

ANGUS COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 16 FEBRUARY 2021

INFORMATION REPORT ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SECURE BASE MODEL OF CARE

REPORT BY KATHRYN LINDSAY – DIRECTOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND JUSTICE

ABSTRACT

This report provides information to members with regard to the Introduction of the Secure Base Model of Care in the Children, Families and Justice Directorate, albeit that a decision is not required in terms of the current Scheme of Delegation to Officers and the Order of Reference of Committees.

1. BACKGROUND

Angus Council, at a special meeting on 19 November 2013 took a number of decisions which changed the way the Council conducted its committee business. Fundamental to this was the streamlining of processes with a focus on key strategy and policy matters.

One element of this was the production of “Information Reports”. These information reports summarise information that would in the past have gone to a council committee for “noting”.

The information schedules are in accordance with that principle.

2. SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION – SCHEDULES

The Resources Service of the Children, Families and Justice Directorate is responsible for all residential provision and carers support services including fostering, adoption and kinship care functions. Our primary aim is to ensure that all our looked after and accommodated children get the best care possible to meet their needs, address past trauma, abuse and neglect and improve their outcomes and opportunities. To enhance the skills of our carers and staff, and promote a consistent approach across the service, we are introducing the Secure Base Model of Care.

We understand that children of all ages need to feel secure in their relationships with the adults who look after them. A sense of security is key to any successful placement for a child, whether this is family-based care or in a residential setting. This sense of security, or a secure base, is created through a loving relationship with care givers who offer a child sensitive care and protection but also are a reliable base from which to explore and enjoy their world. A secure base relationship promotes a sense of security, confidence, competence and resilience from which other positive outcomes can be better achieved.

The Secure Base Model is based on key theories and research about child development and family relationships and focuses on attachment and resilience. The aim of the model is to ensure that our settings provide sensitive care giving that develops secure relationships and better equip children to face future challenges successfully and embrace opportunities in life. Resilience is associated with a sense of security, self-esteem and greater capacity to address future challenges, all linked to a secure attachment.

The model can be used to support work with children of all ages and helps staff and carers understand and address behaviours that children may display when they have experienced insecure attachments. There are a range of practical suggestions and supports readily available making it easy to understand and put into practice. The model will be used to inform assessment of staff and carers' capacity to provide a secure base for children who live in their care, support them to do this and provide a framework for assessing and reviewing a child's development and progress.

In terms of financial investment to introduce the model costs have been minimal and staff time has been the main resource used. To upskill Managers/ Team Leaders in the Secure Base Model, some attended training run by AFA (Adoption and Fostering Alliance Scotland) with whom we have an existing professional membership, keeping costs minimal. There is an implementation strategy group which meets regularly and worked to develop the training programme.

Due to the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have implemented a series of virtual training sessions on the model which has now been delivered to all staff in the carers support service and half our residential staff. Secure Base champions have been identified for each team whose key role is to promote the model and bring any issues or queries to the group. The training is in the process of being rolled out to foster carers and kinship carers and to date, it has been well received.

The initial phase of implementation has involved introducing the model in professional supervision of staff with the next planned phase involving using the approach routinely in support and supervision sessions with carers. We expect a full rollout of this aspect to be achieved during summer 2021. To embed the model completely in all areas of practice will take up to two years and will require ongoing upskilling of new and existing employees beyond that. In terms of evaluation, we envisage a high level, measurable, outcome to be a reduction in the number of placement terminations and placement breakdowns. The upskilling of staff will help promote consistency of approach to parenting across our provision.

3. REPORT AUTHOR

This report and associated schedules has been compiled by Eunice McLennan, Service Leader, Resources who can be contacted by emailing childrenandlearning@angus.gov.uk if you would like further information.

Please see attached link for more information:

Click [here](#)

List of Appendices: None