

Covering statement

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Covid-19 Restrictions

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, Council staff have been unable to access Council buildings and records. This led to the premature ending of a comprehensive file audit and has limited the research opportunities and materials available to staff in compiling the responses listed below.

PART C – PREVENTION AND IDENTIFICATION

5. Abuse

Question 5.5	<u>External Investigations</u>
a)	<p><u>What external investigations have been conducted relating to children in foster care which have considered issues to abuse and/or alleged abuse of children?</u></p> <p>Edinburgh Corporation (1930 – 1975)</p> <p>There is no reference within the surviving records to indicate if external investigations took place for this period.</p> <p>Lothian Regional Council (1975 – 1996)</p> <p>There is no reference within the surviving records to indicate if external investigations took place for this period.</p>

	<p>City of Edinburgh Council (1996 – 2014)</p> <p>We are including information from the conclusions of the Edinburgh Inquiry as part of our response in relation to external investigations. The Edinburgh’s Children Inquiry was established on 4th of December 1997 by the City of Edinburgh Council’s Policy and Resources Committee with its findings reported to full Council. While it was an internally commissioned report, we are including it within this section as the authors of the investigation were external and independent of the Local Authority.</p>
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For each such external inspection please answer the following:

External Investigation 1

b)	<p><u>Who conducted the investigation?</u></p> <p>The Edinburgh Inquiry was conducted by Kathleen Marshall (Chair), Cathy Jamieson and Alan Finlayson.</p>
c)	<p><u>Why was the investigation conducted?</u></p> <p>The Edinburgh Inquiry report stated on page 10 that the remit of the inquiry was:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>In relation to the recent High Court case, to ascertain if there was any allegation raised prior to the commencement to the police investigation, and if so</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>to determine if there were any reports which were not acted upon, and if so, why;</i> - <i>to determine the appropriateness of the action taken at that time;</i> - <i>to identify any lessons that may be learned against the background of what is known of practice and procedure in place at that time (i.e. 1973 – 1987), additional to what may be contained in subsequent reports in this field.</i> 2. <i>To view current procedures, practice and guidelines in operation in the City of Edinburgh against the background of;</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the High Court proceedings;</i> - <i>the Finlayson/Newman report of 1993 – “Listen – Take Seriously what They Say”;</i> - <i>the Scottish Office report “Children’s Safeguards Review” (1997),</i> <p><i>to determine;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>what safeguards are in place;</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the adequacy of these;</i> - <i>the uniformity of their application across the city;</i> - <i>what additional safeguards may be necessary.</i> <p>3. <i>To make recommendations as appropriate arising from remits 1 and 2 with a view to assuring the Social Work Committee and the public that every measure is in place to minimise child abuse.</i></p> <p>4. <i>To determine its own method of approach in discharging 1 and 2 having regard to the following timescales.</i></p> <p>The provision of foster care was considered within Remit 2 of the investigation, with considerations set out in Chapter 13 of the final report.</p>
d)	<p><u>When was the investigation conducted?</u></p> <p>The Inquiry was formally established on 21 January 1998. The investigation report was published in January 1999.</p>
e)	<p><u>What was the outcome of the investigation in respect of any issues relating to abuse or alleged abuse of children?</u></p> <p>The outcome of the investigation was set out in the Inquiry's report 'Edinburgh's Children' which was published in January 1999. The report set out a number of recommendations which related to both residential care and the provision of foster care.</p>
f)	<p><u>What was the local authority's response to the investigation and its outcome?</u></p> <p>On 4 February 1999, the Inquiry report 'Edinburgh's Children' was reviewed at a full City of Edinburgh Council meeting. The Council accepted and approved all 135 recommendations within the report in addition to agreeing an Implementation Plan.</p>
g)	<p><u>Were recommendations made following the investigation?</u></p> <p>Yes, Chapter 13 of the Inquiry's report set out recommendations that specifically related to the provision of foster care.</p>
h)	<p><u>If so, what were the recommendations and were they implemented?</u></p> <p>The Inquiry report 'Edinburgh's Children' made 135 recommendations in total. In Chapter 13 of the report, 5 recommendations were specifically made with regard to foster care. The recommendations were:</p>

	<p><i><u>Recommendation 112:</u> We recommend that investigations into allegations against foster carers be carried out by an independent person with no responsibilities for foster care provision in the area. ('Edinburgh's Children', Marshall (1999), page 219)</i></p> <p><i><u>Recommendation 113:</u> We recommend that the Director of Social Work evaluate current practice with regard to response to concerns expressed by foster carers about children and young people they have looked after, with a view to ensuring that this takes appropriate account of the valuable insights they may be able to contribute with regard to the welfare of those children. ('Edinburgh's Children', Marshall (1999), page 220)</i></p> <p><i><u>Recommendation 114:</u> We endorse Kent's proposal that foster care be brought within the inspection process. All foster care placements should be inspected. We recognise this may need to be phased in. ('Edinburgh's Children', Marshall (1999), page 221)</i></p> <p><i><u>Recommendation 115:</u> We recommend that field and support social workers should make occasional unannounced visits to foster placements. ('Edinburgh's Children', Marshall (1999), page 223)</i></p> <p><i><u>Recommendation 116:</u> We recommend that, with a view to diluting concerns they may experience by implied suggestions that they are under suspicion, support workers should take the opportunity to inform foster carers of the substance of this report so far as it relates to fostering, including the observations that the inquiry has made about the value of and need for fostering, and its recognition of the importance of their receiving high standards of relevant training and support. ('Edinburgh's Children', Marshall (1999), page 223)</i></p> <p>All 135 recommendations were considered by the full Council on 4 February 1999, including approval of an Implementation Plan. All recommendations have been met in full. (Ref. Report to Council Corporate Team on Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, dated 9 October 2019).</p>
<p>i)</p>	<p><u>If recommendations were not implemented, why not?</u></p> <p>Not applicable. Recommendations were met in full.</p>