

Report

Report to:	Social Work Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	10 November 2021
Report by:	Director, Health and Social Care

Subject:	Family Centre Provision
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ to provide the Committee with details of the work undertaken by Family Centres

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the content of the report is noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the national framework to improving the wellbeing of children and young people. It advocates preventative work and early intervention to support children, young people and their families with statutory and third sector partners working together in the best interests of the child.
- 3.2. The Scottish Government recognises the need for early intervention approaches to build the capacity of individuals, families and communities to secure the best outcomes for themselves; creating a shift from intervening when a crisis happens towards prevention, building resilience and providing the right level of support before problems arise.
- 3.3. The Early Intervention Foundation notes 'addressing a child or family's needs early on can reduce risk factors and increase protective factors in a child's life'.
- 3.4. In South Lanarkshire, Social Work Resources have two Family Centres, one in Cambuslang and the other in Burnbank (Hamilton) which are central to our early intervention response based on the GIRFEC Framework.

4. The Role of Family Centres

- 4.1. Family Centres work to divert children and families away from statutory measures of intervention and reduce the number of child protection referrals by offering early effective support to parent(s) and children, through intensive family support.
- 4.2. The Cambuslang and Burnbank Family Centres are purpose built and offer a caring and nurturing environment for parent(s) and children where family support is offered. In addition, facilities within the Family Centres can be used in Parenting Capacity Assessment such as parent(s) ability to prepare/cook meals.

- 4.3. Staffing within the Family Centres consist of Team Leader, Social Workers and Family Support Workers and Administrative Support. Social Workers and Family Support Workers work with Service Users offering individual support and or groupwork support.
- 4.4. The Family Centres target their intervention to pre-birth cases and children under five. There is also a focus also on young parent(s) aged between of 14 - 18 years.
- 4.5. The Family Centres are not part of Universal Service Provision, but targeted to those most in need. Referrals are taken from Midwives, Health Visitors, Social Work and Education.
- 4.6. Referring issues predominately centre around poverty, alcohol and drug misuse, pregnancy, housing, homelessness, finance, education, mental health, parenting, (learning disabilities) domestic violence, isolation and offending.
- 4.7. The range of work undertaken in the Family Centres ranges from intensive family support which involves addressing issues around parenting for example, implementing routines and putting in boundaries. Other work involves Child Protection, Adoption/Permanence/Looked After and Accommodated (LAAC), Kinship, children involved in the Children's Hearing System and Pre-birth risk assessments.

5. Groupwork Provision

- 5.1. Burnbank and Cambuslang Family Centres deliver a range of groupwork programmes aimed at parent(s) mentioned above.
- 5.2. Groupwork is a methodology for practitioners to help individual clients attain their goals in a group setting. It can be regarded as a problem-solving session to encourage individuals with similar concerns to develop solutions together, as well as to learn from each other's experiences.
- 5.3. The Family Service Centre Code of Social Work Groupwork Practice Guide recognises groupwork can also be instrumental for social change as people come together and mobilise resources to create a more supportive environment for themselves and others.
 - 5.3.1. Our main groupwork programmes offered in the Centres are:
Incredible Years
This is an evidence-based program for parents supported by over 30 years of research. The goal is to prevent and challenge young children's behaviour problems and promote their social, emotional, and academic competence. The program is used worldwide and has been shown to work across cultures and socioeconomic groups. This is an accredited programme which runs for 10 weeks.
 - 5.3.2. Mellow Parenting
A 14-week accredited programme helping parents develop positive relationships with their children. Increases confidence and self-esteem, parent/child bonding. This includes structured parenting workshops.

5.3.3. All about me

This group can help to reduce social isolation, stress/mental health issues, raise self-esteem, confidence and encourages social engagement. This group is aimed mostly at parents that have not experienced groupwork before.

5.3.4. Dad's Group

This group offers an opportunity for dads and male carers to come together and get involved in fun activities and discussions about the challenges and stresses of parenting.

5.3.5. Early Birds/Early Bird plus

This is a 12-week programme for parents and carer of young children 4 - 8 years with an autistic spectrum disorder. The aims of the programme are to inform and empower parents/carers. The sessions will help you to understand your child's autism, improve communication with your child and develop strategies to pre-empt problem behaviours and to help manage those that do occur. Sessions will be held locally on the same day and time each week. Three spaces can be allocated, this allows for two parents/carers and another professional working with the child.

5.3.6. Other groupwork provision delivered at the Family Centres is detailed in Appendix A.

6. Overview

- 6.1. With the delivery of our Groupwork programme our aim is to achieve positive outcomes for the parent(s) and family of those who attend through building self-confidence/esteem resilience and improved parenting, resulting in children remaining at home and being parented safely. Also, to encourage/support parent(s) into employment, further education, voluntary work to develop their skills further.
- 6.2. Our Groupwork programmes also involve linking in with other partners such as Fire Service, Local Community Police, Dietician/Nutritionist, Physiotherapist, Health Visitors/Midwives, Credit Unions Local Community Groups (for example Swaddle, Juniors), Churches, Salvation Army, Women's Aid and local Foodbanks.
- 6.3. Some of our Programmes have a multi-agency approach and are co delivered with health and education staff.
- 6.4. Family Centres are also a resource for and supports contacts between children and their families. Accommodation is appropriate and equipment can be provided to assist in parent/child interaction for the purpose of any assessments.

7. Community Use

- 7.1. Burnbank Family Centre is also used by Child Care in the Community as an After School Facility, supporting parent(s), families in the local community who require this service. This is offered from 3pm - 6pm Monday to Friday during term time and from 8am - 6pm on school holidays (Easter and Summer).

- 7.2. Burnbank Family Centre is also used by Relationship Scotland who run the Contact Centre at the weekends Saturday and Sundays. This is where court orders or arrangements have been put in place via Courts and or Solicitors for children to have contact with their non-resident parent(s) and more recently contact with grandparents. This can be supervised and or supported contact. Relationship Scotland also use this building some evenings during the week offering a counselling for children (Time to Talk), family mediation and Parenting Apart Programme. The work of Relationship Scotland is highly valued by Sheriffs throughout Scotland.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. The Family Centre provision allows for the delivery of Early Intervention and Groupwork programmes, which give us the opportunity to provide a targeted service to the most vulnerable in our Communities as early as possible.
- 8.2. Our provision is in line with the GIRFEC national approach in Scotland to improve outcomes and support the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports children and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them.
- 8.3. Since COVID-19 our Groupwork programme has not been delivered on the scale it would normally have been. The Centres have embraced technology and offered a scaled down Groupwork Programme using Microsoft Teams. The feedback we have received from our Service Users it that they prefer face to face Groupwork.
- 8.4. The Centres are beginning to resume their Groupwork programmes, in keeping with safe systems of work and national guidance

9. Employee Implications

- 9.1. There are no employee implications associated with this report.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

11. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 11.1. There are no implications for climate change in terms of the information contained in this report.
- 11.2. There are no implications for sustainability in terms of the information contained in this report.
- 11.3. There are no implications for the environment in terms of the information contained in this report.

12. Other Implications

- 12.1. There are no additional risk implications associated with this report.
- 12.2. There are no other issues associated with this report.

13. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 13.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy, or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required.
- 13.2. There is also no requirement to undertake any consultation in terms of the information contained in this report.

Soumen Sengupta
Director, Health and Social Care

5 October 2021

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- ◆ focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Get it right for children and young people
- ◆ Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults

Previous References

- ◆ None

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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In addition to this the following groups are also offered:

Happy Baby

Parent(s)/Carer(s) who are socially isolated with a baby up to six months old. Focuses on communication and interaction with your baby, promotes awareness and understanding re language use, behaviour, consequences for development in terms of relationships and learning.

Toddlers at Play/Play & Explore

This group is aimed at vulnerable/socially isolated parents of children aged 6 - 18 months. Learning through play - ball games, dancing, sand and water, drawing, painting, singing, musical instruments.

Birth & Beyond/Mellow Babies

This is a six-week antenatal programme. The programme decreases stress levels in pregnancy. It helps mums to understand that babies are prepared for social interaction from birth and emphasises the importance of early interaction for brain development.

Health issues in the Community

This is an accredited programme working within an integrated framework. Group attendees work with community nutritionists to develop good health diets for their children. Additional to that the programme looks at ways in which mental health can be addressed.

Healthy Eating

This group will offer participants a chance to learn skills that will benefit all the family. These will include healthy cooking on a budget.

Baby Massage

Baby massage is provided in the Family Centres as the local Health Visitors no longer provide this service. Health Visitors steer their patients to the family centre where they engage in a four-week programme. Baby massage is an excellent way for strong attachments to develop. Further to that massage promotes a healthy digestive system ensuring that babies get the right amount of nutrition to help them grow and development.

Bonding with baby

Bonding with Baby is a programme which allows workers to demonstrate how babies learn through play, reading etc. This is a very good programme for the younger parent to engage in. This programme is generally undertaken in the family home.