Change in Residential Child Care in Scotland Webinar
Transcript

Hosted By:
Craig McCreadie, Improving Care Experiences Consultant, CELCIS

Featuring:
Seonaid Graham, Lead for Care Experienced Learners, Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership
Mary Morris, Team Manager, Children and Young People, Care Inspectorate
Anthony O'Malley, Senior Methodology Adviser, Care Inspectorate
Mihaela Manole, Implementation Research Fellow, CELCIS
Gemma Watson, Improving Care Experiences Consultant, CELCIS
Karen Bain, Acting House Manager, Aberlour Sycamore Services
Marc Blyth, Lead Learning Coordinator, Aberlour Sycamore Services

Craig McCreadie

Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the Change in Residential Child Care webinar hosted by the CELCIS. My name is Craig McCreadie and I'm an Improving Care Experiences consultant and the Residential Child Care team in CELCIS. And joining us today, we have an array of speakers from a range of settings, all of whom have written articles which have been published in the Scottish Journal for Residential Child Care.

Before introducing our first speaker, let me just explain how we arrived at this point today. Over the last couple of years as a team, we've been carrying out some engagement work with the residential childcare sector

and quite a broad way. There were a number of thematic areas which came from this, which highlighted where the sector was asking for there to be some work done. Some of these were areas which helpfully already aligned with the work CELCIS was doing with the residential child care sector, such as having a focus on reflection through the [Reflection and Action Learning Forum](#) (RALF) and also progressing conversations in relation to restraint and restrictive practice through the activity of SPRAG ([Scottish Physical Restraint Action group](#)). An area we identified from our engagement activity was the desire for there to be more bespoke learning moments for the workforce across residential child care. We took some time to consider this and decided to create this webinar today as a space which allows some of the excellent content from the Scottish Journal for Residential Child Care to be elevated in a slightly different way as a specific learning offer for a broad range of people across the sector. Working with the team, we were able to identify some potential speakers who happily all said yes and have joined us today. And I want to particularly thank our speakers for being willing to be part of this session the first one. So thank you in advance to all our speakers for your contribution today.

So, let's move on into the programme. And let me introduce our first speaker. With us today is Seonaid Graham, who's joining us from Glasgow City Council Education Services. [Seonaid wrote a piece for the Journal alongside a group of colleagues](#), which was first published in 2024. And I'm delighted to ask her now to be our first speaker of the session. Over to you, Seonaid.

JOURNEY OF CHANGE
IMPLEMENTING NURTURE AS A MODEL OF CARE

SEONAID GRAHAM & MARIE DUNCAN

Seonaid Graham

Good morning everybody. I'm absolutely delighted to be here this morning and to be the first guest speaker. My name's Seonaid Graham and I'm the lead for care experience learners within Glasgow Virtual School, Glasgow City Council Education Services and as Craig said, I'm going to take you through Glasgow's journey of change in which we implemented nurture as a model of care within all nineteen of our children's houses over the last three years. Unfortunately, my colleague Marie Duncan can't make it today, so I'm going to speak on behalf of her slides, but just to emphasise that this journey was very much a multi-agency model of care between our residential service colleagues within HSCP (Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership), Education Services and our educational psychology colleagues as well.

So I'm going to start where it all began in Glasgow and that was with the council's commitment to developing a nurturing city which was established in 2012. And what's different about this is that this was a whole services approach to create a city where our young people and children can say we are listened to, we know we are valued and we feel we belong.

So how did we create a vision around this? What we knew is that we had to shift practice within our children's houses away from a behavioural model of care, and in order to do that we had to give our carers permission to care and most importantly permission to love. We wanted to support the children's house practice that is theoretically informed and trauma based. So, when we developed How Nurturing Is Our Children's House, this wasn't a replacement of what was already there. This added to the trauma informed practice that had been taking place, but it gave our children's houses a framework. It also supported the development of a shared understanding. It developed a shared language between carers, young people and other services linking with our children and young people. And it ultimately delivers the aspirations of The Promise, which is something I'm going to touch on just at the end of my section of this presentation. To give you a bit of background about nurture in general: nurture was developed within Education Services in Glasgow in 2014 . So, it's been around for over ten years and it's been well embedded. And my background within education was as an educational psychologist, a senior psychologist with the care experience team, and prior to that, for my sins,
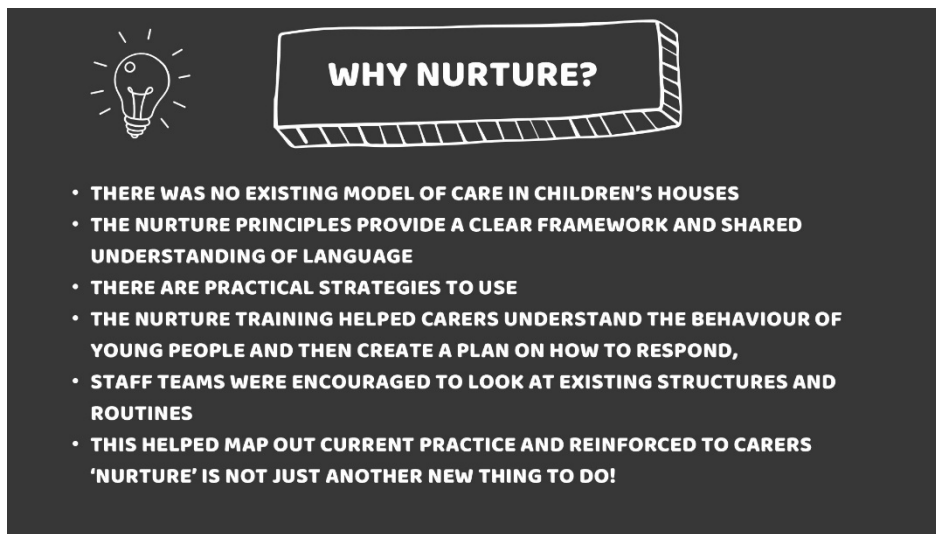
a primary school teacher. So, nurture came from education, but the vision that we wanted to create was to have that framework and support our residential sector to shift that practice and to be more aligned with the nurturing principles.
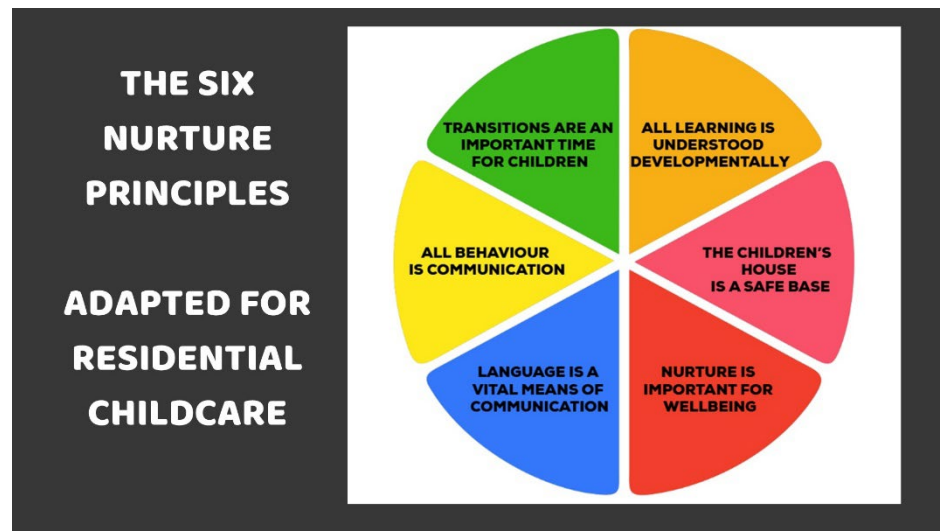
So, some of you might be familiar with the nurture principles and some of you might not. What would say about these six principles is they never change. We never add to them, and we never take one away. And they all have equal merit. So, there's not one nurture principle that's more important than the other. And I'm just very quickly going to take you through to give you some examples of what these principles mean for our children and young people. So, all learning is understood developmentally. What we mean by that is that we don't look at our young people by age and stage. So, you're 14, you should be able to tidy your room, you are 16, you should be responsible, you are ten, you should be reading. It's about where that young person is and their developmental journey. So, we look at where their emotional development is, where their cognitive development is and we don't base it on a number. So, we know that within education that we could have a ten-year-old who emotionally is operating as a four-year-old because of significant trauma and adversity. We could have a 14-year-old who's operating at a much older level. So, we need to take the number away and look at their developmental journey. The second principle was the children's house offers a safe base. And this is really based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Everybody, whether you're a child, young person, adult needs to feel safe, whether that's in a school environment or within a home and a house environment. So, we had to make sure that the

houses felt safe, they looked safe. And our young people felt that when they were living in the houses, because if a child or young person feels safe, then they're able to go on to further develop. And, what we call self-actualisation. Nurture is important for well-being in terms of our confidence, our resilience, our self-efficacy. It's at the heart of everything we do as humans. Our well-being is fundamental and nurture emphasises that. Language is a vital means of communication. So, whether it's a non-verbal language or verbal language, the words that our young people use and probably more importantly with this one, the words that our carers use, is that language appropriate? Is it inclusive? Is it supportive? Is it care experience friendly? And that's something that we've worked really hard with within our children's houses, but actually we're still in a wee bit of journey within our school settings as well. The next one's probably the biggie and that's all behaviour is communication. What we had to do here was we had to move away from that tip of the iceberg, the behaviour that we see, and we had to dig a lot deeper and go right down to the bottom to actually ask ourselves as carers, what is our young person trying to communicate through their behaviour? What emotion are they trying to tell us? Are they angry? Are they disappointed? Do they feel shame or is it something as basic as they are sleepy, they are tired, they are hungry, whatever that emotional state might be? That's the hard bit. That's a bit where our carers had to become detectives and not just based on what you see in the moment but really think about what is that young person trying to tell us about their emotional state and their feelings. And the last one, transitions are an important time for children. And transitions are an important part of everybody's life. But if you think about our residential sectors, how many transitions and changes have our children and young people gone through? How many care placement changes, how many family changes, and then even things as simple as how many changes within a day. So, within Glasgow children's houses there's three shift changes. So, the person that wakes you up in the morning is different to the person that greets you after school or college, and it's different again to that person that puts you down at night or settles you in the night. So that's the transitions just within a staff change, carers changing within a children's house. So, it's looking at the importance of the big transitions and the small transitions as well and identifying that some of these will be triggers for our young people and that they need to be prepared and that these are really important times for our children. So that just gives you an example of those six principles. And as I said at the start of this slide, they never change. We never add, we never take away.

And everything we did within the framework of practice always come back to those six principles. And that's where the framework is at.

WHY NURTURE?

- THERE WAS NO EXISTING MODEL OF CARE IN CHILDREN'S HOUSES
- THE NURTURE PRINCIPLES PROVIDE A CLEAR FRAMEWORK AND SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF LANGUAGE
- THERE ARE PRACTICAL STRATEGIES TO USE
- THE NURTURE TRAINING HELPED CARERS UNDERSTAND THE BEHAVIOUR OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEN CREATE A PLAN ON HOW TO RESPOND,
- STAFF TEAMS WERE ENCOURAGED TO LOOK AT EXISTING STRUCTURES AND ROUTINES
- THIS HELPED MAP OUT CURRENT PRACTICE AND REINFORCED TO CARERS 'NURTURE' IS NOT JUST ANOTHER NEW THING TO DO!

Ok, so why nurture? There was no existing model of care in children's houses across the 19 houses in Glasgow, everybody was doing something a wee bit different still based on trauma informed practice. You had different styles of management, you have different staff, you have different children and young people, so we needed something that was going to give continuity and consistency across those houses. The nurture principles did provide a clear framework and that shared understanding for our carers. Also, practical strategies that they could use to support their children, young people and also use to support themselves as carers because their nurture and well-being is actually equally as important. The nurture training helped carers understand the behaviour of young people. So again, moving away from that tip of the iceberg, what's really underneath where our young people and where their emotional state is and helped create a plan and how to respond. Our caring teams were encouraged to look at existing structures and routines. And this is probably quite important - it wasn't throw the baby out with the bathwater, but look at what we're already doing and then look at how we can add to that. And that helped map out current practice and reinforced to carers that nurture is not just another new thing to do. It's not just an add on and it's not just a fad. It's actually fundamental and it'll be what lots of our houses and carers were already doing. But it gave them a framework in which to hang that practice on in order to evaluate and improve.

NURTURE IS IMPORTANT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WELLBEING AND BUILDING RESILIENCE

RELATIONSHIPS + RESILIENCE = REDUCING IMPACT OF ADVERSITY

So why do I keep going on about nurture? Well, we know that nurture is important for the development of well-being and building resilience. Research by Education Scotland has shown that relationships - and that mean for us between the carers and the children and young people - can mitigate against negative outcomes. It's important that relationships are positive, inclusive and support attunement, warmth and connection. Also, those relationships add structure, and that our carers have high expectations to support our young people's development, achievement and ultimately attainment. It's important that we have carers who understand containment of young people, relational practice, which is key in order to support the impact of those early adverse childhood experiences that often our children in children's houses have experienced alongside attachment needs. We know that nurture helps develop our social skills, confidence, self-esteem and readiness to learn. It's based on attachment theory alongside theory of children brains development. So again, nothing new from what we're already doing with trauma informed practice. Nurture has been used in education with positive results since 2014. And again, we used that model and we adapted it for our children's houses, ultimately to improve those outcomes for our children and young people and to reduce the impact of adversity that they faced.
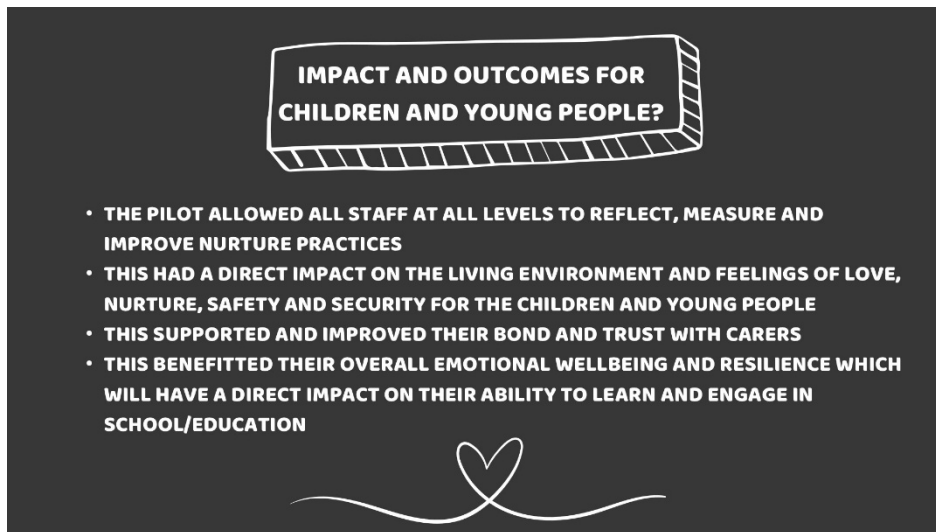
AIMS OF THE HINOCH PILOT

- TO DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK TO IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE THE SIX NURTURE PRINCIPLES
- TO BE ABLE TO MEASURE THE NURTURE PRINCIPLES USING AGREED BENCHMARKS LINKED TO THE CARE STANDARDS
- TO SET TARGETS FOR IMPROVEMENT IDENTIFIED BY HOUSE CARERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE LINKED TO THE NURTURE PRINCIPLES
- TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION USING IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE
- TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH THE USE OF COACHING MODELS

So where did we start with the pilot? We picked one house, and we looked at developing that framework to implement and evaluate those six nurture principles. Then we were able to measure the nurture principles which we actually linked to the care standards and used those as benchmarks. We set targets for improvement within the pilot identified by house carers themselves and also more importantly by the young people linked back to the six nurture principles. And we supported effective implementation of that pilot using implementation science. And we had to ensure sustainable long-term implementation. So, we used coaching as part of that model as well. The first pilot wasn't started in 2021 and that house was chosen based on its readiness and strong nurturing leadership approaches, which is exactly what implementation science tells us, is required. House readiness, in order to embed learning is key as a multi-agency approach.

So, we started the pilot rather bravely in one of our children's houses, Chapel Avenue, who were more than ready and had very strong nurturing leadership. We did a needs analysis where we gave out readiness questionnaires to staff, senior leaders and young people. We looked at the environment within that house and used a checklist to see what was working and maybe what we needed to think about. And then we delivered our training. So, our first session was right back to basics - attachment and trauma - and that really set the scene for linking on to nurturing principles. Unfortunately, COVID hit so all our training went online and what we did after that initial two-hour session is, we then did one-hour sessions on each of the nurture principles so that we could really look at the breadth of each principal. And after we did our training,

which is supported by our Nurture Development Officer within education, we looked at that coaching support. And the importance of coaching here using the [GROW model](#) was to make sure that this was then implemented, that we supported our carers to continue to implement How Nurturing Is Our Children's House. And with the first pilot which I led, I went out fortnightly - sometimes it went on to monthly - to meet with staff to allow for that deep discussion and consultation about real things that were happening in the children's houses.

So, what was the impact and the outcome for the children and young people? The pilot allowed all staff at all levels to reflect, measure and improve those nurturing practices which they'd been doing for years. It's a direct impact in the living environment and the feelings of love, nurture, safety and security for the children and young people. And this ultimately supported the bond and trust they had with their careers. It benefited their emotional well-being and resilience, which had a direct impact back when they're learning.

For the next slide, I'm just going to let you read what our young people said was the biggest impact of the first nurture pilots in our children's house. And wouldn't that be lovely if all of our young people across all of our children's houses in Scotland were able to say that?

There were benefits to staff as well. We looked at the stats before and after the pilot. So, there was an immediate decline in the use of physical restraint within that first pilot house. There was also reduction, a significant reduction, in carer absence rates. That told us that carers were happier to be within the home environment, the house environment to work and the use of lower demand approaches to support young people based in nurture principles was actually working.

I'm going to take it right back to why did we set up How Nurturing Is Our Children's Houses as a multi-agency approach? Because we know through The Promise that children must be listened to and involved in decisions made about their care. If children and young people can't live with their families, they must be part of a loving family. And for us, that was fundamental to living in a children's house and the focus and importance of relationships, that lifelong relationships and that our workforce are compassionate decision making.

And lastly, just two key messages for you to think about. And this is what we aim for. We want our young people to fulfil their ambition, and we want our young people to feel they grew up loved, safe and respected and so they can fulfil their full potential.

So, what happened after the pilot? And this is a story of over 450 residential carers, practitioners, managers working together to love and care for their children and young people. The pilot was a huge success, and we were very fortunate to be joined by Marie Duncan, Assistant Service Manager, who then worked with me for the further rollout that had been started by myself and Erica Barr, one of the service managers. The training was used to tackle complex cultural problems in the rollout, and we were determined that the nurtures training would be one piece of a complex puzzle that would support wider implementation.

So, the plan evolved over the next four years followed a broad approach and we've termed this as it was about head, heart and hands. We had to know what the culture was. We had to believe in the culture in terms of the mindset nurtures a model that works. It's worked in education, and it's worked in our pilot - and behaves in a way that supports the culture as senior leaders to actively create those nurturing environments.

We started with the head, and we established a training strategy in which we put the rest of the children's house into trios. So, we had 19 at the time and then we looked at delivering that online training, the same training that we delivered to the pilots through our nurture development officer. Unfortunately, again COVID was still around, and all that training took part in the children's house living rooms, but it was then supported by follow-up coaching by our very kind colleagues in Glasgow Educational Psychology.
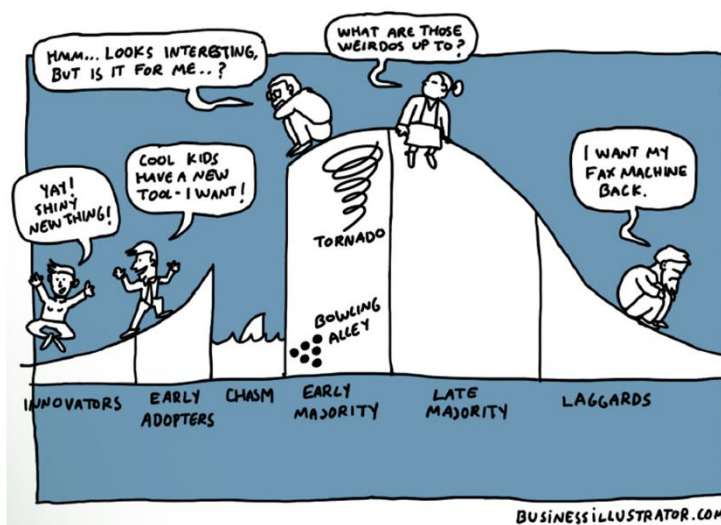
I would just like, if I have a wee minute, just to look at some of the dilemmas which you can imagine we might face within our children's house in terms of where staff are and how they might interpret and take on that change - which was coming - in terms of the roll out of How Nurturing Is Our Children's House and thinking about the diffusion of innovation model. This really illustrates the experience that we had in the rollout at this time as well - that it was new ideas spreading within an already existing culture. And we had early adopter houses, but we also had some houses that got a wee bit stuck and houses that really like the way that they've been doing it. I want my fax machine back being an example.

So the things that helped during this period of the model was just having that really clear vision of nurture being the model of care, that it has its own framework, it's that shared understanding of nurture across the houses, and we worked with the children's houses and education colleagues very carefully to roll out that programme and it didn't happen overnight. In order to be sustainable, it took three years for all houses to be fully trained and for coaching to develop. Once we did a roll out of all the houses, what we then did as a multi-agency team is we set up leadership workshops. So that was regular time where we could bring senior practitioners out to go over those nurture principles and to discuss new areas of practice within the house linked to that.

And I suppose with the heart, knowing and understanding the nurture model is very different from believing in it as well. So you can do fantastic training, you can have 100% attendance, but you've really got to believe in it. And probably our biggest challenge was making sure that we did win the hearts and the minds. Some people were suspicious about something new, didn't feel they were ready to engage. But again, with the support of the senior leadership team across the houses and within the service managers, we were able to win those hearts and minds.

So, in terms of hands, the integration of nurturing into day-to-day processes is where we currently are. The managers have now created a charter, which is amazing, and it's a bespoke vision for the service in terms of other work within the nurture principles. There's flexibility within each house as well through the charter. And the charter actually helps us again further benchmark and look at that self-evaluation process as well.

So just to highlight that we have now created some documents, again we would be happy to share, but in terms of the nurture charter, this came directly from our carers in terms of those standards. And for nurturing approaches, we've also developed the reflective spaces toolkit, again because what we see in terms of that implementation is the sustainable part comes after and these documents have been developed further support our carers with the How Nurturing Is Our Children's House.

So, we've still got a wee bit to do. We know that it works. We know we've reduced violent instances with the further rollout. We know that children are choosing to live with us for longer. Fantastically, we've got better Care Inspectorate grades, which is brilliant. We've got more referrals into our children's houses, and we've now got lifelong relationships with our carers and our children and young people.

WHAT WE'VE NOTICED....

WE HAVE CHANGED THE EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE BETTER - ABLE TO EVIDENCE IMPROVED OUTCOMES

CHILDREN ARE CHOOSING TO LIVE WITH US FOR LONGER.

REDUCTION IN VIOLENT INCIDENCES.

REDUCTION IN THE USE OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION.

IMPROVED CARE INSPECTORATE GRADES.

INCREASED REFERRALS FOR GLASGOW HOUSES.

LIFE LONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

And this is really where I'm going to end off. What do we still need to do? Well, we have night shift staff as you will have in your children's houses. So, we have developed a separate programme of training to deliver to night staff and we're in the process of delivering that. We also have refresher programmes. The pilot was four years ago. So again, we've got new staff coming in. So twice a year we have refresher programmes on our nurture. We're looking at digital resources; we're looking at nurture for early years because we're getting younger people into our houses. And we're also looking at how do we support our families in terms of our children and young people's own family; how do we support them with nurture. And that's something that we're going to continue to develop.

So, I'd just like to thank you for listening. If you do get a chance, please do read the article and I'm around later on if there's any questions at all.

Craig McCreadie

Seonaid, thank you so much for sharing that. I think it was a really fascinating and really insightful example of the kind of multiple elements and ingredients required for this kind of change, particularly framing it through an implementation lens - like it's a form of alchemy, trying to move towards that kind of consistency and continuity and the experiences that the kids have when we're responsible for them.

Some really great chat emerging in the chat function as well. There are some interesting themes emerging around the use of language and potentially industrialised language in relation to residential child care as a sector and how that relates or doesn't to the everyday experiences of children and staff.

I want to introduce our second set of speakers who are joining us from the Care Inspectorate. Mary Morris and Anthony O'Malley, co-author of the paper which was published in the Journal in 2024. I'm going to hand over to you now. Thank you very much.

care inspectorate   the promise scotland

Putting The Promise at the heart of inspections

Mary Morris, Team manager, Children and young people
Anthony O'Malley, Senior methodology adviser

Mary Morris

Thank you very much, Craig for that introduction and for inviting us along today. I'm one of the team managers in the children and young people's team and Anthony from our methodology team is here as well. Thank you

also to Seonaid. That was a really great first session. Very inspirational and affirming.

So, our article came out last year, I think it was last autumn ([Keeping The Promise in regulation: Our revised approach to how we regulate and inspect services for children and young people](#)). So, it feels quite a long time ago now. The article really was about changes to our inspection methodology and us trying to much more do what The Promise had asked us to do. The Journal article - if people have written articles for the Journal or are thinking of doing it, you do get a bit of help and support, so that's really useful. And one of the things that we were advised to do was, because it was there's an international audience, was to just put a little bit of context around The Promise and just really remind ourselves of how groundbreaking The Promise was in its scope, its conclusions and how it was undertaken. So, we start with that and then we go into describing how we were trying to focus on what really matters, what's really important for children, and put relationships at the heart of that. And that's around children feeling loved, being safe and just really distilling down to what matters. That sounds quite simple, but for us as regulators with the legislation that we have, it's not always that simple.

But we wanted, as well, to explain a bit about the scaffolding that underpins our approach and be more transparent and open with services about the things that we look at and why we look at them. Because we're not trying to catch people out - we actually really want to celebrate good practice and recognise when services are getting it right. We know there are incredible levels of commitment to children and young people in our children's houses and services in Scotland. So, Anthony is going to just talk you through a little bit around what we call - not perhaps the most Promise-informed language, it's stuff we still need to think about - but what technically we call the core assurances.

Reflections on our journal article

New ideas	Initial approach	Change	Core assurances
The Promise put expectations on everyone, including regulators.	Reflecting on the Promise. Key question 7: distilling our quality frameworks.	Scaffolding and how to underpin outcomes. Complex, fast-paced and evolving for everyone.	Keeping an outcome-focused approach. Reframing through the Promise lens

Health and Social Care Standards. My support, my life.

"Inspection frameworks must prioritise the quality of relationships experienced by children, not the process surrounding their care." – The Promise Pg119.

Anthony O'Malley

Thanks, Mary. So, I work in the methodology team at the Care Inspectorate and we're responsible for developing our approaches to assurance and improvement work, including our quality frameworks, self-evaluation and our various approaches to inspection. So we're working very closely with colleagues like Mary and the children and young people's teams as we do this. We have an organisational set of core assurances that apply across the whole of the Care Inspectorate. These are things that really outline the key areas of practice that we know are really important and are central to people having positive outcomes and experiences, as well as helping us to identify any potential risks to outcomes. We look at those during every full inspection in all care services that we inspect. We take a proportionate approach to assessing each of the core assurances, but in a slightly different way depending on the service that we are inspecting. And to give you an example of that, one of our core assurances is medication. So, we'll always look at medication and care services. However, if there's a larger clinical element to a care service, then we're obviously going to look at that in more detail because of the likelihood of it being more complex or potentially more life-saving medication is increased. So, we'll look at it in a bit more detail. Where there is less complexity than that we would tend to look at in less detail. We'll still look at it, but in a bit less detail. We do sometimes hear that the core assurances, which actually also appear in all of our quality frameworks now, or most of our quality frameworks certainly that have been updated in the last couple of years, and they can sometimes seem a little bit process based, but we match them all to the health and social care standards in order to keep them really outcomes focused, so they're

derived in line with the health and social care standards. But equally, our focus is always on the impact that that practice is having for people and people's experiences and not necessarily just purely the processes that are underpinning it.

In recent months though, we have taken this a step further and we've started to reframe the core assurances that we look at in our CYP (children and young people) services. And we're really trying to reframe them through a Promise lens. And that does include a potential change to how we inspect some services, which we're piloting at the moment. I'm going to hand back to Mary to introduce a little bit of that work and then I'll talk to some of the practicalities of that.

Mary Morris

So yes, this is really hot off the press stuff for us. So, I'll talk about frameworks and The Promise in action first and then talk about the pilot that we're calling Promise Assurance Inspections. So, the Quality Framework for Children and Young People, which has been out for a few years now. We've been updating that again to make it link much more explicitly to The Promise and also referencing the great work that Seonaid was describing - much more trauma responsive, much more trauma informed in our language that we're using. We're also really keen to celebrate the fantastic work that we know it is happening across the sector. We've got an ongoing regular feature where we will report on a service that's doing some aspect to keep The Promise particularly well. And we're keen to engage with services to get that good news out there. You know, quite often the narrative in the media about residential child care isn't as positive as it should be. It's important that we do celebrate the huge strides that we've made in Scotland over the last few years. The Promise Assurance Inspections - so we're still at the pilot stage with this. (There is some information coming out this week in our provider update about it. And we probably will be delivering more detailed information about it ourselves). But the thinking behind our Promise Assurance Inspections is that we want to focus more on spending time with children and young people. We want to focus on relationships with services. And as I've said, we know that actually in Scotland there are many services where there's a high level of commitment, high level of skill and really, really strong work that's been done to ensure that The Promise is kept for children in residential services in Scotland. And we know that as well by

our evaluations, a high proportion of services are evaluated as very good or excellent. And we're aware that sometimes the gap between us coming to inspect those services can be two or three years. And we want to look at that and reduce that gap and also maybe just take a little bit of pressure off services. We know that even for really good services, it can be anxiety performing when we rock up. And that can then translate for children. They see that maybe the staff are a bit anxious about what's going on. So, we're working hard to look at different ways to engage. And we've come up, as I say, it's a pilot and we're still taking feedback, but we're looking to come and do shorter, snappier inspections. For us as inspectors, we probably have to unlearn some of what we usually do because we're recognising that actually we need to look at less. We want to spend more time talking to young people, talking to staff. The plan is as far as possible to give the feedback there and then on the day to the manager and staff in the service and we won't grade. Anthony will talk a little bit more of about that, but that will hopefully take some of the pressure off as well. We know that there might be questions, so Anthony's going to cover some of where we're at with our thinking around the Promise Assurance Inspections.

Anthony O'Malley

We know a number of colleagues joining us today are working in regulated services. So, any discussion around potential new approaches or different approaches to inspection will always be of keen interest, I'm sure. We have a current pilot that's being tested in a small number of services at the moment, and which is just concluding, that is focused on care homes for children and young people that have evaluations of very good or excellent and have been inspected within the last two years. We are going to be extending that pilot across the remainder of the inspection year to some of our services who fall within that criteria and who are due to be inspected in this inspection year. As Mary said, the inspections have a shorter footprint. They are usually completed on the same day or within the morning of a second day and they're ungraded. So we don't evaluate [key question 7](#) at this inspection, which is the current key question used for inspection of children and young people's services. So, during these inspections we don't evaluate key question 7, so we don't open up the key question unless we have concerns. When we undertake the Promise Assurance Inspection, if we were to identify concerns, we may opt to open up key question 7 or indeed that question from our full quality

framework which does still sit behind that, in order to let us to report on that while needed. We take a proportionate approach, as Mary said, during these inspections - reducing some of the sampling that we're doing, but also a real focus on speaking to people, young people in particular. And we have a much shorter inspection report as well. And the inspection report is framed around The Promise foundations of voice, care and people - so that the actual report itself and how we're reporting on these assurances will be under those foundations. And like Mary said, some of the aims we have is to let us see young people in services more often, to help us build stronger relationships. And just really examine with those key Promise foundations that uphold and promote children's rights and well-being and lets us report publicly on them through that lens. We want to also be quicker and a little bit more proactive in identifying potential risks to good outcomes for children and young people. So again, that being more visible, more visible to young people who enter services and again, making our approach to scrutiny a little bit more proportionate in better performing services. And like we said, at the moment the pilot is in care homes for children and young people. We are also engaging extensively throughout the pilot with children and young people, with providers, with managers and staff and with our inspectors to ensure that we are getting the approach right because it is something new. So, it's a bit at a time and that's why we've decided to extend the pilot. We have at the moment interim feedback which has been very positive from services who have had a Promise Assurance Inspection and the methodology team will be leading that engagement at the point of inspection reports being published. So, that's a sort of small overview of how the approach works.

We do anticipate there'll be questions and if there's any we can't answer today and it's not answered in a further update, our contact details will be available and we can certainly come back to people at a later point. The only other point I would touch on with that is in relation to our quality framework, the bigger quality framework, which is the main quality framework for care homes for children, young people and special residential schools. That's currently being updated, as Mary said, just to make sure we align some of the language through a more Promise lens and that will then be amalgamated with key question 7. So, the intention being the key questions 1-5 will support self-evaluation and services along with our tool kits which are available. Here is a link to our current tool kits for self-evaluation. So, we hope that by having key question 1-5 to support self-evaluation and key question 7 for inspection, what we

would then do is for better performance services in the care home sector at the moment: one year would be a Promise Assurance Inspection if the grades are very good or excellent for the current pilot. And then in the alternating years, it would be a full inspection using key question 7. So that's why we're updating the full quality framework as well to show that key question 7 will be remaining as is for the moment. That was only reviewed last year, but key question 1-5 will be brought up to date so that there's a link with self-evaluation as well. We've got one other piece of work we just want to tell you about which we think is really interesting and hopefully something that we can also continue to scale up. I'll let Mary introduce that.
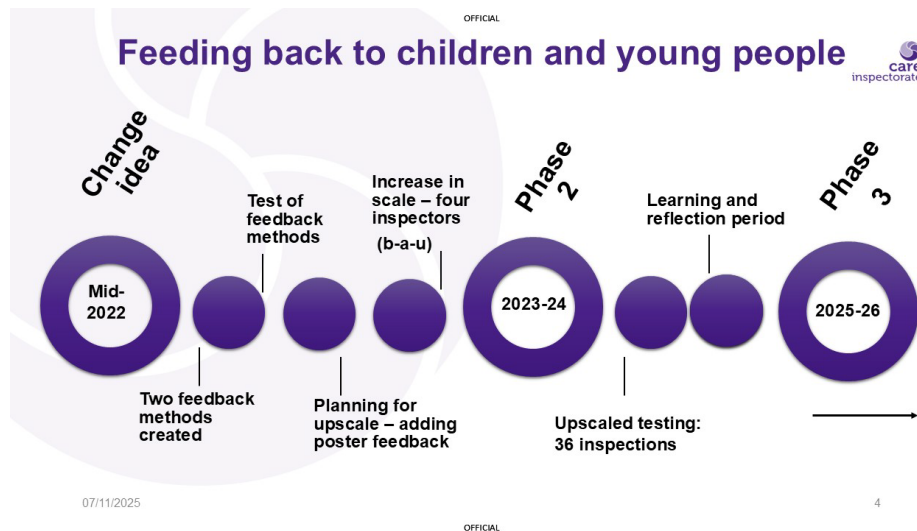
Mary Morris

Thanks, Anthony. You know The Promise, as Seonaid very skilfully outlined, is very much about putting voice at the centre of all of our work. And we were and are very conscious that when we inspect a service, it tends to be the manager, senior staff that we engage with in terms of feeding back what the service is doing well and some areas that they could maybe perhaps build on to, to make it even better for children and young people. And that young people were missing from that. So, this work, which Anthony will describe in more detail, is trying to look at that and find different ways to more directly engage with children and young people. And children and young people, as you know, they're all different. Some of them will be really interested. Some of them might be interested some days. Some of them it's not really something that that's top of their list of priorities. They've got other things going on in their life. But the kind of traditional inspection report that we produce generally isn't probably the most engaging for children and young people. So, we're looking at different medias to engage with them. But I'll let Anthony talk you through where we're at with this. It's still very much work in progress and we do appreciate the help and support we've had from services in allowing us to take this work forward.

Anthony O'Malley

So, as Mary said, what we're looking to do, because at methodology we also lead on the Care Inspectorate's report writing guidance internally for inspectors and how we present our reports to the public. And we are very aware that the manner and style of our reports are not particularly accessible for children and young people. So we developed a project

which actually started with two inspectors as part of an improvement project with a basic change idea that we should provide find some way of providing direct feedback to children and young people following that inspection process.

Feeding back to children and young people

Change idea

Mid-2022

Test of feedback methods

Increase in scale – four inspectors (b-a-u)

Phase 2

2023-24

Learning and reflection period

Phase 3

2025-26

Two feedback methods created

Planning for upscale – adding poster feedback

Upscaled testing: 36 inspections

07/11/2025

4

In mid-2022, a couple of inspectors tried this in two different services where there were 2 or 3 feedback methods. One being the inspector went back to the service, met with the young people and gave them a summary of the feedback that was in the inspection report, but certainly about the points that children and young people were most interested in or that they had already expressed a view on during the inspection. We tested going back to the service and also, we tested a video, because when the inspectors will come back sometimes young people were at school, work or busy doing other things. So, they weren't always necessarily going to be there. So we provided a video that young people could watch later with feedback that was again targeted to them and what they told us was important to them and also some of their direct views. We wanted to try and upscale that because the response was very positive from those two services. So, part of applying for upscale was to introduce a third method which was a which was a poster, and I'll show you a little example of one of the posters later.

We wanted to say, OK, we've added another method - we're going to have a poster as well. That was actually suggested by one of our young inspection volunteers at the Care Inspectorate. So, we introduced the poster, and we then brought some more inspectors on board, and we had four inspectors test this business as usual. So, what that meant was any

inspections they were doing, they were checking if the young people wanted to receive feedback directly from us. And if so, which of these methods would they like to receive it in, or it could be multiple methods, and in one service all three methods were used because young people had expressed different views on the methods. We then upscaled that in 2023-24. So, we covered around 36 inspections where feedback was provided. We had lots of feedback from our inspectors on that, from young people and from services as well. We had a bit of learning and reflection on that on whether we should make some changes to how we structure some of the language, but mainly it was also about making sure we reflected the young people's views. But also, whether we should consider summarising some of the other points of the inspection report that might be relevant to young people who were not present at their feedback or present even during the inspection because they were maybe engaged with other stuff. So, it's been a long-term bit of work. We're moving into phase three in 2025-26, where we have lots of learning from the care homes for children and young people sector, also some care at home and housing support services inspected by children and young people inspectors. So, we're now also looking to see whether it potentially works in some different service types. And that will be over 2025-26, not necessarily the inspection year, but I'd say probably the whole of 2026, the calendar year, will include some of that work. And again, this is just about us seeing what works, not rushing something, not putting something out that is something we think is a good idea. We want to be very much led by what young people are telling us, what inspectors are finding when they're testing this approach. And that would be the plan to roll that out for the next couple of years. So, we'll just finish on a very quick example. This is just one of the posters here.
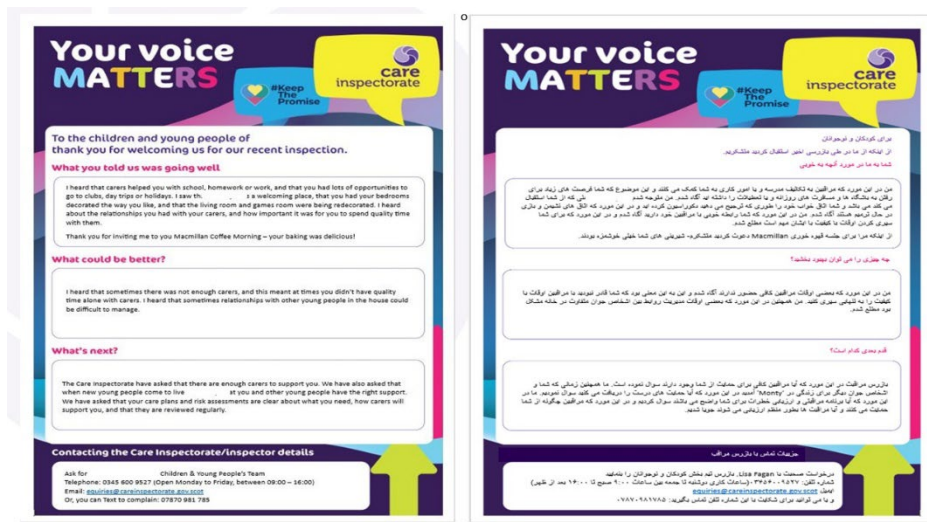
The layout and design of the poster was designed in conjunction with one of our young inspection volunteers who had also participated in some of the inspections where feedback was being provided in the early stages, so they had a really clear handle on the project and what worked. You will find some stuff about this project on the children and young people's section of our website. But again, we just wanted to share this as an example. We recognise that we are also on a journey with everyone else to try and develop our approaches to inspection and really answer the asks of The Promise. Both Mary and my e-mail addresses are on this and I'm sure the organisers will be able to put you in touch with us if you need to as well. Yeah, thanks everybody.
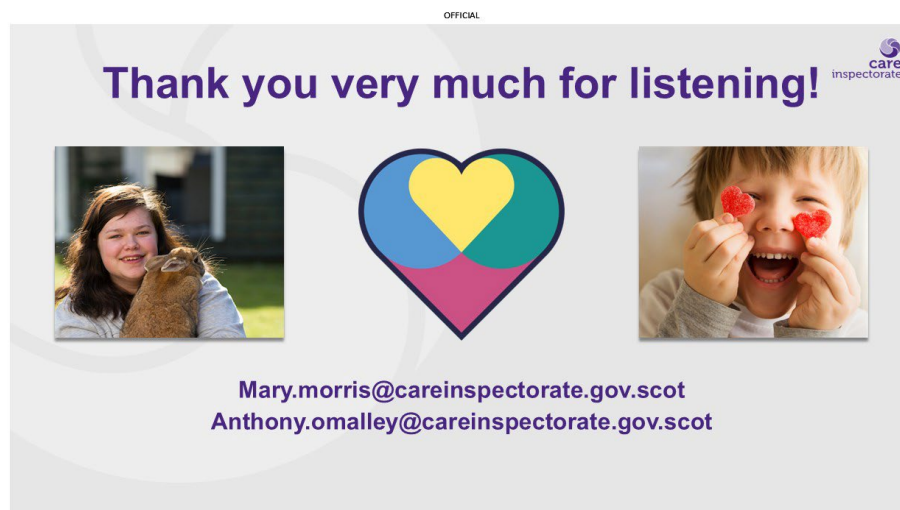
Craig McCreadie

Well done, Anthony and Mary, gold stars all round. Thank you so much for that presentation. I think it was such a brilliant way of considering… what you referenced - complexity - on so many occasions through that. And I think that the Care Inspectorate is such a unique part of this living dynamic system. And I think it was a really insightful example of working to adapt as a system changes around you at the same time. There's just so many moving parts in what you were describing there and the iterative changes that you were describing as well. Thank you so much for that.

We're going to move on now and introduce our final set of speakers, which is a group of four this morning made-up of Mihaela Manole and Gemma Watson from CELCIS and Karen Bain and Marc Blyth from Aberlour Sycamore services. Mihaela and Gemma were the authors of our Journal article alongside Laura Quinn, also from CELCIS [(Observing high quality children's residential care: Reflecting on an implementation approach](#)), but they're joined today by Marc and Karen as two of the people who are part of the work which the Journal focuses on. Mihaela, I'm going to hand over to you in the first instance.

Mihaela Manole

Thank you, Craig. I'll start by providing some background into our work, including information on our methodologies which mirrored the approaches that Seonaid described in her presentation. As part of the partnership, CELCIS has provided improvement and implementation support to Aberlour's Sycamore Residential Service and our partnership has a long history, but today we will share learning from a pilot that involves conducting observations of practice in two children's houses and strengthening the use of feedback and reflective practice. Our approach to change has been guided by quality improvement and by Active Implementation, which has a set of six frameworks that support practice to be used with consistency in order to achieve outcomes that are meaningful. [You can read more about the frameworks here](#). They were developed by [Active Implementation Research Network](#) based on research evidence and decades of learning from implementation efforts. The frameworks guide us to use improvement cycles to identify and put in place the scaffolds that teams and practitioners need when they are asked to do something new. Therefore, our Sycamore colleagues paid a lot of attention to a period of readiness and support for what was, in

essence, a new way of working with feedback, and you'll hear more about it later in the presentation. The active implementation frameworks also highlight the important role of teams.

Before observations – Key milestones reached
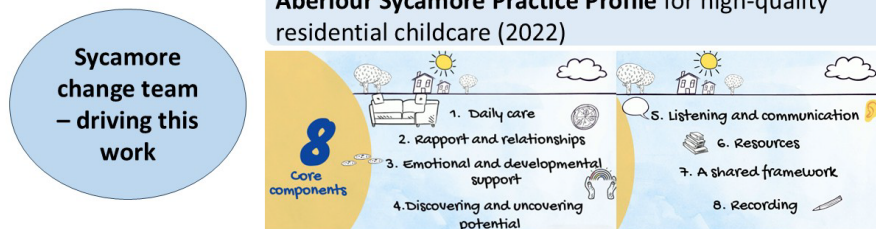
- Sycamore change team:
  - three highly committed members, mid manager and senior manager roles;
  - extensive experience of direct residential childcare practice, and exposure to Active Implementation.
  - with easy access to support from Sycamore's senior leader, when needed;
- CELCIS role included: support for the Sycamore change team to build their implementation expertise; supported the development of the Practice Profile.

And this slide talks about some key milestones that were reached before planning the observation phase. At that point, Sycamore already had a team in place, and we had been working together for several years, and Marc (Blyth), Andy and Chelsea were selected to drive this change work. Methodology frameworks aside, it was their commitment and the wealth of experience that truly powered this work. They were also well placed at mid and senior manager levels to identify any barriers in implementation and, when needed, to access timely support from their senior leader. The team has gone through some changes, but if I caught the responses to the survey earlier today correctly, I think we might have almost a full complement of people involved at this webinar today. Together we developed the Sycamore Practice profile, which was another significant milestone - this is where we were guided by active implementation which highlights that the components of a practice must be clearly understood or pulled apart so you can so we can tell which components contribute to the desired outcomes and therefore the practice must be clearly defined so that it becomes teachable and learnable, doable at practitioner level, accessible and, in time, scalable. The visual on this slide shows the eight core components of High Quality Residential that childcare practice articulated in the Sycamore Practice Profile. They were developed by delving into evidence and research and more importantly, by building on the good practice already in place at Sycamore, which was identified through conversations and sessions with staff across the organisation. But

a practice profile alone, is a document and it's not sufficient to support practice change. And I think most of us can think about a manual or two that after some time ended up forgotten on a shelf or in a drawer. This is where observation and feedback come into play. They are critical for understanding what challenges have to be addressed within the organisation and the wider system to support people at practice level. Observation is also critical for understanding if a practice is used with fidelity or as intended as described in the practice profile. A practice profile can then become more than a document, it can become a tool, for support, selection, training and professional growth if it's used alongside observation, feedback and reflection. And this is where we went next.

Following the publication of the Practice Profile, Marc, Andy and Chelsea moved to strengthen readiness and to supporting their colleagues to become more familiar with the content and the purpose of the tool. They started with sessions on the Practice profile in which they also paid attention to how their colleagues felt about it. These were followed by sessions that explored the previous experience of their colleagues in relation to both providing and receiving feedback. And I'm now handing over to my colleague Gemma, who will continue the story.

Gemma Watson

Thank you, Mihaela. So, two Aberlour Sycamore children's houses were mutually selected for the pilot phase of this work. And when we were considering which houses should be involved, we developed a set of readiness criteria and the decision to take the pilot into the two houses was mutually agreed alongside the two houses. So, we developed a readiness checklist, and it supported the indication of the two houses. Some of the prerequisites included a stable management and staff team within the house, adequate staffing levels and also children being settled and consulted on the work. Motivation, culture and ethos within the teams was also really important and we looked for a learning culture with evidence of developing practice and also evidence of reflective practice happening during reporting and supervision. The Sycamore Change Team that Mihaela spoke about also estimated the time and capacity needed to protect for the pilot and made this clear to the leadership team at Aberlour Sycamore. It's really important that change does not happen as something added to day-to-day tasks, but there's time put aside for that. So, two of the three members of the team each managed to protect a

minimum of six hours a week for observation of practice and two hours for the paperwork and providing feedback to their colleagues each week. They also estimated an additional eight to ten hours a month for meeting with house teams and managers with the senior leadership at Aberlour Sycamore and meeting with the CELCIS team to debrief, discuss learning and adapt the approach and the plan. This way they started to develop a really timely feedback loop, and this was really important in the work.

The observation phase in the two houses was carried out over a nine-month period and allowed for 77 direct observations of practice in the two children's houses. They were carried out by the Sycamore Change Team. They were known as the external observers because they did not work in the houses. Some of the observations were also conducted by an internal observation team who were based in the houses alongside their colleagues. Children and young people were consulted before the work started and throughout the pilot. The observers adopted a really relational approach. They were respectful of the house routines and activities of both the adults and the children. They started with positive feedback and they also identified elements of positive practice that was infrequently used. The aim of the feedback was to provide specific and descriptive positive feedback to strengthen the consistency of good practice and storytelling became a really important tool that we used to understand the observations and offer descriptive feedback.

So, learning together and creating space to reflect was embedded in our way of working and at the end of the pilot it was important to consolidate any learning from across the nine months. Marc took responsibility for analysing the observation forms collected and CELCIS facilitated four sessions that used a retrospective approach. We used the sailboat retrospective that some people might be aware of to facilitate these sessions, and they helped us to understand what had worked really well and why that had worked well, but also identify any barriers or challenges. And we had support from a skilled and impartial colleague at CELCIS, Laura Quinn, who co-wrote the article in the Journal as well. Laura acted as a critical friend in the work and also consolidated the learning alongside us. Laura supported us to facilitate four learning sessions within the two houses with the Sycamore Change Team that included the senior leadership team and the internal team at CELCIS. Laura also supported with analysing the data.

Of course, there were some challenges along the way over the nine-month period and some obstacles for us to collectively overcome. By far the biggest was around capacity, so the challenge of balancing the observations and the intentional use of feedback with the regular responsibilities of the adults and the houses. Flexibility was required when scheduling the observations. For example, the observation period was initially for six months, but we extended that to nine months in response to the changes in both the houses. Another challenge was around completing the observation notes, particularly at the beginning, as the observers needed some time to settle into the new role and some support around that to find the right balance when capturing and providing feedback. There were also some technical and admin barriers that slowed the feedback loop and the impact of the previous experiences of staff required some of our time and our attention.

Some staff shared initially that the idea of being observed and being offered feedback created some apprehension. They'd experienced experiences in the past that could feel embarrassing or judgmental. However, the experience that they actually had during the nine months was really positive and really supportive. It increased their confidence around receiving and offering feedback. And we know that giving and receiving feedback is a skill that can be honed. That shift reflects the attention paid by the Sycamore Change Team to take a relational approach and in ensuring space was created to prepare for the observations. And I'm going to hand you over to Karen now who'll tell you a bit more about the experiences of the staff.

Karen Bain

Thank you, Gemma. So, before the initial implementation of the practice profile, there was nervousness within the team because we were stepping into the unknown and we were the first team to ever do this. So, there was a lot of scaffolding around the team to offer that reassurance and help them understand what feedback is, what is the purpose of it and why do we need to get it. So, with that reassurance, that really helped scaffold the team and set them up for the practice profile coming into play. And then what we've seen when the feedback started, there was a real change in the culture within both houses, and the feedback became really more prominent, and it was delivered with confidence and it brought the team a lot closer together. And I think one of the nicest

quotes from the team was "it brought a close team even closer", and it really set the team up to help the young people in a different way. We totally changed the way we we've done the logs for the children, and they became really more purposeful and highlighted why we were making decisions rather than just focusing on their diary for the day, because the kids want to know why we made decisions. So that really helped the adults underpin what are we doing for these children and why are we doing it, which in turn helps the children with their goals and delivers better outcomes for our children, which we have seen across both the houses that the practice profile has been implemented.

Following the practice profile implementation, we looked at our supervision for the adults and how we can make this more in line with the practice profile. With the supervisions that were delivered before, it felt like more a tick box process. And that's a reflection on both giving supervision and receiving supervision over the years that I've been with Aberlour, and what we've done was focused more on reflections and feedback and goal setting for the adults rather than just having a set agenda. And it really opened up conversations within the team on how they feel giving feedback and how they give feedback. Because what we wanted to do was have every adult speak about how they feel giving feedback and receiving feedback. And what we found was the adults struggled more with receiving positive feedback. What they would say was, yeah, that's just what we do. That's our job. And it's like, but it's so much more than that. Why are we doing it this way? And it really helped open up conversations. And it helped to redevelop support plans and risk assessments for the kids. And it set goals for the adults over the six to eight weeks in between supervisions, which then led to a certain wider goals for the year, which again in turn worked for helping promote therapeutic work with their children and again help their children reach their full potential, which has been a great overturn for their children and young people. And it also helped build up confidence within the team in delivering all this work because kids are kids, and our kids very much want to just play on Xboxes and devices, where there was a real drive from the team to do so, so much more with our kids and help set different goals and look at the at the bigger picture on why we do what we do. So, there's been a real shift in the whole culture within both houses. And what we found also is when new adults come in to the team, it's just what we do. There's no big learning pack on, this is a practice profile, because it's

so ingrained within the team and this is the way the culture is within Sycamore. I'll just send you over now to Marc Blyth.

Marc Blyth

Thank you, Karen. I was part of the external observation team as Gemma discussed. I think part of that was there was a lot of emphasis put on the external team, mentioning Andy, Chelsea and myself, but it was so much bigger than that. And none of it would have happened without having a senior leader basically steering the ship for us. Sometimes they're visible and sometimes they're like the pilot of a plane. You know that they're up the front, they're behind the door and you don't always see them, but you know things are getting done. And without them, none of it would have happened because inevitably what happens when you're looking to implement change is you will come across a multitude of barriers or things that will delay. And what we had was, and I'll give a shout out because I know he's on this webinar to John. Hiya, John. The amount of effort that went on behind the scenes, because what happened was, we'd actually started this process during COVID, so everything was online, you weren't allowed to access or see anybody. And we put a big drive in to see how we could deliver the scaffolding sessions to begin with, in person. This is completely relational, and you cannot do relational on a screen. I know for 300 people it's a lot easier, but when you're looking at house teams talking about the things that we're talking about, sharing those stories, it had to be in person, and we made a decision we weren't going to go ahead unless they were done in person. So, thanks to John and the efforts behind the scenes, we were able to make that happen. So, anybody who is looking to implement anything – best laid plans - but there will be things that pop up. I don't think anybody expected COVID and it certainly surprised us, but having that senior member within your team, who's able to step into that space, make those decisions and sort things out and is able to make things happen very quickly. And because in our experience, the more delays that you experience, staff teams will step into that space of 'here we go again, we've been here before. This is something else that's come in. Is this going to be something else that disappears after 6 to 8 months?' So yeah, having your senior leader needs to be the person who's got the passion or just as much passion as everybody else around it. So, I will thank John for that one because there was a lot of work put in by John.

Change is fluid. It moves; it surprises you. It can feel stagnant at times because it's going to be very, very small steps. And I think we need to be mindful of that. There will be barriers that come up, and it will impact on how people view it during those times. And I think it's important to remember to bring people into that discussion, hold that discussion with them, don't let people sit with it. As a team we had to be very open. We weren't there to judge, we were there to listen because we were there learning alongside. This was a new experience for us. The practice profile was new to us. The whole experience of implementing something quite groundbreaking was completely new. So, we had to make sure that the staff teams understood that we were on the journey with them. We weren't doing this to them; we were doing it alongside them. And I think for any type of change, I think in the past things have been handed to staff teams. You go and do that while we keep on doing what we're doing. And typically, they fail. And I think we can see it across a multitude of things; we've certainly experienced it a multitude of times within Aberlour. So yeah, doing it alongside and being part of it is certainly key.

How do we keep it going? The sustainability - there's always excitement when you start something new and you've got all this input. But inevitably what will happen is gradually our focus moves across to implementing that across other houses within our service. And part of that is making sure that you offer the support within those teams to make sure that they are ready to not completely be independent from it - people will always need support - but taking that step back and being available to them when they need you. At the same time, you can't just put in, we'll do this for six months and after those six months, that's it, we are finished. There's a complete deadline date. We had to do a three-month extension because we were aware that the teams were nearly ready, but they just needed that little bit more time to take them to that point that they were able to take things forward themselves and then allowing them that space to keep on practising. Certainly, because after those nine months, it wasn't a case of everybody is the perfect practitioner and everything is fixed. It wasn't about that. It was about making sure that people understood how to use the practice profile, how, as Karen said, how to take that into supervision. What is the purpose of supervision? How can I become a better practitioner? What do I need to work on and what is going well? Because as Karen said, the amount of experiences that we had holding reflections with staff teams, and they would talk about what wasn't going well and rarely would they mention what was going well.

And that was part of our role was to highlight to them. Here's what we have seen. That was an excellent piece of work that you had done, but they wouldn't recognise it to begin with. And I think once the team got to the point, they were able to do that, that's when you knew you were getting ready to step back and start thinking about the other houses. So yeah, it's about affording the time and the respect to people to keep it driving forward.

The learning culture was mentioned earlier on, it's not about being perfect before you implement change, but what you do need to be is in that learning space. When we were identifying our houses, because of a multitude of staff changes, as we typically see in social care, we had two houses who were in that space. We had other houses that were in kind of a transition space. So, we'd have been unfair on those houses that were in transition space to step into them. They weren't ready. They're ready now, but at that time they weren't ready. So it's about understanding that you don't have to be perfect. What perfect looks like, I don't think anybody actually really knows, but we're certainly striving to get there. But, certainly have an understanding that it has to be a learning space rather than perfection - and a great deal of honesty. And I think that this goes across all aspects of our life. If we want to make positive change in our lives, we need to be honest. And don't get me wrong, when we had the scaffolding sessions, that brought up a lot of difficult conversations because we had to recognise our practice in the past. You have to understand that to get where you're going, you need to know where you've been, and you need to know where you're at. You need to understand your journey and that journey will be different to every individual service, every organisation. We're all on our own journeys. But yes, having those honest conversations without judgement and having those reflections alongside each other and at times putting an arm around each other because they can be very, very difficult conversations. But I think that laid the foundation for us to move forward. It's key to understand that this wasn't about performance management, as we've mentioned before, it's about stepping into a space that generates meaningful conversation and reflection on practice. And that was for the observation team as well. We were very open to people feedback, and we encourage people to feedback to us and say here's what I see within your practice because what we've done is, we embedded ourselves within the houses. We weren't near with a clipboard saying oh, you've done this wrong, you've done this right. It was about please direct us on what you

would like to do in the house today. And that may be going out with children to an activity or going shopping and doing a bit of work around life skills, or it may be just the menial typical day-to-day running in the house of cleaning toilets. We were there to be used as a staff member but being able to feedback our observations. And I think it is the only way you can feedback effectively - if you're actually part of it and embedded in it. And it was certainly a great learning experience for ourselves doing that. The ultimate goal of this is about enabling staff to become the best practitioners that they can be so that children have got the best possible care that they can have. That is the ultimate goal. And although we have the practice profile and it's taped up and printed and it's nice and shiny, it is there to be edited, we won't sit still on it. We will keep adding and editing it as we go and reviewing it. There was a question around how does it feel to have somebody come in and observing you? So, we made the conscious decisions that we would have people that were familiar with the whole staff teams across all the houses and the children because ultimately, we are entering the children's houses. This is where they live. It's not a workplace; it is the children's houses. So, although we had conversations with staff around what was going to be happening around the process, we sat down with the children individually and sought their permission, saying I know that we come in the houses, but we're going to be coming in for a different purpose now. How do you feel about that? And we explained it to them - and all credit to the children - they went, well, we see you anyway so that's OK. But I think it's important to seek their permission because sometimes we can forget that this is the children's houses and the footfall going through houses can be too high at times. So, we were very conscious about that. Building trust is another key element. And I think a lot of that came from us being in and being alongside. It's very hard to build trust in the process of you're the person standing back and you're not sharing. You need to be alongside and sharing. As we always say, it's doing alongside rather than doing to. And it's something that we keep going back to because I think in the past, that's why certain things probably failed is because it was done to, rather than done alongside. It was previously mentioned about scaffolding and, and the whole purpose of the scaffolding was to firstly familiarise people with the process, how is this going to look? How do people feel about it? And secondly was to introduce new concepts specifically around feedback. Because the whole purpose of the observation was, we would be feeding back significantly more than what people were used to. And there's quite a massive barrier to the word feedback. It comes with negative

connotations and that's what we found out through the scaffolding sessions. And it was quite interesting because people were even asking us to change the word feedback. So there was a bit of discussion around that, but it's not necessarily the word, it's the weight that's been put on the word and your experience of feedback in the past. So, anybody that's considering bringing in change and looking to observe it, I think the importance of really getting down to how people feel about certain processes - because we've all got different experiences - that was key to the current success that we have. We're certainly not going to put our hands up and say that's us finished. We're still on that process. And the storytelling. We have to revisit the stories from the past and how people felt about those. And obviously there'd been a lot of changes around restraint and that was certainly a big one and the journey that we've been on with that and how people felt about it. And how do you move people where you have people that have worked for you for say, 10 years, then you have new people coming in. How do you bring them together? Because they're coming in to - you're trying to change a culture to a large degree, and you have new people coming in who could very easily just follow the culture that was already existing. But as Karen mentioned, for new people coming in, this is just the experience that they've experienced. So, it was a positive, but we're certainly aware of the fact that we were trying to shift our culture and shift people's points of views.

And it takes time. It definitely takes time. And you need to make yourself available. It will never be finished. We will continue going there, will continue to be supportive, but we need to make sure that we could continue to gather the data. Without the data, how do you understand where you've been or where you're actually at and what needs to change? And so, there was a lot of data gathering done through the house teams, through set questions at three different stages to pull that together. So certainly, I mean, I could talk for a long time on this because there's so many different elements.

There's a lot in there, but, key points from that are, I would say; afford people the time, the respect and the understanding that change can be very difficult, especially when there's been experiences in the past where it's been change after change after change. So, thank you very much and I'll pass you back to Mihaela.

Mihaela Manole

Thank you. [Here is the link to the page](). There you can find the practice profile. You can find the short video on how the practice profile was developed and a [series of three blog posts written by Marc]() which talk about Marc's experience throughout this change journey. Thank you very much for listening.

Craig McCreadie

Thank you to Mihaela, Gemma, Marc and Karen. There's so much there and I think that has done a brilliant job of tying up some of what's just been present throughout the webinar. So, I'm going to have a little attempt to try and do that and then we'll have a little short time for some questions. But just some quick reflections. I wrote down the sentence about the importance of that: "This work brought a close team even closer". I thought that was a very powerful thing to hear in the telling of the story and also just the thing that we experience all of the time. We certainly often observe it in our work a lot, just the discomfort that people have in receiving positive feedback and being willing to take that on board. But I think some of the elements that were just really present in what the four of you've just shared that I think has been present throughout the webinar is the importance of time and allowing that, creating it, finding it. The importance of a continuous learning culture and the value of feedback and how feedback is understood, shared, received in the way that Marc was just talking about, about the weight that some people are giving it. The importance of adaptive practice and leadership, which was clearly present in a lot of the work there. And also just the overwhelming sense of relationships being a key active ingredient in this kind of change work. And I think there was something really important to pay attention to around the granular nature of some of this work, particularly through observing practice and how exposing that must have felt and could have felt. And how relationships were probably ultimately the thing that kind of insulated that and kept it safe and kept it progressive. Thank you to the four of you for sharing that.

We have got time just for a few questions. The chat you may have noticed has been particularly lively. So, we've been trying to work our way through that. Thank you to all of our attendees for that. Seonaid is it OK if I come to you first. I might just try and get around one each before we run out of time. I may come back to you for a second question if we

have the time. But the first one is just a fairly straightforward one – at this end of the work, looking back on it, was that anything that really surprised you?

Seonaid Graham

Probably a positive of just how staff actually did embrace it because it had almost like a domino effect, even though there were challenges sometimes in mindsets. I think what was good was the staff realised that this model was going to be here for a while - it wasn't just a one hit wonder or something that we do for three years - and the fact that four years down the line and they're still embracing it and it's still evolving is just absolutely lovely to see. So that's probably a positive one. Anything else that surprised me? Again, a positive of the kids, the impact on the children in all that different language about wanting to stay there forever, feeling loved, feeling wanted. Because the carers change that approach. And I'm a huge advocate of that kind of language. It's the language I would use with my own children, hence why it's really lovely to hear our children say that in the children's houses. So probably two positives there.

Craig McCreadie

Brilliant. Thank you, Seonaid. And some of that there, you know, about we didn't want it to be a three-year kind of one hit and then four years later embrace new change again, I think we can see the notes of that and what we've heard from our colleagues Aberlour as well. I'm just thinking about some of the work that the Care Inspectorate are attempting to take forwarding at the point in time that they are and what that might look like as that continues to evolve. I think there's some lovely synergy across those. Mary and Anthony, I'll put one to you for now. Again, I might come back for a second if time allows, but there was just a recognition that at this moment in time across residential child care, recruitment and attention is obviously a significant issue. People are very aware of that and there was just a reflection on the role that this new approach may play in attracting people to come and work in care services for children and young people. Is there anything that you would want to reflect on there?

Mary Morris

That's a big, big, big challenge, isn't it in Scotland? And again, I think in The Promise, in the original report it was highlighted that, recognising culturally in Scotland, it's a, it's a big, big task. I think certainly we can play our part by positively promoting some of the great work that is happening. And, also I definitely think there's room to talk about the rewards and what a rewarding job it is working with children and young people. You know, it has its moments, like all jobs, but it is incredibly rewarding and can make a huge difference. So, if there's things that we can do to promote that - but I think it's wider, I think it's qualifications, experience, lots of organisations across Scotland working with schools, with universities, the SSSC, our fellow regulator. So, I think there's things we can do, but I think it is much, much broader than just the Care Inspectorate. It's a big ask really. And I think just for Scotland really to value and recognise the role for our children in Scotland.

Craig McCreadie

Thank you. I think we recognise just the vast complexity that sits within that is a bit of a wicked problem to try and address. But I appreciate you speaking to that point that came through in the chat. I'm just going to have one more question for our colleagues from Aberlour and then I'm going to move us towards a bit of a conclusion. So, for any of the four of you that want to grab this one, you talked a lot about the importance of the role of leadership and the space they occupied and the change work. So the question that's come in is how do you keep leadership connected and supportive?

Marc Blyth

I'll comment that. A big part of that is about I think the structure that we have. We're not removed. And as a leadership team, the managers and senior residential workers, assistant managers all come together frequently. So, I think there's already that communication line and people are available. I think there's been a lot of work done in the past to make sure that relationship is there and people are visible and the senior leadership team as well also make efforts to come out and visit. I think it's not just a name at the end of an e-mail with a little emoji, it is real people. And that's probably been about a ten-year process. It's, it's not something that happens overnight. So, the reality is the practice profile itself was five years in the making. It's not something that we spent six

months pulling together. So it is that understanding that to make big changes and having those leadership connections, it will take a significant period of time. But I think somebody's got to pose the question first, how do we do it and then you figure it out from there. So it's as I say, it's different for everybody, but we had already been on quite a significant process before that.

Gemma Watson

I think having one senior leader who was aligned to the work was really helpful as well across not just the pilot, but the years of work that came before that in terms of developing the practice profile. Someone who's really engaged in the work and understood the work well. And also granted permission to the team in terms of capacity and time and understood what change takes. And about like everyone's been saying today in terms of it taking time and not layering on to people who had committed to be involved in this work, but actually carving out some time specifically to do this and having the buy in from senior leadership was really important.

Craig McCreadie

Thank you, Gemma, we did have more questions. I just want to say thank you to everyone who's contributed through the chat or through the Q&A. The level of interest and chat has been really high, really dynamic and we're taking that as a bit of a positive saying that this is a space that's felt like a meaningful space to be in. And there are topics here that people would like to get their teeth into a little bit more. I'm just going to start to move towards the conclusion of this session.

What we wanted to do is give you a quick look at how do you find the Journal? How do you find the, the those over [20 years' worth of incredible content there](#)? So we wanted to give you a very quick tour of it. So you simply go to the, the CELCIS homepage and then you'll see like the secondary menu there, you'll see the word Journal on a blue tab and that is the means by which you can access over 20 years' worth of content. It is a phenomenal resource. When I first joined CELCIS, I spent a number of months going through some of the 20 year back catalogue and doing a bit of an inventory of it. And there's a real phenomenal story to be told about the work around this this sector. So please visit there and have a look at the content. And also in relation to the Journal, we

should have said this after the website. The next Journal is actually due to be published very soon. It will probably be open by mid-November. So please keep an eye out for that. It's going to be an excellent issue. Just our last two things when we send out all the resources and everything related to today. And then finally, just a huge thank you to lots of people, a huge thank you to our speakers. We know that we didn't give you loads of time each and we know that it can sometimes be harder to have less time to speak on such massive topics. So, thank you so much for all of the preparation and energy that you put into preparing and delivering today. I think there were three fantastic inputs. A huge amount of thanks to the team in the background, Michelle, who's held us together, and Amy who's been supporting, our Communications colleagues who have helped us promote this, everyone who's connected to the Journal. There's been quite a large cast of people who've made this happen today. I just want to express my gratitude to everyone. Thank you.

Look out for future communication about what we think we might do with this space next. But for now, thank you so much for attending facts to being part of this first experience, and we hope to see you again in the future. Thanks everybody. Take care.

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