

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2015

Report by Director of Education

PARENTING STRATEGY ANNUAL REVIEW

**PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW**

1. To update members on the progress of the implementation of the Parenting Strategy. The report outlines approaches taken to ensure that East Renfrewshire children and young people grow up in nurturing homes and communities where adults in their lives have a clear understanding of their needs and how to support these.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. Elected members are asked to note the contents and approve next steps as outlined in the paper.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Members will recall that Committee approved the Parenting Strategy in January 2013; a key strategy in the Council's prevention and early intervention agenda. The strategy outlines how integrated services endeavour to build on the unique position of parents to shape their child's future and support them to develop the knowledge and skills required for a successful life as an adult.

4. The Parenting Strategy naturally complements the ambition of the Early Years Collaborative and focuses all services on East Renfrewshire Council's Single Outcome Agreement 1: All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure start to their lives and are supported to succeed. Through the introduction of the model for improvement, services are working together to look at service redesign and to make changes to how we deliver for children and families.

5. Supported by funding from the Scottish Government's Early Years Task Force, a Family Centre Development Manager has been in post since July 2013, with the responsibility to drive and support the implementation of the authority's Parenting Strategy.

6. The Parenting Strategy has 4 clear objectives:

- Children and young people in East Renfrewshire grow up in nurturing homes where families have formed positive, loving and lasting relationships;
- Children and young people in East Renfrewshire grow up in nurturing communities that are vibrant, flourishing and child-centred;
- Children and young people in East Renfrewshire are raised by parents who are well informed about parenting and make effective use of the wide range of information, advice and support about parenting available locally; and
- Parents are supported by a highly skilled and confident workforce.

7. The Early Years Framework (2009) calls for transformational change through a coherent national agenda but offers flexibility for local partners and services to take decisions in the best interests of the community that they serve. Significantly, the framework sees a paradigm shift in policy towards encouraging parents, families and communities to take responsibility for improving their own life chances and that of their children, a tenet which is echoed in the Christie report and in the commissioned paper by Prof. Susan Deacon, *Joining the Dots* (2011).

8. The *National Parenting Strategy Making a positive difference to children and young people through parenting* was published by the Scottish Government in October 2012. It guides Community Planning Partnerships and suggests practical steps to realise the Government's aspiration for Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow up.

9. This national aim is also reflected in East Renfrewshire's Single Outcome Agreement SOA 1: All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure start to their lives and are supported to succeed.

## **REPORT**

10. This report gives a summary of the steps taken to implement East Renfrewshire's Parenting Strategy and its impact on children, families and staff.

11. An evidence based programme 'Family Nurse Partnership' has been introduced to support teenage first time mothers and fathers. This approach draws upon research of human ecology, attachment and self-efficacy, and is instrumental in improving birth related health outcomes. In turn, this should lead to better child health and development and greater economic self-sufficiency for families. To date four notifications have been received.

12. 'Enjoy Your Baby' and Mellow Bumps, attachment based programmes, have been piloted to support expectant mothers and fathers. As a result parents have a greater understanding of the importance of nurturing relationships, and have developed their resilience to manage stressful situations. Partners from Education, Social Work and Health will jointly deliver these, thus ensuring a clear, consistent and comprehensive ante-natal parenting programme is in place in East Renfrewshire.

13. A parenting programme for S4 secondary pupils is currently being tested in Eastwood High School. The purpose of the programme is to highlight to young people the skills and knowledge required to become a successful parent. Using the Early Years Collaborative model for improvement, Plan, Do Study, Act (PDSA), the test is supported by a range of professionals within East Renfrewshire.

14. 'Let's Play' is a robust programme designed to increase the awareness of parents and families in the importance of play in children's lives. The programme is strength based and encourages services to provide opportunities for families to engage in play experiences with their children during evenings, weekends and school holiday periods. The first phase targeted the families from the community of Neilston. Data gathered at the end of the first phase evidenced the increase in parents' knowledge of the importance of spending time with their children with little or no cost, and a reduction in stress at holiday times.

15. Through NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's 'Healthy Mums, Healthy Babies' programme, the CHCP Health Improvement Team has been using the model for improvement to test the impact around smoking, alcohol and breastfeeding in pregnancy. In collaboration with the National Childbirth Trust, a Baby Café in the community of

Auchenback has been created to increase and promote breastfeeding. Working alongside the health visiting team they have identified mothers in the community of Barrhead to form a breastfeeding peer support group, members of which will be on hand to assist and provide guidance to all mothers who attend.

16. There has been an increase in the number of parent and child social groups across identified areas of East Renfrewshire. Community engagement staff have worked alongside the groups to ensure that there is a focus on the quality of provision, as well as supporting in the practical steps of running such a group, including creating constitutions.

17. One example of this is the new Man and Toddler group which has been formed in Barrhead where local dads/carers have been supported to set up a male parent and toddler group; to date the registration is 10 fathers and 16 children. Members of the newly formed group have shown interest in other community events and are participating in a midweek walking parent and toddler group in the Auchenback area.

18. Parents from across the whole of Barrhead are involved with one parent stating that, "I want to give something back to my community as some services have been instrumental in getting me and my children's lives back together."

19. 81% of early years establishments have achieved Bronze Family Friendly accreditation with the remaining 19% expected to achieve by June 2015. Our Family Friendly programme was highlighted as having a positive impact on children and their parents in the recent joint inspection of services for children and young people in East Renfrewshire.

20. As part of the Early Years Collaborative a Parenting Key Change Group has been established to oversee all aspects of parenting across East Renfrewshire Council. Partners from Health, Social Work and Education meet on a regular basis to discuss parenting programmes and to ensure that there is no duplication and that a consistent message is provided by all services. The model of improvement is being used to ensure that any interventions with parents are measured, improvements made and followed up. This commitment was recognised by the Care Inspectorate during their recent joint inspection.

21. In May 2014 East Renfrewshire's Corporate Communications Team highlighted the success of two male Child Development Officers who were the first to complete the childcare apprenticeship within the council. Several articles were printed with the aim to encourage more males into the profession. These articles are displayed throughout nurseries within the council with the aim of providing positive role models for fathers and young boys.

### **Next Steps**

22. Continue to work alongside all departments within the Council to ensure parenting programmes have a consistent message, draw upon the expertise and the range of skills available across all services and are delivered by the most appropriate services.

23. Introduce 'Let's Play' to the community of Dunterlie, while expanding the number of services offering parent and child play experiences.

24. Continue to support, encourage and provide necessary training and support to volunteers from the community to enable them to facilitate parenting programmes and groups.

25. With the support of Human Resources and the Corporate Communications Team, promote the importance of a work life balance to maximise employees' time for parenting.

26. Through the work of the Early Years Collaborative, continue to proactively support the communities with new parent - child social groups across East Renfrewshire.
27. Encourage and support all pre-five establishments to continue to participate in the Family Friendly accreditation process at Silver level.
28. Extend Family Friendly accreditation to other departments within the council.
29. Support parents with children who have additional support needs by providing a wider array of networks at an early stage.
30. Work alongside 'Family First Workers' to ensure that information and practical support for families is easier to access, while building a culture based upon the positive aspects of seeking help.
31. Create a 'parenting hub' on the GIRFEC website to ensure families are kept up to date with current parenting information and initiatives.
32. Create a database on the delivery of Triple P level 4 programme delivered across East Renfrewshire.
33. Introduce evaluation systems for Triple P multi-agency forums to generate robust evidence and identify need for change.

## **PARTNERSHIP**

34. The Council's Parenting Strategy has led to greater communication and collaboration across services, including third sector organisations, utilising existing strengths and ensuring joined up working.

## **FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS**

35. Full implementation of the Council's Parenting Strategy will lead to less duplication and more efficient use of resources across all Council departments.
36. The Early Years Change Fund will support any financial costs linked to changes to service delivery and approach.
37. Any other financial and efficiency matters related to the Parenting Strategy will be met from individual department's devolved budgets.

## **CONCLUSION**

38. The implementation of the Council's Parenting Strategy is having a measurable impact on children, their families and many staff in East Renfrewshire. Confirmation of this is stated in the recent Care Inspectorate report of the joint inspection on Services for children and young people in East Renfrewshire (September 2014). Particular strengths included, '*There is exceptionally effective parenting support available to all families in the area which is successfully targeting more vulnerable families. This helps parents meet their children's needs and promote wellbeing.*'

39. As outlined in the report, further steps will be taken to ensure that full implementation of the strategy leads to sustainable change, which benefits children, young people and their families, staff and partners in East Renfrewshire.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

40. Elected members are asked to note the contents and approve next steps as outlined in the paper.

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