

Note of meeting: Secure Care Champions Group February 22, 2022

Attendees: Ruby Whitelaw (Chair and notes), Janet Adams (South Lan), Kerry Watson (Cyrenians), Gary Peebles (Kibble), Diane Cafferty (GSC), Louise Morrison (GSC), Kevin Northcott (Rossie), Lesley Mollison (Rossie), Alison Melville (SG), Ashley Gilchrist (Dundee), Leona Donnelly (GSC), Caroline Corcoran (Dundee Ed.), Karen Strain (SG), Lizzie Thomson (CELCIS), Grace Lindsay (ECC), Leah Findlay (Dundee), Angela Boyle (SMK), Jim Shields (SMK), Kerryn Steel (SMK), Ronnie Bruce (Highland).

Apologies: Alison Gough (GCS), Diane Dobbie (South Lan.), Joanne Faulkner (South Lan. Ed), Paul Sullivan (CELCIS), Beth-Anne Logan (STARR), Martin Loughrey (Dum Gal).

Agenda:

1. Introductions
 2. Note from last minute
 3. Experience of using the practice example exemplar
 4. Family involvement
 5. Sharing good practice – Dundee City Council input
 6. The website
 7. Engagement with local authorities and partners so far
 8. Standards focus – 32, 36, 37; 33, 34, 35
 9. Group membership and meeting arrangements
 10. AOB – practitioners forum; update event/report
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1. Meeting opened with new members introducing themselves either in person or via the chat function. Enthusiasm around what the group can offer by way of learning and the sharing of good practice.
 2. Comprehensive note from previous meeting in November 2021 shared prior to the meeting. Note included group discussions around standard implementation, barriers and future plans and activities. Agreement that the note was a good reflection of discussions.
 3. Feedback requested on the proforma shared with the group previously to gather evidence on the impact of the Standards. Rossie advised that they found the exercise really helpful as it allowed them to review what they were doing focusing on the Standards rather than individuals. This was impactful and confirming and they have been able to identify areas for improvement as a result. The Good Shepherd Centre advised that they found the exercise good for reflection and it will allow them to identify where further work is needed. St Mary's Kenmure advised that while there has been a delay in forwarding the practice examples they have focussed on two pieces of work. This was useful as it keeps the attention on the Standards and how they can be further developed.
 4. RW advised that a representative from Cyrenians has joined the group as it was recognised in the previous meeting that family involvement needs more discussion within the Champs group. An updated from the GSC reflected that they have employed a family support worker and this in house provision has had an impact on family's engagement with the Standards. Sharing information about rights has been crucial and ongoing. This will remain on the agenda moving forward.

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5. Representatives from Dundee City Council shared their journey with the Standards. They reviewed instances where secure care was used completing an audit looking at the 44 Standards. They grouped the Standards together and after two or three examples found that they became more familiar with the Standards and the process. They shared the Snap fax developed as part of the Standards work with children and young people as well as a video via a social workers mobile phone when a child was identified as transitioning to secure care. This appeared to help alleviate some anxieties.

The first year of the audit involved three children with a mixture of remand and CHS experiences. This year more children are involved in the audit. They fed back that the Standards worked well. They found that due to Covid-19 restrictions the social worker didn't have much of an impact in the journey initially and there is recognition that there could have been better engagement before secure care but there was a sense that with increased knowledge and understanding social workers are now more comfortable and knowledgeable and things are improving. They identified that greater consistency is needed and reflected that the child's view isn't always clear within their plan, they found that they had to look at multiple meeting minutes etc. to see the child's voice so this is an area for development that they are working on.

Feedback was that during the secure care stay it was difficult to get information from different centres and they seemed to have different reporting mechanisms. They noted that while social workers may not always be asking the right questions, lots of attempts were made but these were not always followed through effectively. So they have started to share the Standards across social work teams, residential services and senior managers.

Learning was evident and by December 2021 it was clear that social workers increased knowledge and understanding of the Standards resulted in children being more informed. There have been lots of good practice that they are building on as well as areas to develop.

A question was asked about why people were not terribly aware of the Standards and what led to the audit. Managers assigned this work as they wanted a benchmark. Thinking about how we could replicate this work across local authorities as it is clear that it is very worthwhile.

Dundee have asked themselves if they should be trying an MRC and additional supportive involvement in every case where secure care is being considered? Should for supportive involvement always be involved as part of the exit strategy? They will review this after this year's audit. Recognition that while most of the young people were known to the adolescent team this was not the case for everyone and they will reflect on what this means.

GSC have incorporated the Standards into key time sessions with young people. Discussion around the potential for them to work with Dundee to develop a system for feedback, it was noted that these sessions are not shared with the social worker although a general update is currently provided. It would be good if this was shared, even if it was at monthly looked after reviews. RW thanked Dundee colleagues for their excellent contribution.

6. RW updated on website usage since November 2021; 998 users, 1252 sessions 2886 page views, 800 UK users, 67 Netherlands, 56 Finland, 32 US, 27 France. The website will be updated with the practice examples provided by three of the secure care centres. Everyone was encouraged to continue to develop this work and share practice examples so that learning can be shared across sites through the website.
7. RW shared two pie charts depicting engagement with CYCJ to date in relation to the Standards. Recognition that these were crude measures and may not reflect what agencies may be doing independently but at the moment 41% of local authorities do not appear to be engaged with the Standards

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work. Most local authorities are engaged to varying degrees with many having undertaken workshops and familiarised themselves with implementing Standards work into their practice. For the 28% who are fully engaged their work has been embedded so significant work has been done including as evidenced by Dundee reviewing of processes, paperwork, procedures and excellent interagency work.

Engagement with other stakeholders is not measured in the same way but there has been no engagement with a number of core and third sector agencies, this is currently sitting at 30%. Most other stakeholders have either attended events or have engaged with CYCJ and have plans to take practice forward.

It is clear from this that much work is needed and this will be a focus for RW moving forward.

8. Standards focus for this session is 32, 36, 37; and 33, 34, 35. The meeting was split into four working groups with the following questions posed:
 - a. How are these standards being evidenced in practice and what has been the impact?
 - b. Have there been any barriers? How have they been overcome?
 - c. Is anyone missing from the process? How can we get them involved?
 - d. What are the next steps? Any other comments?

Group 1 feedback

Standardised reporting system would be beneficial. This would help to capture the voice of children and young people. This could also help increase engagement across all of the LA and organisations. Multi-agency approach – consideration of the correct person to capture the child's voice. Captured for example every four weeks at LAC reviews. This would help to capture and involve families, carers etc. to engage in the Standards. Ensuring we get the right people e.g. who the child considers family. Expectation that reports are correctly balanced to highlight strengths, hopes and opportunities.

Change of language for reporting e.g. strengths and areas of opportunity. Change of language e.g. 'secure unit'. Clear links and continuity before, during and after secure care - education, multi-agency, whole systems approach. Introduction of virtual schools is helpful. Consider the English model of regular PEP reviews in Scotland. SQA qualifications review to be more inclusive for young people who transition between educational establishments, eg. course cut offs. Education, schools etc. have a better understanding of the secure care pathway and standards. Contact education magazine publishers perhaps to get the message out that through journals. Included in SEEMIS or other national database system to support education needs of young people. Collective response to be included.

Group 2 feedback

Discussed wellbeing impact assessment and parallels with the Standards and the Stay Connected programme at GSC. Discussed wellbeing, rights, inclusion, family support and the importance of language.

Discussion around the intensive support being provided by secure centres not being continued when children move on. There is lots of good practice out there and it needs to be shared as often local authorities are placing young people in different communities so they aren't as familiar with the local resources that would promote continuity. This is crucial for exit strategies.

Group 3 feedback

Standards group 2: View from centres is that Standards 33-35 are being met by the centres but work to be done elsewhere. Information sharing between previous education setting and secure care centre is messy/random/not consistent. Centres end up doing their own assessments and putting education plans in

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place. Inconsistency in who is involved and their understanding of what's important when young people make a transition into secure care for their education - some more proactive than others.

Understanding/buy in from 'before' education settings - picture varies in different authorities. What are the next steps? Education Forum - CELCIS to raise 'mainstream' awareness. Other ways to raise awareness in the educational sector about the standards? Target ASN managers of Local Authorities and VSHTs. Q from AM - Is there a need for a rights booklet from the Scottish Children's Rights Officer Network re secure care - or are the Standards resources sufficient?

Group 4 feedback

Discussed CSW letters and two polarised examples they experienced of when this was done very well where there was very good input on rights and the legal process as opposed to one where the language was oppressive. It would be good if work could be done to standardise this approach.

Discussion around educational achievements and the need for broader recognition to be captured, examples around getting through routines, going to school, vocational experiences.

9. Group membership will continue to be built on, if anyone has ideas about who should be added to the group, please get in touch with RW. Spoke about meeting arrangements and agreed that meetings will continue every six weeks and return to hybrid if we can get volunteers to host. The GSC offered to host the next meeting Covid dependent.
10. Advised that the Secure Care Practitioners forum discussed at the previous meeting will begin on the last Thursday of March (March 31, 2pm-3pm online). More information will be contained in the CYCJ ebulletin.
11. RW advised that there will be an update event for the Standards and she would be looking for volunteers with input to both this and the report due Spring/Summer time 2022. This would be an opportunity to showcase everyone's great practice.

Next meeting is Tuesday, April 5 at 10am-11.30am. Venue tbc.