



## **Social Work Scotland Children and Families Standing Committee**

### **Manifesto, priorities and support structure**

#### **Social Work Scotland Objectives**

1. Influence and shape legislation and policy relating to social work and social care;
2. Promote the unique role, value and contribution of social work and social care;
3. Champion research and evidence informed approaches in our work;
4. Provide professional leadership and increase leadership capacity across social work and social care;
5. Support and encourage workforce development (with a focus on celebrating success, promoting standards, achieving practice improvement and demonstrating continuous learning)
6. Recognise the value of continuous improvement through self-evaluation and performance improvement activities

#### **Social Work Scotland Children and Families Standing Committee:**

- Are the unique voice for the leadership of children and families social work and social care professions;
- Supports practice which protects the most vulnerable children and families in Scotland and which is led effectively and creatively to achieve social justice and public protection;
- Promotes partnership between children and families, communities, statutory bodies and the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, local government, ministers, academics and other professional bodies; and
- Progresses a cohesive integrated response to improving outcomes for children.

## Manifesto

**Social Work Scotland Children and Families Standing Committee believe that Scotland needs children and families social work and social care professions which are led effectively and creatively to achieve social justice and public protection.**

As the collective voice of the leadership of the social work and care professions supporting children and families:

1. We **will** promote the value of a confident and competent social work and social care workforce; one which recognises the value of **co-production** between professionals and families and their communities, which recognises the **partnership** between statutory and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, and which delivers **local services determined by local need**.

2. We **believe** that social work has a unique role in **advocating** for the most vulnerable children and their families to support them to have their voices heard.

We **will** continue to promote the unique voice of children and families social work leadership; with **relationships** at the heart of our practice, we are uniquely placed to understand the policy direction required to deliver the **best outcomes** for vulnerable children and young people to **strengthen** the role of communities and families.

We **value** each person we support as an individual, **without judgement**.

3. We **believe** that we are the unique voice for the leadership of children and families social work and social care professions and that we are best placed to articulate the experiences of vulnerable children and their families to promote **understanding** and **tolerance** in society.

We **will** continue to **advocate for the financial resources and political support** required in order to turn around the balance of care for children and young people across Scotland; this will ensure that more children are **supported** at home and in their communities wherever safe and possible to do.

We **will** continue to **influence and shape legislation and policy** relating to children and families social work and social care, particularly in helping to tackle poverty, inequality and social injustice.

We **will** continue to articulate the benefits which a single national outcomes framework for children would provide including clear lines of **accountability** and **responsibility** across the whole spectrum of children and families support

4. We **believe** that we have a role in early intervention in partnership with universal services and we have a role in **prevention** practice as well as a statutory role.

We **will** continue to be **responsive** to the needs of the people we support and protect; to be **accessible** and **accountable**; and we **will** promote **coproduction** with communities, families and children wherever possible.

5. We **believe** in the value of research and the promotion of practice informed evidence.

We **will** continue to test current social policy and practice, champion research and evidence informed approaches in social work, **promote innovative responses** and **celebrate excellence**, as we continue to strive for the best possible outcomes for children, young people, and their families.

**Social Work Scotland Children and Families Standing Committee know the following things to be true:**

- **It is our job to promote social justice.** We know that children cannot have the best start in life if they are living in poverty. We will raise poverty issues as part of our responses to draft legislation, draft policy and through all of our messaging. We will lead in engaging national conversations on key inequality issues in order to benefit the most vulnerable children and their families.
- When **we embrace change and encourage collaborative and integrated arrangements** we deliver better outcomes for people.
- When we support and create opportunities for those within, and those supporting the profession of social work, **we develop effective and creative leaders for the future.**
- When **we support and encourage workforce development** we do this with a clear focus on celebrating success, promoting standards, achieving practice improvement and continuous learning.

### **Priorities**

- **Represent the collective voice of children and families social work and social care leadership** in responding to and identifying issues which affect children and families.
- **Promote the unique position and value of social work** with vulnerable children and their families.

- Continue to **highlight the critical importance of early intervention** and prevention practice in order to influence the balance of care across Scotland.
- **Prioritise and collaborate on proactive strategic commissioning of research and awareness raising activity** regarding best evidence and outcomes for children and families.
- **Prioritise and collaborate on proactive work which progresses effective social work practice with children and families**, which identifies and addresses systemic barriers and which supports workforce development.
- **Support the development of effective and creative leadership** across all levels and sectors of children and families social work.

### **Support Structure**

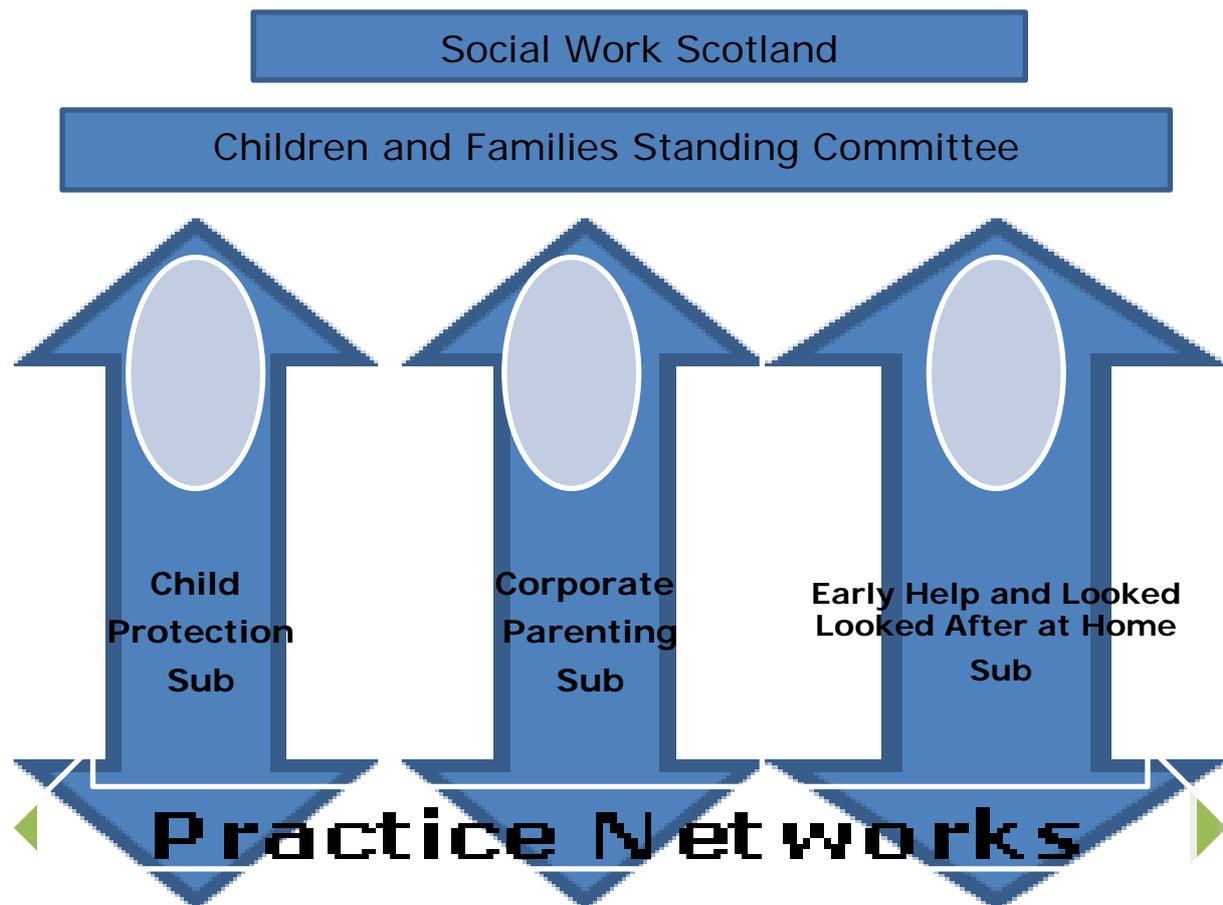
The support structure of the Children and Families Standing Committee endeavours to deliver on behalf of Social Work Scotland overall with respect to children and families issues and promotes information flow **in and out** and **across** each area of the work. This requires discipline in terms of regular reporting to the main Children and Families Standing Committee.

**Sub Groups** and **Practice Networks** have an **information flow** in **and** out of them.

**The Sub Groups** support the work of the Children and Families Standing Committee by taking forward specific pieces of work identified

**The Practice Networks** enables the sharing of practice, networking, and supports the committee feedback loop regarding new and emerging practice issues "on the ground", but can also act as task and finish groups as necessary to support specific work being taken forward in the sub groups, to respond to particular emerging national needs e.g. responses to draft legislation on Adoption.

The structure is as follows:



This model:

- Enables further **responsiveness to issues** – it allows for the drawing of people together quickly to respond to arising issues.
- **Promotes sharing and networking** – staff and leaders require the opportunity to come together to share challenges and opportunities and through this to develop capacity across Scotland.
- **Develops specific practice expertise** – by maintaining some of the work of the current subgroups and re-purpose these through refreshed terms of Reference which are developed through a modernised agenda to reflect GIRFEC.

The subgroups will support the Children and Families Standing Committee in responding to and progressing issues, including the Committee priorities.

#### **Sub Groups/ Practice Networks**

- The **Child Protection** Sub Group.
- The **Corporate Parenting** Sub Group.
- The **Early Help and Looked After at Home** Sub Group

The **sub groups** should each be facilitated/ supported by a Chair and Vice Chair drawn from the membership of the Standing Committee and comprised of broader Social Work Scotland membership.

A **practice network** should sit underneath each sub group and should be facilitated/ supported by members of the overarching sub group and open to both members and non-members (social workers/first line/middle managers).

A plan should be agreed to determine frequency of meetings which should support the programme of Standing Committee business.

### **Frequency of Review**

The Standing Committee will convene an extraordinary business meeting one year from implementing the revised structure and priorities to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the revised working arrangements;
- Review and determine strategic priorities for the forthcoming year; and
- Determine the frequency with which subsequent reviews should take place.