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## INSPECTION REPORT HIGHLIGHTS GOOD PRACTICE & MULTI-AGENCY WORK IN BORDERS

An inspection report of services in the Scottish Borders that protect children has highlighted good practices and joint working between local agencies.

The report, published today, follows a visit by the Care Inspectorate to the Scottish Borders in September 2011. The visit was part of a national series of visits to all local authority areas in Scotland to examine the services provided by health, the police, the council and the Children's Reporter, as well as voluntary and independent agencies, to protect children and keep them safe.

In Borders, the inspection team identified steady progress in many areas. Its report highlights a number of examples of good practice which it states are driven by a clear shared vision, values and aims and improved partnership working between NHS Borders, Scottish Borders Council, Lothian and Borders Police and partner agencies.

Among the strengths identified was evidence of children, young people and their families having positive and respectful relationships with staff. There is evidence that staff clearly listen to their views and that children and young people benefit from the support offered to them.

In addition the inspection team identified that staff are alert to the signs that children and/or young people are at risk and respond promptly, contributing to clear, effective and sensitive action plans to keep children safe in the short term.

The report also identified areas of development around early and effective intervention and longer term support within a locality model. Already aware of this issue, local agencies have been developing plans to address this. These plans are at an early stage and will take time to show improvement in this new locality approach.

John Raine, Chair of the Multi-Agency Child Protection Committee said: "I am extremely pleased to receive what is a positive inspection report and requires no follow up inspection.

"The report makes it clear that good progress has been made in Borders. It shows that agencies are committed to providing high quality and effective services to protect children and young people and there is clear evidence that this is happening. This is a credit to the staff from all agencies involved.

"However there are always areas of improvement and agencies will continue to work even more closely together to improve our policies and practices. "

Director of Social Work for Scottish Borders Council, Andrew Lowe agreed, saying: “We are always looking for improvement in child protection. We do this by working with others and it is therefore heartening to read this report but we also see learning points here and we will continue to work on these.”

Sheena Wright, Director of Nursing and Midwifery for NHS Borders said: “Agencies within the Borders are committed to working together to protect and support children at risk within our area. This report shows that we deliver an efficient and effective service. However, we are not complacent and will continue to develop our multi-agency approach and improve services to keep children safe within the Scottish Borders.”

### **Notes to Editors**

The report ‘Joint Inspection of services to protect children and young people in the Scottish Borders Council area’ is available online at: [http://www.scswis.com/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=471&Itemid=378](http://www.scswis.com/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=471&Itemid=378)

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