26 years of age, including care-experienced young people have been recruited to the Youth Panel (see photo below). The panel meets four times a year to assess and approve funding applications, of up to £10,000, from an annual funding pot of £120,000. The Gannochy Trust Youth Panel have designed the core aims and outcomes for the fund, which will include:

**Youth Activity** – to provide learning-based activities and experiences for young people

**Youth Voice** – empowering young people through projects that support their opinion being heard

**Youth Health and Wellbeing** – helping young people develop independent living skills and activities that are focused on improving their wellbeing.

The fund is open to registered charities that work in Perth and Kinross and can help in the delivery of these objectives.





The Connecting Relationships Empowering Supporting Together (CREST) Team has two functions - independent Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) and Lifelong Links. Team members, who are referred to as FGDM and/or Lifelong Links Coordinators, work with children, young people, their families and the professionals who support them. They are independent from the child or young person's social worker and have no statutory role with respect to the child or young person. CREST has been described as rights-based, inclusive and partnership working with families in action.

Family Group Decision Making puts families at the heart of decision making for children and young people. It supports families to create their own Family Plan to keep their children and young people safe and cared for within their family group wherever safe and possible to do so. The families are supported by the FGDM Coordinator to do this.

Lifelong Links Coordinators work closely with children and young people who are care experienced to identify family members and friends who can be part of their support network as they grow into adulthood. [Here](#) is a short video which explains what Lifelong Links are and why they are so important for children and young people who are care experienced.

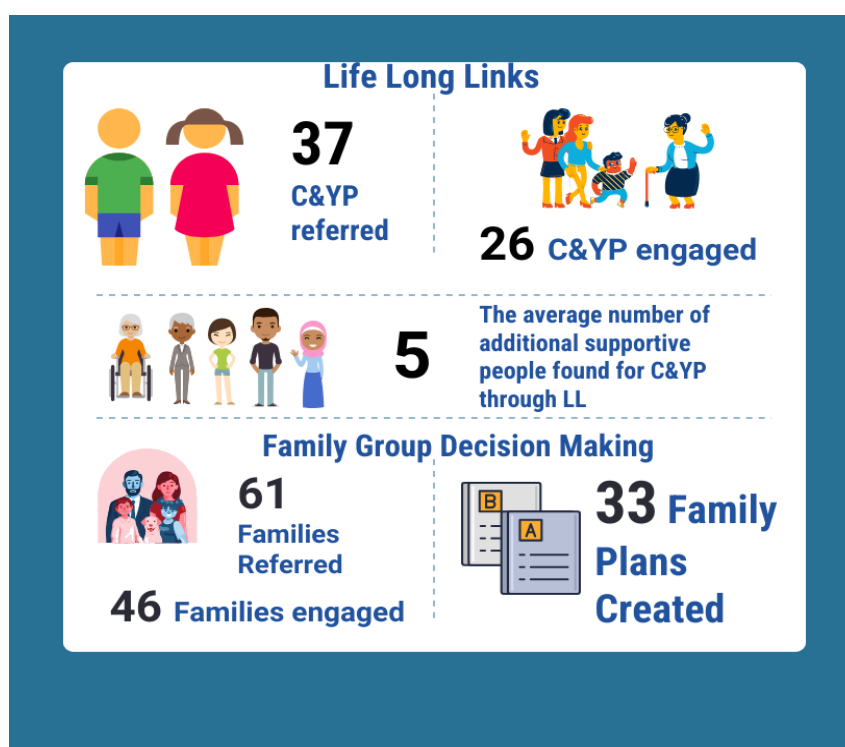


The CREST Team have had a successful year in 2023 – 2024 and are delighted to report that, after an in-depth assessment of their FGDM Service, they have been awarded service accreditation. This involved CREST policy and practice being matched against a set of high standards, drawn from current best practice and learning both in the UK and internationally. CREST Team now joins Edinburgh and Glasgow City Councils as an official accredited service in Scotland.

### **What is the impact for unborn babies, babies, children and young people?**

The CREST Team is making a real difference to the lives of unborn babies, babies, children, young people and their families. Working with either part of the team is completely voluntary for children, young people and families so consent is actively sought, and options provided. Over 70% of the children and young people referred to Lifelong Links have gone on to engage with their coordinator to work towards creating a Lifelong Links plan. Similarly, over 70% of families referred to the FGDM part of the team have engaged with the coordinator and this has resulted in 33 Family Plans being created. Follow up at 3 months after the creation of the plan shows that the Family Plan is still working well for 30 of the families.

Here is a snapshot of CREST's work in 2023 - 2024



### What's next for CREST Team?

CREST have been developing a Connections Toolkit and Plan and are planning to implement it in the year ahead. It is a tool that social work colleagues and foster carers can use to support children and young people identify, and stay connected with, people that are important to them, including siblings and sibling-type relationships. Grandparents, other family members, and important people within the child or young person's community can play a significant part in offering ongoing love and support.

Designed to be led by the child or young person, this tool can support social work staff and foster carers to better understand the child or young person's world, the value of their relationships and how they change overtime. The tool can also be used for children and young people living at home who have social work involvement, are on the edge of care, and in kinship care.

The team are planning to work on creating better processes to hear the voice of those who have been involved with the service and use that to further develop the service.



# Independent Advocacy Perth & Kinross



Independent Advocacy Perth & Kinross (IAPK) continues to partner with children, young people and their parents or caregivers to provide independent advocacy services as they navigate Children's Hearings and other important meetings such as Looked After Child Reviews and CPPMs. The service has three full-time advocates who provide a service to children and young people.

The importance of independent advocacy for children, young people and their parents or caregivers in child protection or legal processes cannot be overstated. Families whose children become subject to CPR or to legal orders have consistently reported that having a trained, independent advocate with them through the process is supportive and helpful. Advocates can ensure that children, young people and their families understand what is going on and prepare them to take part in meetings or Children's Hearings through the establishment of a trusting working relationship. The independence of the advocates is central to this as the child, young person and their parents and caregivers are more able to trust what the advocates are telling them as they know that they are in no way linked to Children and Family Social Work or other services. IAPK follow a code of practice which ensures that the independence is retained and refer to the child, young person or adult receiving services as their advocacy partner, reinforcing their collaborative approach to their work.

162 New Referrals with 50 existing partners totalling children and young people supported during 2023.

212

Meeting type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total for the year
Children's Hearings	25	42	27	28	122
Looked After Reviews	20	23	40	28	111
Case Conferences	11	5	3	6	25
Core Groups	7	4	17	10	38
Child Plans	26	5	11	6	48
Other*	7	33	21	33	94
Advocacy Partner Meetings	161	165	147	164	637
Total	260	277	266	275	1075

## 1075 Meetings with and for young people

The above table shows the number and type of meetings that independent advocates were involved with in 2023. The independent advocates now work with young people up until the age of 26, in line with continuing care legislation. As services change for young people from



Children and Family Social Work to Through Care After-Care or Adult Care teams, the consistency of an advocate may be especially important in supporting transitions.

The IAPK Team pictured with Tommy Whitelaw, Motivational Speaker, to discuss ***What Matters To You***



Parent of Young Person; ***"We would not be in the great position we are now if it had not been for the support Independent Advocacy has offered to my child."***

***"Wow, well if that wasn't powerful enough to make the necessary change"*** (Having heard the views of the child) Children and Families Team Leader

***"Can you ask about the Hearing that is happening, I would like you to be there for me because you are good at passing on information to me in a way I understand."*** - Child

***"I am so glad I was able to attend, thank you."*** – Child

***"All the professionals sit up and listen to the advocate when they share what you have told them."*** – Parent

***"Having advocacy there made a real difference, thank you so much."*** – Parent

***"Great work, thank you."*** – Parent

### **The Impact of advocacy**

Independent advocacy improves, engagement and participation for those individuals and family members meeting are about.

We are told frequently that where an independent advocate is present, what was previously adversarial or, there was non-engagement and little communication, there is now discussion, participation and a collective approach to talking and resolving risks to the child and family.

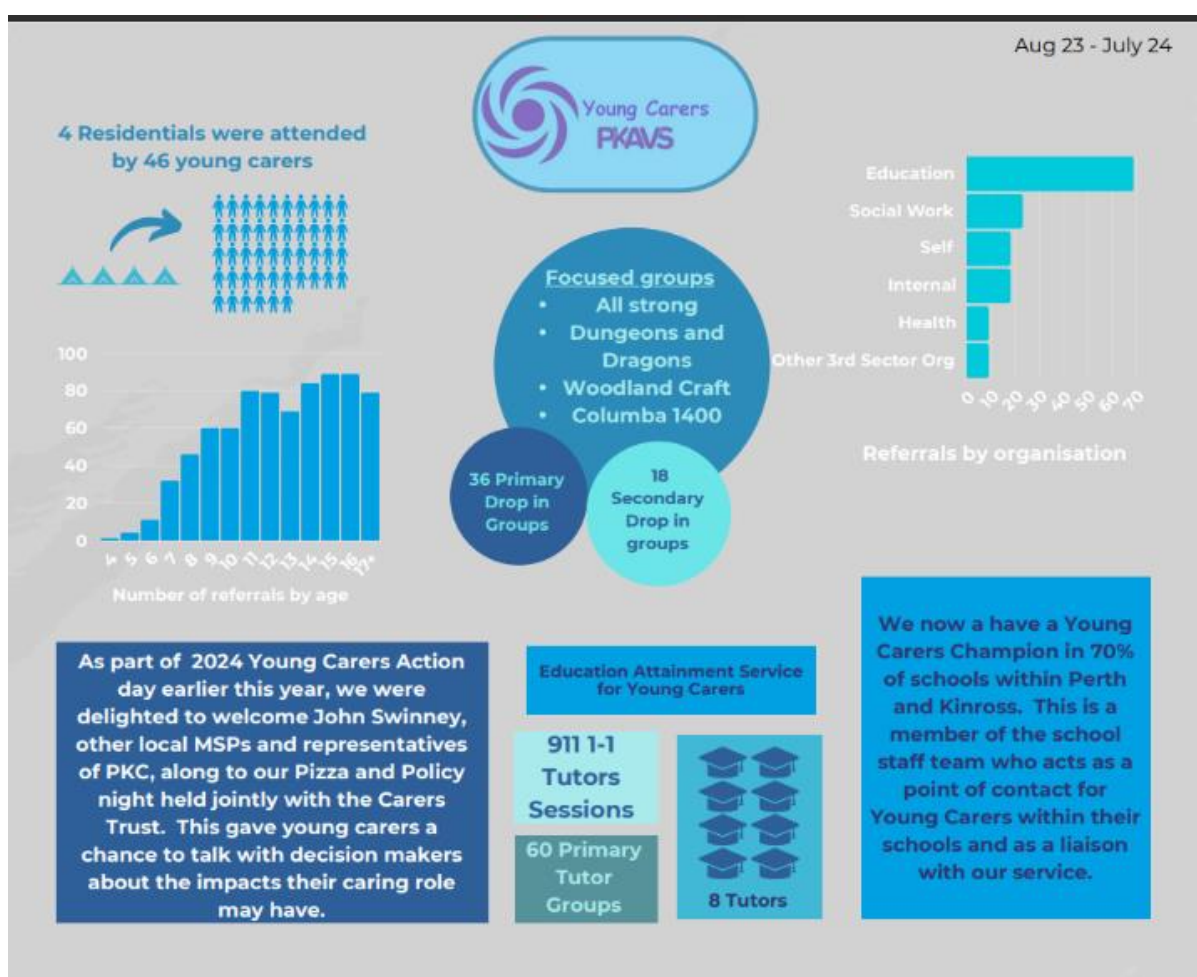
As a result of improved communication and engagement, children can sometimes remain with family. Where they are away from family, advocacy can support in gaining views around family contact and share the creative ways to maintain relationships. Often, it's the child with the answer. They can disclose to their advocate their experiences and how they are at this time.

Where there is engagement and a joint approach to safety planning, there is more likely to have sustained change, and a successful outcome for the child and family. They are empowered to participate, chose, share. Participation and information are a right of the child and parents. We continue to work on having a rights-based approach to all meetings.

What we observe is that those who use the support of an independent advocate learn how to participate and attend meetings, share their thoughts in various setting appropriately. This is a life skill, and we aim to empower our partners to attend meetings without advocacy. The team can then go on to support more children and families.

A **Young Carer** is anyone under the age of eighteen, or over eighteen and still at school, who provides care or assistance to a family member, of any age, who has a disability, physical or mental long term health condition, or is affected by drug or alcohol misuse.

Many young carers support their parents or caregivers to look after and meet the needs of a sister, brother or sibling with a disability. Children with disabilities are at higher risk of neglect and abuse. Providing safe spaces and support for young carers may strengthen the protective factors around these children.



The [PKAVS Young Carers](#) provide a range of outreach and residential activities to support young carers in the community. The young carers workers are working hard to ensure that the voices of these children and young people are heard by decision-makers. The Young Carers Champion scheme in schools is raising the profile of young carers and raising awareness of their needs.

The work of the young carers has been highlighted twice on national television through the Children in Need campaign. Please take a few moments below to watch the short videos which demonstrate the difference that the support provided can make to young people's lives.

**To see the difference our service makes to the lives of young carers please click the links below**

**Earlier this year we received the Excellence for Carers Award. This award is given to carers centres within the Carers Trust Network who are able to demonstrate both an existing excellence of service to unpaid carers and a culture that fosters continuous improvement and striving for excellence. We are delighted to have this recognition for all that we do.**

**HOW IS LIFE AS A YOUNG CARER?**

**JESSICA'S STORY**

**Later this year...**

Growing numbers of referrals and the increasing competition for funding revenues has put a strain on our services. It has been challenging to ensure we are meeting the needs of the service but by changing how we deliver respite we are ensuring that we continue to offer a diverse programme of opportunities for young carers.

- Weekly cooking on a budget workshops
- Board games Club
- Camping
- Tree planting
- Football club

**Our counselling service continues to provide a much needed opportunity for young carers to access 1-1 sessions here at our centre, for an initial 6 week period.**

[Zuhair's story](#) - How is life as a Young Carer?

[Jessica's story](#) – Looking after my mum from the age of three.



## NSPCC Speak out Stay safe Perth and Kinross

The [NSPCC's Speak out Stay safe Programme](#), a national safeguarding programme for children aged 5- to 11-years-old, continues to be delivered in Perth and Kinross schools. NSPCC and Perth and Kinross Council have agreed a delivery plan so that every primary school is offered the virtual programme on a three-year cycle. The programme aims to help children to understand what abuse is and how to recognise the signs, their right to be safe and that abuse is never the victim's fault. Details are also provided to children about where to get help and the sources of help available to them, including the [Childline](#) service. Linking directly to the Curriculum for Excellence, the programme helps reinforce key messages about abuse and neglect through:

- Virtual assemblies for children aged 5-7 and 7-11, available in English, Welsh and BSL.
- Follow on lesson plans with engaging activities and resources to help reinforce and embed key messages.
- Face-to-face, volunteer led workshops for children aged 6-7 and 9-11 (these are offered to schools as NSPCC has volunteer capacity locally).

NSPCC also offers an adapted six week [Speak out Stay safe programme for children with Additional Support Needs \(ASN\)](#). This programme supports schools to teach children about what abuse is and safe adults they can turn to for help. Everything schools need is provided, including session plans and films, alongside printable resources and props. These materials are intended for children with moderate learning disabilities, autism spectrum conditions or other additional learning needs and are available throughout the year.

In the 2023-24 session, 24 schools delivered the virtual assembly content to pupils. In addition, 22 schools also had NSPCC volunteer-led, face-to-face workshops for P3, P6 & P7 pupils. The programme was also delivered at Craigclowan School.

### What is the impact for children?

Ensuring that children understand what abuse is and that they have the right to be safe and protected is a foundation of promoting safety as children grow and develop. Providing content in British Sign Language and tailored to the needs of children with additional needs is vitally important as research indicates the greater vulnerability of these children to abuse and neglect. The programme is well-evaluated by local schools who have provided feedback such as:

***"...the two assemblies went very well. The teachers have also done follow up lessons in class."***

***"Parent/Carer letter was easy to adjust and share. Website information is clear and easy to navigate. Emails clearly provided all necessary information. Buddy provided a key, recognisable character they understood the purpose of and related to. Sam provided a relatable character and story. Pupils understood what different hurts are in an age-appropriate way"***

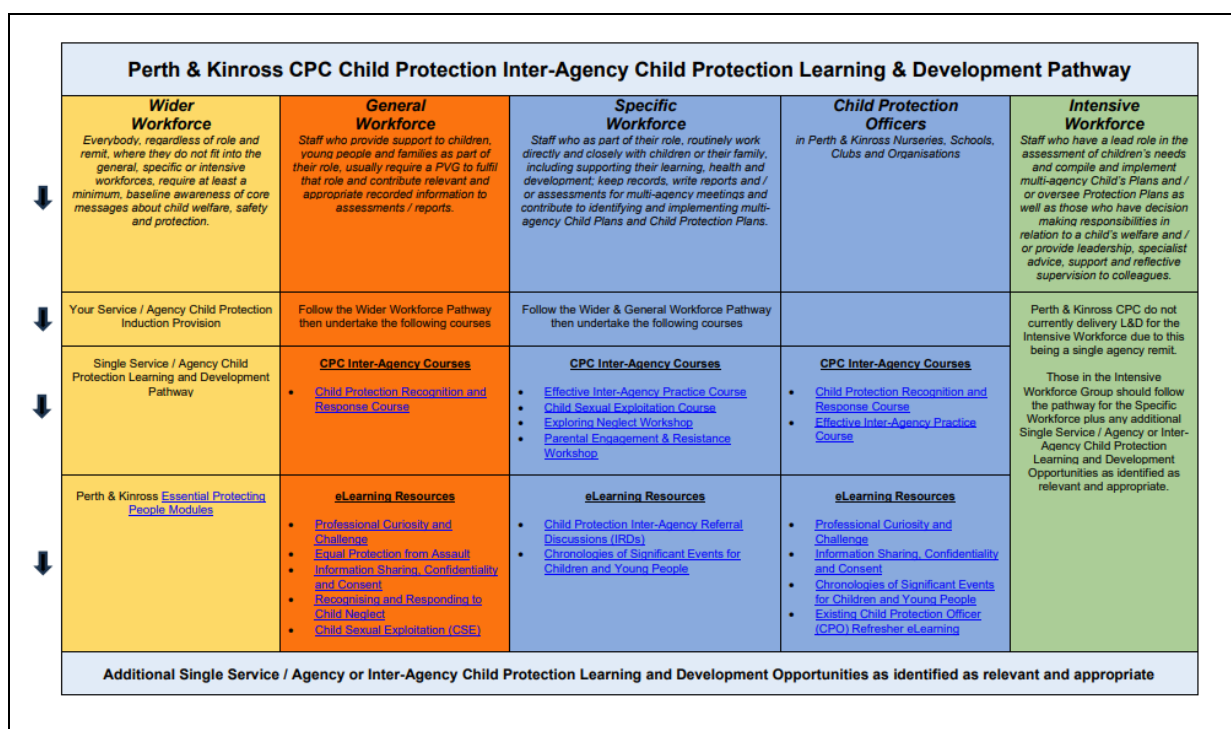


## Impact on Staff

**Evaluation:** We are continuing to support and develop a professionally curious, competent, confident and skilful multi-agency workforce. Our staff are highly motivated and committed to their own continuous professional development. We are empowering and supporting our staff with a wide range of evidenced-based multi-agency learning and development opportunities, which are evaluated highly and having a positive impact on practice. The content of these learning and development opportunities takes account of changing legislative, policy and practice developments and local challenges.

### Staff Learning and Development

All CPC inter-agency child protection staff learning and development opportunities are continuously updated to ensure they are compliant with the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021; updated 2023](#) and the [National Framework for Child Protection Learning and Development in Scotland 2024](#), which we have translated into our robust and dynamic [CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development Framework](#). This includes an updated [Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning Pathway](#).



Since the rapid technological changes in 2020 brought about by the pandemic, we have actively embraced new technology to create a flexible, blended approach to our inter-agency child protection learning and development programme.

In response to staff needs and wishes, we increased our offer of in-person learning and development opportunities over 2023/2024. We also continued to deliver live webinars and maintain our range of interactive online learning resources, allowing busy practitioners to learn at a time, pace and place convenient to them. This ensured that the learning events on offer provided networking opportunities and met the updated knowledge, understanding and skills required of each workforce group specified within the [National Framework for child protection learning and development 2024](#)

**What do we mean by harm?**

**Physically unsafe situation/ home environment:**

- adult behaviour
- domestic violence
- physical chastisement - hitting, slapping, punching, kicking)
- young children left alone

**Sexually harmful**

- sexual abuse
- sexual exploitation
- indecent images
- exposure to pornographic material

**Emotionally threatening behaviour:**

- harsh/severe shouting, swearing, scapegoating, blaming, rejection
- threats of physical harm
- manipulation, use of threat, control or coercion
- involvement in financial/criminal activity; forced marriage, honour-based marriage

**Lack of care, material indicators:**

- home conditions
- child's appearance, hygiene concerns
- children absent from school
- child being hungry, tired, inadequately dressed, in poor (untreated) health

*A slide from CPC Child Protection Recognition and Response Course*

**Difficult Conversations**

**Be Courageous**

Tackling disputes, disagreements and hostility; raising concerns or challenge and giving information that will not be well received are recognised as hard things to do.

How far you delve and challenge will depend on your particular role and responsibilities.

*Extract from the P&K CPC Professional Curiosity and Challenge eLearning Resource*

CPC inter-agency child protection learning and development opportunities and resources continue to be delivered within the existing budget and free-of-charge at the point of delivery. We collate evaluation reports and are pleased that our training opportunities continue to be rated very highly. Some extracted examples are shown below.

*Figure X: On-the-day comments following attendance at a Child Protection Recognition and Response Course April 2024*

10. Please use this space to add any general comments or suggestions in relation to CPC Child Protection Learning and Development Opportunities. Perth and Kinross Child...

4 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Very insightful. I got a lot out of the session.
2	anonymous	Fantastic delivery, content was relevant to my job role.
3	anonymous	This was a well delivered course .
4	anonymous	I found the training one of the best i have done. It has gave me confidence to recognise when something should be looked into further.

*Self-Reported perception of confidence before attending a Perth & Kinross CPC Child Protection Inter-Agency Learning & Development Course*

6. PRE-COURSE

Before attending this course, how confident did you feel about **identifying and responding to concerns** where a child may be at risk of harm in your work context?

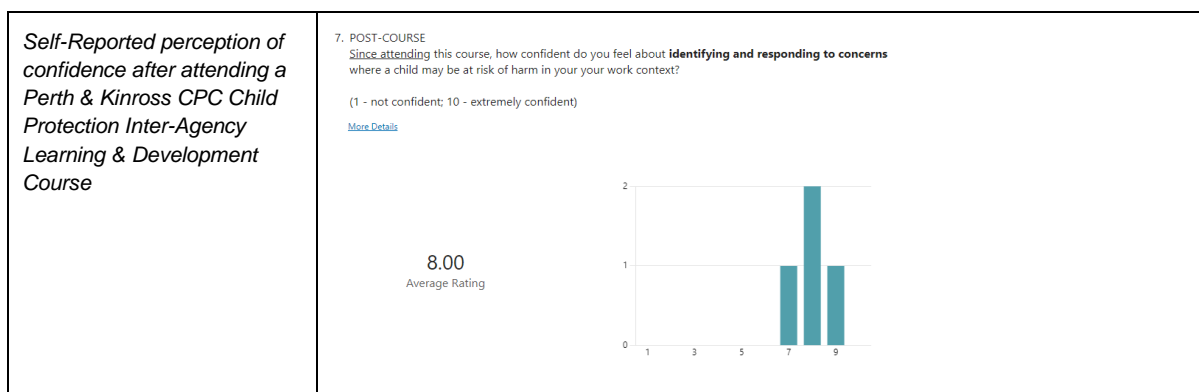
(1 - not confident; 10 - extremely confident)

[More Details](#)

**4.00**

Average Rating





***In terms of impact***, the following three tables show the wide range of child protection staff learning and development opportunities delivered from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024: by way of in-person, webinar and online learning resources:

<b>Staff Learning and Development Opportunities – OnLine E-Learning Modules (1 August 2023 – 31 July 2024)</b>		
<b>Title of Course</b>	<b>Activity (Internal and External)</b>	
	<b>2022 / 2023</b>	<b>2023 / 2024</b>
<i>Child Protection OnLine Module</i>	2,443	2,072
<i>Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) OnLine Module</i>	956	994
<i>Adult Support and Protection OnLine Module</i>	569	1,138
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,963</b>	<b>4,204</b>

<b>CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection OnLine E-Learning Resources (New and Adapted) (1 August 2023 – 31 July 2024)</b>	
<b>Title of Learning Opportunity / Resource</b>	<b>Completions</b>
<i>Ten Minute Briefing: The Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019</i>	749
<i>Recognising and Responding to Child Neglect</i>	730
<i>Child Sexual Exploitation: Recognition and Response</i>	292
<i>Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Consent</i>	105
<i>Professional Curiosity &amp; Challenge</i>	139
<i>Chronologies</i>	119
<i>Child Protection Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (IRDs)</i>	332
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,466</b>

***CPC and other CPC supported Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development Events (1 August 2023 – 31 July 2024)***

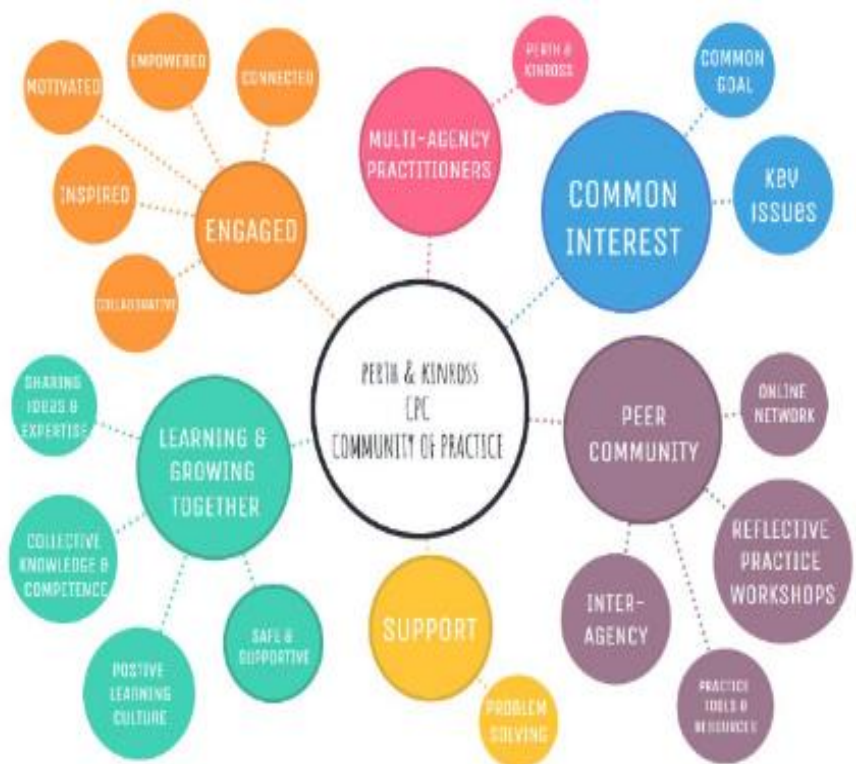
<b><i>Title of Learning Opportunity / Resource</i></b>	<b><i>Learning Method</i></b>	<b><i>Total Opportunities</i></b>	<b><i>Total Attending</i></b>
<i>CPC Child Protection: Recognition and Response Course (formerly CPC Basic Awareness Inter-Agency Child Protection)</i>	Webinars	8 (7 delivered)	68
<i>CPC Child Protection: Recognition and Response Course via CPC (formerly CPC Basic Awareness Inter-Agency Child Protection)</i>	In-Person	8 (6 delivered)	95
<i>ELC Child Protection Basic Awareness</i>	In-Person	5 (5 delivered)	47
<i>ELC Exploring Childcare and Protection</i>	In-Person	1	3
<i>CPC Effective Inter-Agency Practice Course</i>	In-Person	2 (2 delivered)	47
<i>CPC Exploring Neglect Workshop</i>	In Person	3 (1 delivered)	10
<i>CPC Parental Engagement &amp; Resistance Workshop</i>	In-Person	2 (1 delivered)	17
<i>CPC Child Sexual Exploitation</i>	In-Person	3 (0 delivered)	0
<i>CPC / ADP Children Affected by Parental Substance Use</i>	In-Person	1 (1 delivered)	24
<i>New Child Protection Officers (CPO) (via Education Services)</i>	Webinar	3	70
<i>Child Protection Officers (CPO) Networks (via Education Services)</i>	Webinar / In-Person	4	240
<b><i>Total</i></b>		<b>40</b>	<b>621</b>

The above table notes the number of learning and development course places available to book (opportunities) and records in brackets the number of courses delivered, along with the total number staff who attended the learning and development courses. Unfortunately, courses sometimes require to be cancelled due to very low take up of places. Any staff booked to attend these courses that require to be cancelled are encouraged to re-book for a later date.

It should be noted that the updated [Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations](#) (PECR), which came into effect in March 2019, to protect the privacy rights of website users, now limits our ability to provide accurate data in relation to online child protection learning and development opportunities and therefore the above are the minimum numbers of take-ups and completions.

## CPC Community of Practice

- 2 in-person events delivered:
  - Professional Curiosity April '24
  - Working with Dads June '24
- 7min briefings and learning resources
- Future Reflective Learning Workshops Planned - Disguised Non-compliance; LGBTI+, Neglect, Having Constructive Conversations UNCRC etc.
- Introductory SWAY presentation  
<https://sway.cloud.microsoft/Pbyhvs13PvZIXEwe>
- Online Community Forum (MS Teams Chanel)



The newly developed CPC Child Protection Community of Practice (CoP) aims to facilitate improved connections and share learning across our services and agencies to support the continued development of our child protection culture, ethos and day to day practice across Perth and Kinross. This will be achieved through the delivery of three in-person thematic inter-agency CoP reflective learning sessions per year, supported by thematic 7-minute briefings, a reflective learning account and an online learning network where conversations about good practice examples and resources can be shared between CoP members.

Any local practitioner who has a professional interest in child welfare and protection can become part of this safe and supportive community. An [introductory presentation](#) provides more information on the community and details of how to join.

### Conclusion / Looking Forward

Whilst there continues to be a good take-up rate of our online learning resources, the CPC recognises there are opportunities to promote these resources further and plans to do so throughout 2024/2025. The CPC have increased opportunities for in-person learning, however, take up of these courses have at times been poor due to pressures of work, as reported by frontline practitioners. We are currently exploring different ways to maximise in-person sign-up and attendance, including for example, locality training opportunities and bite-size learning for existing courses and an inter-agency training needs analysis in 2025.

The CPC Learning and Development Officer is now back in post and has immediately instigated an increased programme of child protection recognition and response training opportunities; both webinars based and in-person and plans to scale-up that offer considerably during 2024/2025.

We have also significantly improved our approach to post-event training evaluation through amendments to the on-the-day evaluation survey form, which prompts the learner to evaluate their perceived knowledge and confidence pre and post course.



## Safe & Together Training

The CPC played a pivotal role in bringing the Safe & Together model to Perth and Kinross through partly funding its initial roll out in Children and Families Social Work in 2021. Further funding was sourced from the Scottish Government's Delivering Equally Safe Fund in 2021 with a two-year programme of funding achieved. This funding was renewed in 2023 and 2024 and now amounts to an investment of circa £70 000.

Safe & Together is based on partnering with the non-abusive parent to keep their children safely with them wherever possible and, through intervention with the abusive parent, it aims to reduce risk of harm to the other parent, children and young people. The Safe & Together model recognises that parents who are being subjected to domestic abuse are almost always working hard to keep their children safe and that they take a range of protective actions to do this. This recognition can reduce the shame that many victims and survivors of domestic abuse can feel and supports the establishment of partnership working. Safe & Together conceptualises abusive behaviour by a parent towards their partner, whether current or former, as a *parenting choice* as such behaviour is always harmful to the children and young people who, whether they are directly witness to incidents or not, are always subjected to the consequences of this kind of behaviour.

To date, 135 practitioners and managers from Children and Families Social Work and from Justice Services have been trained in the full model (5 days training) and over 240 staff from across partner services and agencies have been trained in the overview model (one day's training). A further 80 staff across Children and Families Social Work have taken additional training on *Working with Men as Parents* or *Partnering with Survivors*.

The range of staff who have undertaken the Overview Training is a testament to the partnership arrangements in Perth and Kinross. It has included Elected Members and staff from Housing, Health, Education, Children's Hearing Panel members, Reporters to the Children's Hearing and a range of colleagues across the third sector. Feedback was very positive, and the training was evaluated highly.

Implementing Safe & Together has changed the culture in Perth and Kinross and there is a far better understanding of the dynamics of domestic abuse both within social work staff and colleagues who have undertaken the training across the partnership. There has been a move away from a tendency for services to victim-blame towards perpetrator accountability. An audit is planned in 2024 – 2025 to evaluate the impact of Safe & Together on practice.

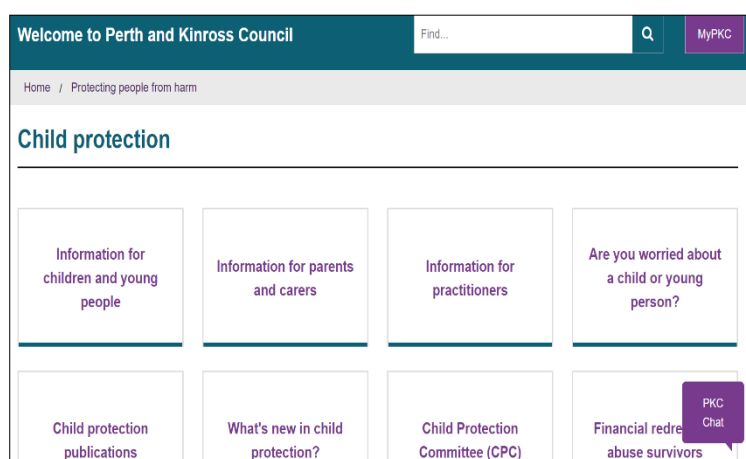
A video discussing Perth and Kinross' journey of implementation of Safe & Together will feature at the European & North America Safe & Together Conference in December 2024.

## Impact on the Community

**Evaluation: We are confident that the CPC remains transparent and public facing; that we are providing highly evaluated public information that is accurate, relevant and useful in terms of helping to keep children and young people safe. As a CPC, we plan to focus more strongly on engagement with the public in 2024 and to centre the voices of children and young people in our work.**

## Public Information, Communication and Engagement

### Child Protection Website



The [CPC Child Protection Website](#), hosted on the Perth and Kinross Council website, remains fundamental to the CPC's approach to public information, communication and engagement. This public-facing website ensures the work of the CPC remains open and transparent. Policies and guidance are published and available for practitioners, children and young

people and their families to read. Easy read leaflets have been uploaded to the website for children and young people and their families about coming to CPPMs. Work will progress on the website in 2024/2025 to add more resources for children, young people and families.

As reported last year, the introduction of the [Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations](#) (PECR), which protects the privacy rights of website users and controls our ability to collect data cookies, limits our ability to provide accurate data. When given a choice, many people will decline non-essential data cookies and turn off tracking across websites to protect their privacy. It may be that, given the nature of our website, users may be even less willing for their activity to be tracked. This year's figures for visitors to the website have dropped relative to the preceding two years which may relate to the PECR and the reluctance of the public to allow tracking or data cookie collection. As we are no longer able to produce accurate statistics for website visits and views, we will no longer be sharing these within our annual report.

### Social Media

In partnership with staff from Perth and Kinross Council's Corporate Communications Team, we have continued to make use of the main Perth and Kinross Council social media platforms (Facebook and X, formerly known as Twitter) to extend the message reach of our key child protection partnership work.



At 31 July 2024, the Perth and Kinross Council Corporate X Account had 23900 followers\* and the Corporate Facebook page had 36,801 likes; compared with 23 217 Corporate Twitter followers and 31,813 Corporate Facebook page likes at the same date in 2023. \*This is an estimate as X no longer gives access to analytics data without paid verification of the account. This cost cannot be justified given the present circumstances.

Throughout the year, the CPC has actively supported several national campaigns including calls for new volunteers with Children's Hearings Scotland (September 2023) and the following Child Protection Committees Scotland's (CPCScotland) campaigns:

- 1) **#ItsOkayToAskForHelp** to encourage parents/carers to seek support if they are struggling with the cost of living and this is affecting family life (November 2023)



Social media activity associated with this campaign provided advice and guidance on where and how members of the community can seek financial support or advice on managing debt during the cost of living crisis.

- 2) **#WhatIfYou'reRight** with Barnardo's Scotland to encourage adults to take note of changes in a child's behaviour which could indicate signs of sexual abuse (February 2024)



Centring the voices of survivors of child sexual abuse, this campaign powerfully highlights the changes in children and young people's behaviour that adults should be mindful of and respond accordingly.

Watch the video here - [What if you're right?](#)

Additionally, at a local level, the CPC's work has also been supported via regular posts offering general information and advice about reporting concerns for a child or young person, the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, and other relevant topics.



In terms of impact, in the past year our CPC specific media posts on Facebook have achieved a total reach of 55,848 (a significant increase on 2022-2023, where the total reach was 43,261). Unfortunately, due to changes to access to analytics on X as outlined above, we are not able to provide a figure for impressions on X for 2023-2024 to compare to that of 2022-2023. The most popular post on Facebook was in relation to Children's Hearings Volunteers on 21 September 2023 with a total reach of 11,022, or around a fifth of the total reach for the year.



As discussed earlier in this report, the importance of members of the community volunteering to be Panel Members for Children's Hearings is an integral part of child protection work. This short video, highlighted by our social media posts, outlines the benefits it brings for babies, children and young people.

<https://youtu.be/qwyU-6BJLRs?feature=shared>

**Looking forward**, we intend to continue to promote both national and local messaging around child protection and to identify any additional opportunities to raise awareness that child protection is everyone's business.

## How good is the delivery of our services for children, young people and families and our operational management?

This section describes how we are delivering our services and providing help and support to protect children, young people and families. It also describes recent improvement work, led by the CPC, to support and empower frontline practice. This work aims to support competent, confident and skilful multi-agency practitioners to make sound professional judgments when dealing with complex issues.

**Evaluation: We are confident that our child protection services are robust, effective and focused on vulnerability, risk and need. We are working extremely hard to improve the life chances of children and young people. Practice is enabled by learning and by evidence-based policy, practice and planning improvements.**



### **Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative (TRIC) Priority Group 5 (PG5): Safeguarding and Child Protection**

***'We will continue to ensure that our children and young people are safe and protected from harm, at home, school and in the community.'***

[Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative \(TRIC\)](#)

Perth and Kinross CPC and partner agencies continue to support the work of TRIC PG5. Much of the work TRIC PG5 has provided the CPC with added value; supported the work of the CPC and provided us with a shared opportunity across Tayside to design, develop, implement and to some extent, evaluate our work to improve day-to-day culture, ethos and child protection practice. However, due to a change in funding arrangements, discussions are ongoing about how the work of the TRIC may be sustained going forward.

## Practice Guidance and Development

In April 2024, the CPC was pleased to publish two key pieces of new practice guidance. The first was an interim joint protocol between the CPC and the Adult Protection Committee and is entitled: ***Guiding Principles For Safe Transition Between, Within and Across Children's Services And Adult Services Including Young People Aged 16 To 18 Years***

This important document set out the ways in which services working with children and young people and services working with adults should better work together to ensure that vulnerable young people aged 16 to 18 are supported to safely transition between services. Historically, young people in this age range can find transition difficult as they are both considered a child within the law and therefore subject to child protection guidance, but they are also considered to be adults within certain parts of the law and therefore are subject to adult protection guidance and legislation also. When transitions are not managed well for vulnerable young people, they can be placed at serious risk of harm. 'Remember My Name – A Significant Case Review into The Life of Margaret Fleming' (2023) clearly illustrated these dangers. It is available [here](#). The CPC continues to work with services towards operationalising these guiding principles.



Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC) and Adult Protection Committee (APC)  
Interim Joint Protocol:  
***Guiding Principles for Safe Transition between, within and across Children's Services and Adult Services including Young People Aged 16 to 18 years***



The second guidance document published was the: **Care And Risk Management (CARM) Of Children and Young People Who Present a Risk of Serious Harm to Themselves and/or to Others.**



The CARM protocol is designed to ensure that the very small number of children and young people who present a risk of serious harm to themselves and/or to others receive the support and monitoring that they need to keep themselves and others safe from harm. It is envisaged that this protocol will mainly cover young people between the ages of 11 and 17.

Serious harm is defined as an incident which is "life threatening and/or traumatic and from which recovery, whether physical or psychological can be expected to be 'difficult or impossible' ([CYCJ definition](#)). It will usually involve allegations of harmful sexual behaviour, allegations of violent behaviour or another high-level risk.

The CPC recognises that young people who behave in harmful ways will usually have their own needs for care and protection and are likely to have been subjected to traumatic experiences within their own lives. The CARM protocol seeks to address these needs as well as mitigating the risks posed; whether to the young person themselves or others. The CPC is supporting agencies to fully operationalise the CARM protocol.

## Updating Policies

The CPC is currently working with a small group of practitioners to update all its existing guidance and ensure that it is readily accessible and that practitioners can get the information they need quickly.

The first guidance document to have been updated and made into an easily searchable webpage is the [Practitioner's Guide to Child Protection Planning Meetings](#). Here is a screenshot from our website which demonstrates the ease of use.

**Practitioners guide and toolkit - Child Protection Planning Meetings**

This Practitioner's Guide has been produced by Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC). It provides clear practice guidance for all practitioners and managers working to support and protect children and families; particularly those who may be invited to attend at and to participate in a Child Protection Planning Meeting (CPPM).

This guidance has been updated following the implementation of the [National Guidance for Child Protection 2021 - updated 2023](#). It aims to provide a comprehensive guide for practitioners who have been invited to attend a Child Protection Planning Meeting (CPPM) to ensure that you are as prepared as possible.

There are two checklists appended to this document - the first is to support social workers who require to plan, arrange and prepare for a CPPM and the second is for practitioners who have been invited to attend. These checklists are aimed at practitioners who may be early in their career and may find the framework beneficial. We trust that you will find this document helpful to you in your work and would encourage you to send any feedback to [ChildProtectionCommittee@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:ChildProtectionCommittee@pkc.gov.uk).

[Show all sections](#)

- [Introduction](#) +
- [Purpose](#) +
- [Child Protection Planning Meetings \(CPPMs\)](#) +
- [Child Protection Register \(CPR\)](#) +

**Downloads**

- [CPPM Checklist 1 - Social Worker's Guide for Planning and Preparing for a CPPM \(PDF\) \[104KB\]](#)
- [CPPM Checklist 2 - Guide for Practitioners \(PDF\) \[119KB\]](#)

## Progressing the implementation of the National Guidance for Child Protection

As reported in last year Standards and Quality Report, the CPC undertook a self-evaluation exercise in October 2023 to assess the extent to which the National Guidance had been implemented into practice within Perth and Kinross. In March 2024, the Scottish government published a comparison document of the self-evaluations of all CPCs in Scotland. An evaluative exercise was undertaken on this document, and it was clear that Perth and Kinross were ahead in some aspects of this work. There were only four areas in which Perth and Kinross was slightly behind. However, these areas had already been identified and the work was underway to address them. The Scottish government has said that it will not be asking CPCs complete this self-evaluation exercise again. To satisfy itself that the requisite progress has been made, the CPC will be undertaking the exercise again in 2025 on a unilateral basis.

Undertaking this self-evaluation exercise has significantly contributed to our own quality assurance, self-evaluation and improvement planning work as we continue to confirm – *How good we are now? How do we know? What we plan to do next?*

This has informed our [CPC Improvement Plan 2023 – 2026](#) and our ongoing improvement programme. Therefore, re-visiting the self-evaluation exercise in the coming year will be beneficial in terms of tracking progress.

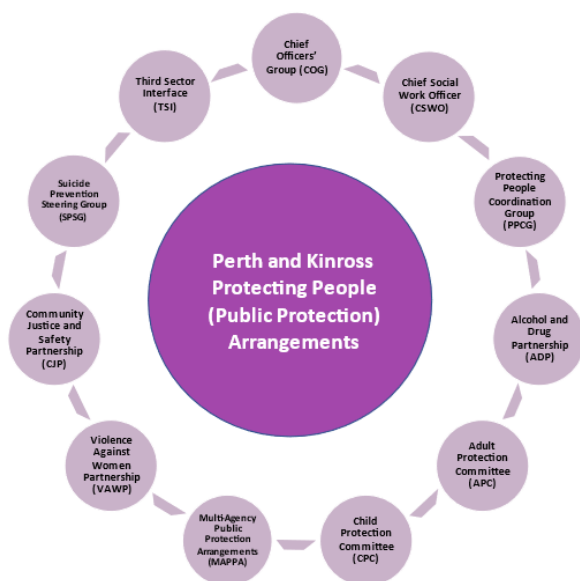
## Audit Activity

The self-evaluation and audit activity, as described earlier in this report, through desktop and multi-agency audit work, supports the view that the services and agencies supporting unborn babies, babies, children, young people and their families within Perth and Kinross are making a real difference by providing support at the right time and when families need it.

## How good is our leadership?

This section describes our collective approach to leadership, direction, support, challenge and scrutiny. It describes how we are promoting effective and collaborative partnership working to deliver the best possible outcomes for children and young people. It also describes our commitment to continuous improvement through quality assurance, self-evaluation and our capacity for further improvement across Perth and Kinross.

**Evaluation: We are continuing to strengthen our individual and collective approach to leadership, which is values-based, and which aims to empower and support staff across all services and agencies. Our partnership working remains effective and robust and our commitment to continuous improvement through quality assurance and self-evaluation aims to provide better outcomes for children and families across Perth and Kinross.**



## **Perth and Kinross Protecting People (Public Protection) Arrangements**

### **Perth and Kinross Public Protection Chief Officers' Group (COG)**

The Perth and Kinross Public Protection Chief Officers' Group (COG) brings together the Chief Officers of Perth and Kinross Council; NHS Tayside; Police Scotland – Tayside Division; the Chief Operating Officer of the Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) for Perth and Kinross Council.

Other key agency Chief Officers attend the COG and by invitation, Chairs and Lead Officers of the local public protection partnerships, are periodically invited to attend the COG, which has now adopted a thematic and exception reporting approach, in terms of our local public protection arrangements. This ensures that only significant issues are escalated to the Chief Officers to make best use of time and resources at COG.

The COG continues to provide leadership, direction and scrutiny on the work of the Protecting People Coordination Group (PPCG), which brings together the various public protection partnerships, which now includes the includes the CPC, the Adult Protection Committee, the Suicide Prevention Steering Group, the Drug and Alcohol Partnership, the Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership and Community Safety.

The COG has a key responsibility for CPC Learning Reviews<sup>1</sup> providing the CPC with direction on both the commissioning and publication of Learning Reviews. The COG continues to monitor the CPC's improvement work, including that originating from Learning Reviews.

Terms of Reference (TOR) are in place, which continue to reflect National Guidance, describe and articulate the COG's working arrangements. The COG meets four times per year at minimum and additionally, as required.

### **Perth and Kinross Protecting People Coordination Group (PPCG)**

The PPCG has consolidated its coordinating role across the local public protection partnerships and has identify shared and cross-cutting public protection themes. The PPCG is exploring opportunities for shared learning and development opportunities for staff on public protection issues, how data from across the public protection partnerships can be used to ensure that themes are identified and responded to through a whole family, whole of life approach. The PPCG monitors the risk registers from the partnerships and where necessary, ensures that the COG is aware of high-level and / or shared partnership risks.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: [National guidance for child protection committees undertaking learning reviews - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-for-child-protection-committees-undertaking-learning-reviews/pages/1-introduction-and-purpose-of-learning-reviews/) (Scottish Government: July 2024).





## **Perth and Kinross Children, Young People and Families Partnership (CYPFP)**

Elected Members and Chief Officers of the public, private and third sectors in Perth and Kinross continue to discharge their individual and collective responsibility for children's services, in particular, child protection services, through the Perth and Kinross Children, Young People and Families Partnership (CYPFP).

The partnership continues to provide the CPC with strong leadership and direction. At its quarterly meetings, the partnership continues to scrutinise the quality assurance, self-evaluation and improvement planning work of the CPC and receives regular progress reports and updates on national and local child protection policy and practice developments. It also continues its thematic approach in relation to data; albeit key child protection performance indicators are included in all data reports.



## **Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC)**

[Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee \(CPC\)](#) is the local multi-agency child protection partnership; compliant to [national standards](#); strongly committed to building an active child protection community and securing a culture where the care and protection of children and young people is at the heart of *everyone's job*.

The CPC drives forward a strong focus on *continuous improvement*; *public information and communication*; *strategic planning and connections* and *annual reporting on the work of the CPC*.

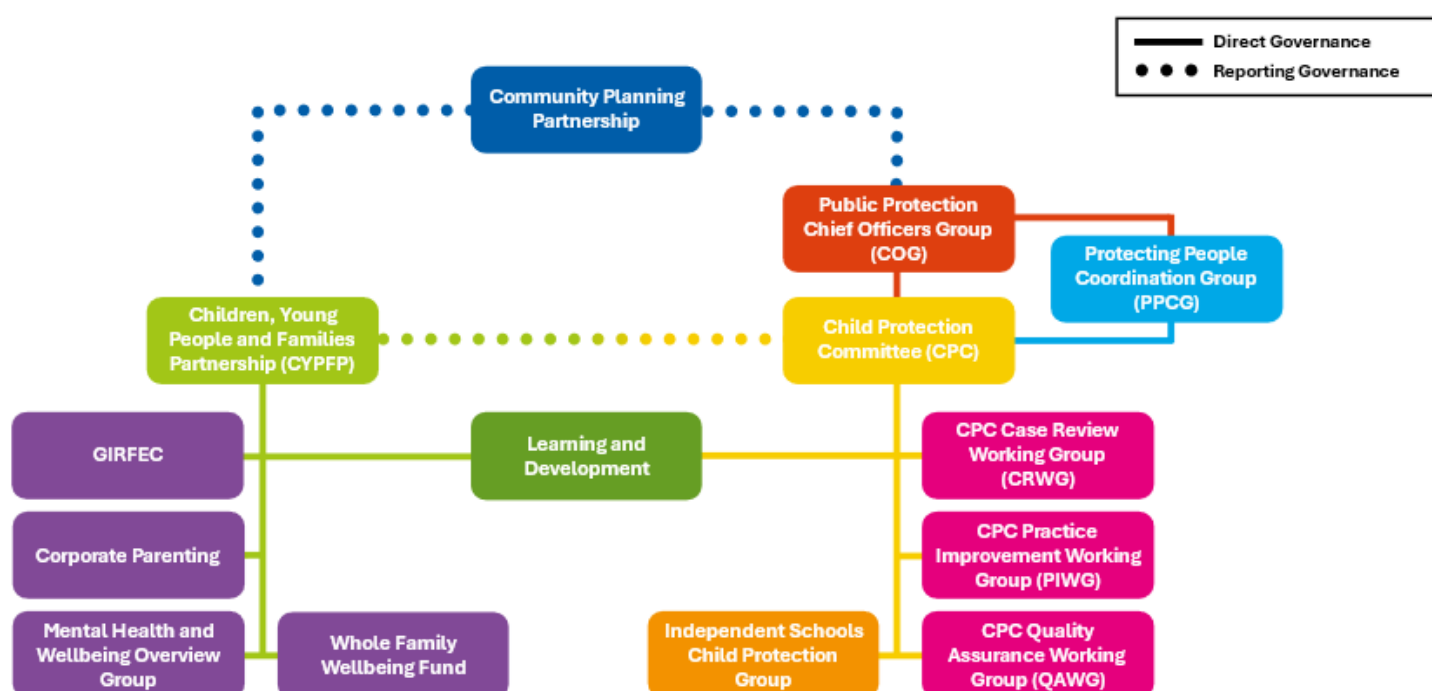
[Membership of the CPC](#) remains intentionally wide and kept under constant review; to ensure it accurately reflects the local children's services landscape across the public, private and third sectors. This allows the CPC to take a whole-community approach to raising awareness of the key risks to children and young people.

The CPC continues to nurture positive working relationships through a culture of mutual respect and understanding; involvement; participation; openness; transparency; support and challenge.

The CPC meets six times per annum; all meetings are [minuted](#) and published on the public-facing [Website](#).

Much of the CPC's work is taken forward via the [CPC Practice Improvement Working Group \(PIWG\)](#); the [CPC Case Review Working Group \(CRWG\)](#) and the [CPC Quality Assurance Working Group \(QAWG\)](#).

The diagram below shows these groups within the governance structure for the CPC



## CPC Annual Development Session 2024

In April 2024, the CPC held an in-person development session. The event took place at 2 High Street, Perth and a total of 20 (76%) out of a possible 26 CPC members (which included both attending and corresponding CPC members) attended this reflective event.

The theme for the session was on change and considering a public protection approach. Bill Atkinson, Independent Chair, set the scene by explaining that the CPC had been through several significant changes in the preceding year. There had been a change of personnel with the retirements of Ross Drummond, Child Protection Interagency Coordinator, and Hazel Robertson, Head of Services for Children, Young People and Families. Members of the committee had changed, and new members were welcomed. The session provided an opportunity for members to discuss continuity and the opportunity for innovation.

Grace Gilling, Associate Nurse Director, NHS Tayside, provided an input on Public Protection and committee members spend time discussing how the CPC could work more closely with its public protection partners going forward. Committee members were clear that it is important in 2024/2025 that the CPC raise its profile locally and focuses on engagement with communities, including children and young people.

A report was collated on the discussions from the day which has been which has been developed into a plan, presented to the CPC in June 2024. This will remain under discussion at the CPC meetings throughout the year.



## Central and North Scotland CPC Consortium

The Independent Chair of the CPC first established this Consortium back in 2009 and currently leads this Consortium, which has continued to expand.

Membership of the Consortium now includes the CPC Chairs and CPC Lead Officers of Aberdeen City; Aberdeenshire; Angus; Clackmannanshire; Dundee City; Falkirk; Fife; Highland; Perth & Kinross; Moray; Orkney Islands; Shetland Islands; Stirling and the Western Isles Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) areas.

The Consortium continues to meet 4 times per annum with meetings being held virtually, to accommodate all geographical partners.

Throughout 2023/2024, members have continued to share and exchange learning and good practice in child protection and invited key speakers and members to provide inputs and presentations on developing child protection policy and practice developments. The theme of interest has been Contextual Safeguarding and how different CPCs are progressing this approach in their areas.

## What is our capacity for improvement?

Perth and Kinross CPC is committed to continuous improvement through quality assurance, self-evaluation and continually strives for excellence. The CPC is a listening and learning CPC.

***We know how good we are now; how good we can be and our capacity for improvement remains very strong.***

Throughout 2023/2024, the CPC, working in partnership with its subgroups, the [CPC Practice Improvement Working Group \(PIWG\)](#); the [CPC Case Review Working Group \(CRWG\)](#); the [CPC Quality Assurance Working Group \(QAWG\)](#) and with the Perth and Kinross PPCG, has continued to make progress in implementing practice improvements and change.

In April 2023, the CPC developed a new and ambitious [CPC Improvement Plan 2023 – 2026](#). This Plan incorporated the various national and local drivers, including existing and emerging legislative and policy changes. It also takes cognisance of previous and existing improvement planning frameworks, existing and emerging scrutiny and inspection frameworks. It also takes cognisance of recent local quality assurance, self-evaluation and review activities and from the learning identified from Learning Reviews. Considerable progress has been made towards the stated goals of this plan which is updated regularly.

We also recognise that the [CPC Improvement Plan 2023 – 2026](#), is only one part of a much wider service and agency improvement planning framework; with similar ambitious improvement plans being progressed within and across our partner services, agencies and other public protection partnerships – all aimed at providing better outcomes for unborn babies, babies, children, young people and their families.

## Our Plan:



## CPC Improvement Plan 2023 – 2026

Three-year plan  
Agreed statement of intent  
Joint commitment to delivering

Ambitious and comprehensive  
Outcome-focused/ KPIs/ evidence of impact  
Schedule of ongoing CPC Actions/ Tasks



### Actions are designed to:-

- keep children and young people safe
- protect them from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation
- deliver better outcomes for children, young people and their families



### Plan includes:-

- Strategic Lead for each Action/Task
- Partnership working
- Staff learning and development opportunities
- Quality assurance processes
- Policy and practice improvements

## Conclusion / Looking Forward

As this report has demonstrated, the CPC is committed to continuous improvement. Whilst there is room to be assured about the current level of service provided to unborn babies, babies, children, young people and their families, there is no room for complacency. To that end, the CPC will be developing a three-year self-evaluation strategy and audit plan to ensure that progress is tracked, and we continue to keep improving the service we deliver to our communities.

There have been a range of changes in legislation and guidance over the last year and with the Children's Care and Justice (Scotland) Act 2024 making significant changes to the Children's Hearing and Justice system for those under 18, it is important that the CPC ensures that its improvement plan reflects these important developments. To do this, the CPC will be refreshing and refocusing its improvement plan in late 2024.

Finally, the CPC will be working closely with its public protection partners in Perth and Kinross - the Violence Against Women Partnership, Community Safety, Adult Protection Committee, Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) and Suicide Prevention – to ensure our already strong relationships are developed into workstreams on the cross-cutting themes that we share to further improve the service that we deliver to unborn babies, babies, children and young people, their families and the community.

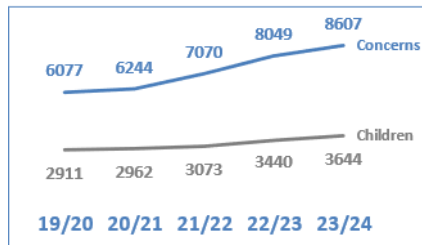
Thank you for your time in reading this report and for your interest in keeping our unborn babies, babies, children and young people safe and protected. If you would like to make contact with the Child Protection Committee to share suggestions for provide feedback on this report, please email us at: [childprotectioncommittee@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:childprotectioncommittee@pkc.gov.uk).

## Key Abbreviations & Acronyms Used

ADP	Alcohol and Drug Partnership
APC	Adult Protection Committee
CCR	Child Concern Report
COG	Chief Officers' Group
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CPIC	Child Protection Inter-agency Coordinator
CPPM	Child Protection Planning Meeting (Previously Child Protection Case Conference)
CPO	Child Protection Order
CPP	Community Planning Partnership
CPR	Child Protection Register
CRWG	Case Review Working Group
CSO	Compulsory Supervision Order
CSWO	Chief Social Work Officer
CYPFP	Children, Young People and Families Partnership
CYRO	Children and Youth Rights Officer
EASYc	Educational Attainment Service for Young Carers
ECS	Education and Children's Services
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
GIRFEC	Getting it Right for Every Child
GLOW	Scottish Schools National Internet
IAPK	Independent Advocacy Perth & Kinross
ICPPM	Initial Child Protection Planning Meeting
IRDs	Inter-Agency Referral Discussion
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MAAPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MSYP	Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament
NHS	National Health Service (Tayside)
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
QAWG	Quality Assurance Working Group
P&K	Perth and Kinross
PIWG	Practice Improvement Working Group
PECR	Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations
PG5	Priority Group 5
PKAVS	Perth and Kinross Association of Voluntary Service
PKC	Perth and Kinross Council
RASAC PK	Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre Perth and Kinross
RRSA	Rights Respecting School Award
SCRA	Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMARTer	Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Realistic and Time-Limited
TRIC	Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative
UBB	Unborn Baby
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
YCC	Young Carers Champion
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

## Appendix 1 – Performance Management Graphs and Additional Details

**Figure 1: Child Concern Reports (CCRs) <sup>2 3</sup>**



The total number of Child Concern Reports (CCRs) shows a continued increase over the last five years, with an increase of 558 (7%) CCRs this year; whilst the number of children and young people subject to a CCR has also risen 6%. Many of these CCRs relate to concerns which are both multiple and complex in their nature.

CCRs can relate to the same child or young person, particularly where there are multiple or repeated concerns about the same child or young person. CCRs are all subject to multi-agency screening arrangements and shared proportionately with key partners. Within police and social

work services, escalation and trigger mechanisms are in place to monitor and review multiple and / or recurring CCRs.

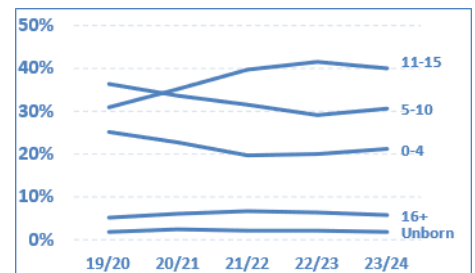
Following multi-agency screening arrangements there are several possible outcomes. Where the child or young person is known to social work and / or an open case to social work, the CCR is shared with the Lead Professional (almost always the Social Worker) for further investigation, assessment and follow-up; or for single or multi-agency assessment and support; or referral to The Reporter (Scottish Children's Reporter Administration – SCRA) for compulsory measures of care; or referral to a Third Sector organisation for help and support.

CCRs which are clearly of a child protection nature and / or which after multi-agency screening indicate the need for a child protection investigation are immediately fast-tracked, without delay, for an Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD).

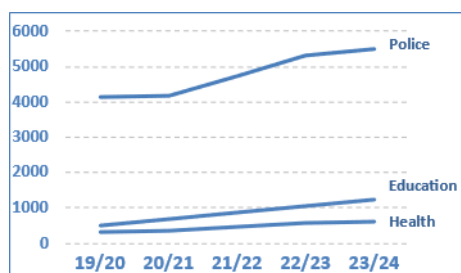
**Figure 2: Child Concern Reports by Age**

The proportion of children and young people with a CCR in most age groups has remained relatively steady; with the number in the 5-10 and 11-15 age groups remaining the largest groups.

There has been a slight increase in the younger age groups of 0-4 and 5-10, with a slight decrease in the proportion of children and young people in the 11-15 age group.



**Figure 3: Child Concern Reports by Source**



The main source of CCRs continues to be Police Scotland, followed by Education Services and Health Services. Overall, these three source groups account for over 85% of all CCRs submitted.

The number of CCRs submitted by Police Scotland has been continually increasing over the last 5 years. Any Police Officer can raise a CCR and these are coordinated and quality assured, prior to sharing, by Police Scotland's Tayside Division's Risk and Concern Hub.

<sup>2</sup> Note: A Child Concern Report (CCR) is a mechanism by which any practitioner or manager across the public, private or third sector, or indeed, any member of the public, can raise any worry or concern they may have about a child or young person's health and / or wellbeing.

<sup>3</sup> Note: Figures are accurate as at 31 July 2024, however, they may be updated in subsequent reporting periods due to retrospective data validation and quality assurance processes.

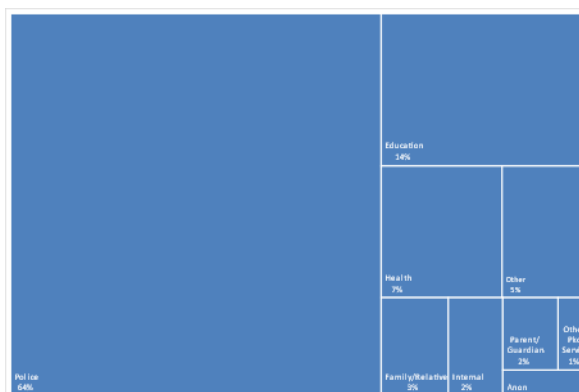


**Figure 3a: Child Concern Reports by Source – 2023/24**

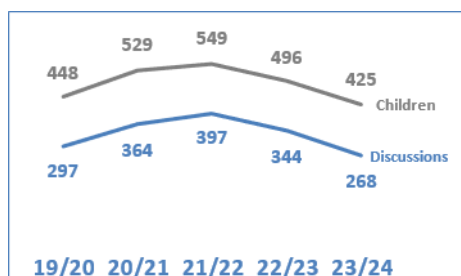
The originating source of all CCRs continues to be monitored by the CPC. This TreeMap diagram shows the % of CCRs from Police Scotland, Education Services (increasing) and Health Services during the last year, which account for over 85% of all CCRs submitted.

CCRs relate to a wide range of child welfare, childcare and protection concerns and are all subject to multi-agency screening, initial assessment and decision-making arrangements.

Overall, 31% of all CCRs relate to the Trio of Risks (Domestic Abuse 23%; Parental Ill-Health 6%; Problematic Alcohol and Drug Use 2%).



**Figure 4: Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) <sup>4</sup>**



The number of children and young people subject to Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) has fallen again this year, and the number of IRD discussions taking place (which may involve more than one child or young person) shows similar trend.

Following an IRD there are several possible outcomes; including the need for a joint child protection investigation (social work and police); a joint investigative interview (social work and police); a medical examination; referral to SCRA; further emergency legal measures and orders; or a single service or agency intervention and support.

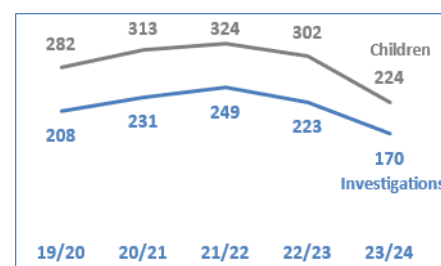
IRDs are recognised as good multi-agency child protection working practice and may be repeated several times for the same child or young person. Locally, a significant amount of improvement work has taken place in relation to IRDs and will continue to take place, to ensure our IRDs are robust, and our interim safety planning is effective. This is a positive and improving practice position and brings partner agencies together more quickly for key discussions and decision-making.

Our established approach to IRDs is in keeping with the shift expected and with the good practice outlined in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 (Scottish Government: 2 September 2021).

**Figure 5: Child Protection Investigations <sup>5 6</sup>**

The number of Child Protection Investigations and the number of children and young people subject to an investigation has again this year, in line with the trend for IRDs.

These are joint investigations between social work and police, decided upon and agreed at the IRD stage and carried out by specially trained joint investigative interviewers who are trauma aware.

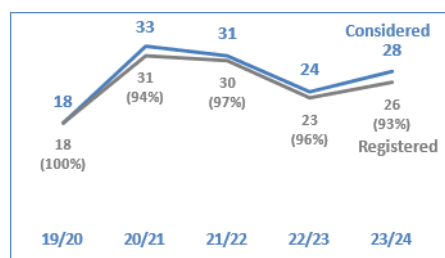


<sup>4</sup> Note: An IRD is a discussion between practitioners, services or agencies, where a child concern report and / or multi-agency screening arrangements have determined that a child or young person is in need of care and protection from harm, abuse or neglect; or there is a likelihood or risk of significant harm, abuse or neglect.

<sup>5</sup> Note: A Child Protection Investigation is carried out jointly by specially trained police officers and social workers. Such investigations are carried out where a Child Concern Report, including an Unborn Baby Referral, indicates that a child or young person is in need of care and protection from harm, abuse or neglect; or there is a likelihood or risk of significant harm, abuse or neglect.

<sup>6</sup> Note: Extracts from P&K CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection Guidelines 2017 – Being refreshed in line with the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021.

**Figure 6a: Pre-Birth Child Protection Planning Meetings (Pre-Birth CPPMs)**



Of the 132 unborn baby referrals (see Figure 15) received this year, after multi-agency screening and assessment, 28 unborn babies were the subject of a multi-agency Pre-Birth CPPM.

At the Pre-Birth CPPM, 26 (93%) out of the 28 unborn babies considered were registered on the Child Protection Register (CPR). All unborn babies registered on the CPR are subject to a multi-agency Child Protection Plan. These cases tend to be complex, and have multi-faceted areas of concern, vulnerability and needs.

This continued high level of pre-birth registrations has also significantly

changed the age profile of those placed on the CPR. Overall, unborn babies and young children under 5 now make up the majority of those currently registered on the CPR.

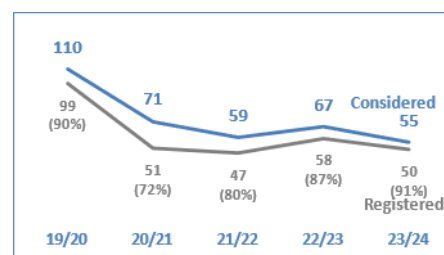
The remaining unborn baby referrals, which did not proceed to a Pre-Birth CPPM, all received a variety of other supportive interventions and responses, having been screened at the Unborn Baby Multi-Agency Screening Group (UBB MASG), i.e. single service or agency support; multi-agency support; the pregnancy did not continue, or the mother moved out with the local authority area, with information being shared proportionately with the new local authority area.

**Figure 6b: Initial Child Protection Planning Meetings (Initial CPPMs)**

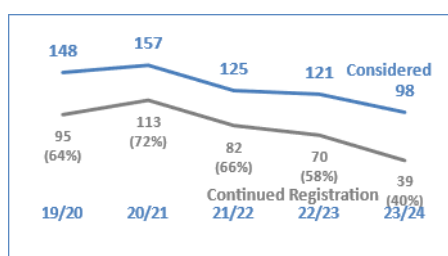
Despite the increasing numbers of CCRs, the number of children and young people being considered at a multi-agency Initial Child Protection Planning Meetings (Initial CPPMs) has remained relatively steady over the last four years.

This indicates that alternative single and / or multi-agency supports had effectively been put in place at a much earlier stage in the child protection process. Multi-agency Child or Young Person's Plans, which have been agreed early; provide much needed supports and help build positive relationships with the family; are coordinated by a Lead Professional (Social Worker). In many cases, this has negated the need for an Initial CPPM, having effectively reduced risks.

Of the 55 children and young people being considered at an Initial CPPM, 50 (91%) had their names registered on the Child Protection Register (CPR). All were the subject of a multi-agency Child Protection Plan, coordinated by a Lead Professional (Social Worker). Those children and young people not registered on the CPR will also have benefited from ongoing support via a Child or Young Person's Plan, again coordinated by a Lead Professional (Social Worker).



**Figure 7: Review Child Protection Case Conferences (Review CPPMs)**



Multi-Agency Review CPPMs reconsider the decision to place and retain a child or young person's name on the CPR.

These child protection meetings take place within standard timescales to monitor changes in circumstances and progress made to reduce and eliminate risk. Where sufficient progress has been made, the Review CPPM can decide to remove (de-register) an unborn baby, child or young person from the CPR. This is always a multi-agency decision.

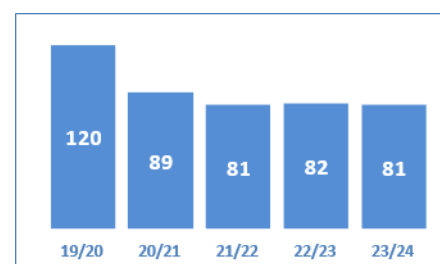
The number of children and young people considered at a multi-agency Review CPPM shows a general downward trend over the last four

years, as does the proportion of continued registrations.

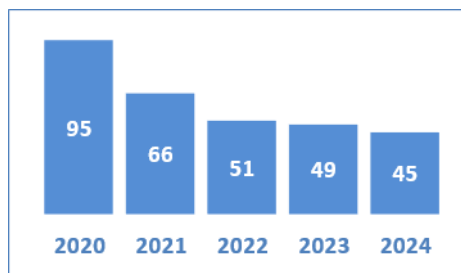
**Figure 8: New Registrations on the Child Protection Register (CPR)**

The number of new registrations on the Child Protection Register (CPR) has remained steady this year. This is closely related to the relatively similar numbers of Initial CPPMs taking place. The number of children and young people placed (new registrations) on the CPR has been decreasing for the last four years, following a sharp increase in 2018/19. This reduction since 2018/19 is a consequence of a significant investment made to secure consistent Chairing of CPPMs and increasing use of Child and Young Person's Plans at a much earlier stage; thus, reducing the need to go to CPPM and CPR Registrations.

New registrations include unborn babies and registrations following a Child Protection Planning Meeting. These figures routinely include large family sibling groups of 5 and more. As previously described, this year the age profile of those placed on the CPR has significantly changed. Unborn babies and younger children currently make up the majority of those now placed (registered) on the CPR.



**Figure 9: Children on the Child Protection Register as at 31 July 2024**



from a relatively high figure of 97 in 2020 (COVID-19 related).

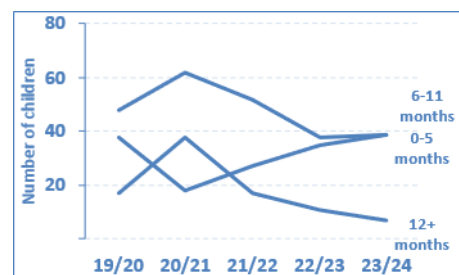
Following the previously described factors, which have resulted in a levelling off in the number of Initial CPPM and registrations taking place, this year there has been a continuing reduction in the number of children and young people's names on the CPR at 31 July 2024. This reduction is also a consequence of the significant investment made to secure consistent Chairing of CPPMs and increasing use of Child and Young People's Plans at a much earlier stage; thus, reducing the need to go to CPPM and CPR Registrations. The number of children and young people, whose names were on the CPR at 31 July 2024 has decreased to the lowest level since 2013,

**Figure 10: Length of Registration**

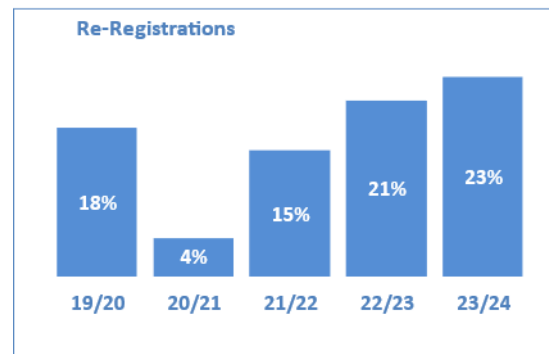
Most CPR registrations last less than a year, and the number of children and young people who remain on the CPR for 12 months or more remains low following an increase in 2020/21. Many of these children and young people have multiple and / or complex needs which require coordinated support.

The number of children and young people whose names are included on the CPR for a period of less than 5 months can demonstrate that decisions are being made on the evidence of sustained progress and a greater likelihood that the changes made will lead to positive longer-term outcomes.

The CPC closely monitors registration rates and in particular de-registrations, re-registrations and length of time children and young people remain on the CPR as part of its quality assurance work.



**Figure 11: Re-Registrations**



The number of children and young people that are re-registered (placed) on the CPR, having been previously removed from the CPR, has returned to previous levels, following a sharp decrease in 2020/21.

Most of these children and young people had last been removed (de-registered) from the CPR more than two years previously, following a multi-agency robust assessment and review meeting agreement.

Re-Registrations take place where the previous improvements in the child or young person's circumstances have not been sustained and the risk of significant harm has returned.

### Areas of Concern <sup>7</sup>

Whilst recognising that the number of new registrations on the CPR has continued to decrease over the last two years; the number of children and young people whose names are included on the CPR and who are affected by parental mental ill-health, domestic abuse, problematic parental drug and / or alcohol misuse (sometimes referred to as the trio of risk) remains significant, and in many such cases, there is an element of parental non-engagement. We continue to recognise that in the majority, if not all these cases, there will be an element of emotional abuse and neglect. The CPC continues to monitor these trends closely and concerns relating to neglect and poverty.

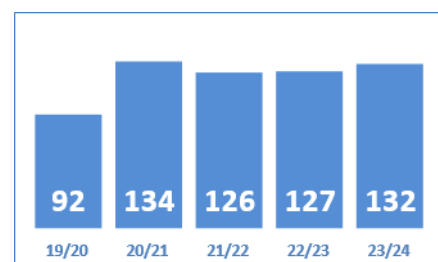
<sup>7</sup> Note: Areas of Concern are the registration categories for placing a child or young person's name on the CPR and these have been specified by Scottish Government. Children and young people can have more than one area of concern recorded. These are decided upon at the multi-agency CPCC and recorded by the Chair, after the CPCC has been concluded.

**Figure 12: Unborn Baby Referrals <sup>8</sup>**

The number of Unborn Baby referrals received this year has remained relatively steady following a significant increase in 2020/21. By far the majority of Unborn Baby referrals continue to come from NHS Tayside; albeit any practitioner, service or agency can raise such a referral. The number of Unborn Baby referrals, when measured against the number of women booking for pregnancy care, equates to around 11.5%, which remains similar to previous years.

The areas of Unborn Baby vulnerability continue to be similar to the areas of concern for registration on the CPR, in particular those relating to the trio of risk.

The impact on our multi-agency screening and assessment processes for these referrals remains very challenging and resource intensive and the level of child protection activity in relation to vulnerable pregnant women and unborn babies remains high (see Figure 6a).



**Figure 13: Joint Investigative Interviews (JIIs)**

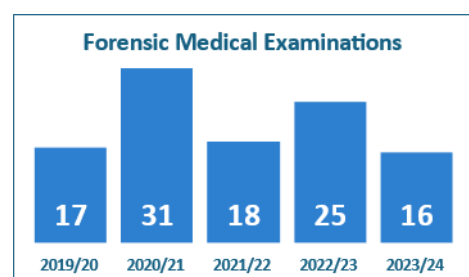


Following an IRD and the decision that a joint police and social work child protection investigation is necessary, consideration will be given to the need for a Joint Investigative Interview (JII); carried out jointly by fully trained, trauma informed police and social work interviewers. The number of children and young people who have had a JII carried out has fallen again compared to last year which was the highest level in recent years. This is in keeping with the numbers of IRDs and child protection investigations and this remains a key component part of our child protection services.

**Figure 14: Joint Paediatric / Forensic Medical Examinations (JPFME)**

Following an IRD and the decision that a joint police and social work child protection investigation is necessary, depending on the nature of the concern, consideration may also be given to the need for a JPFME.

The number of children and young people who have had a JPFME carried out shows considerable variation from year to year.



<sup>8</sup> Note: Currently an Unborn Baby Referral is a mechanism by which any practitioner or manager across the public, private or third sectors, can raise any worry or concern they may have about an unborn baby's health and / or wellbeing; or in relation to whether or not that baby will be safe and / or in need of care and protection, pre-birth and / or after birth.