

## **Local Government and Communities Committee Child Poverty Inquiry**

### **Scottish Children's Reporter Administration Comments**

SCRA welcomes the opportunity to provide written evidence to the Local Government and Communities Committee on its Child Poverty Inquiry.

This response includes an outline of research undertaken by SCRA in Edinburgh into the links between deprivation and the numbers of children subject to compulsory measures of supervision, as well as some general comments on child poverty in relation to children referred to the Reporter.

### **SCRA Submission**

SCRA conducted research in Edinburgh<sup>1</sup> which clearly shows that children living in the most deprived areas are more likely to be subject to compulsory interventions in the form of Supervision Requirements than those in the most affluent areas.

For instance, in the ward with the highest multiple deprivation within the city, 7% of children were subject to Supervision Requirements, while in the least deprived ward there were no children who were subject to Supervision Requirements. Nationally, children subject to Supervision Requirements average 1% of the child population.

SCRA's research on Edinburgh found that the majority of children subject to Supervision Requirements (72%) had been referred to the Reporter under grounds of care and protection. Whilst 26% of those subject to Supervision Requirements, had both offence and non-offence grounds of referral, only 1.7% had been referred on offence grounds only.

These findings suggest that experience of poverty and deprivation can impact on important aspects of children's lives, including their welfare and also on offending behaviour. While it would be inaccurate to suggest that deprivation is a failsafe predictor of future involvement with the Children's Hearings System, it may be a contributing factor.

SCRA suggests that consideration should be given to tailoring monitoring, analysis and policy in relation to poverty and deprivation specifically towards the needs of children and young people. This will be particularly important given Scotland's commitments to contributing to meeting the UK Government's targets for halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020, enabling evidence-based policy to be developed and implemented.

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<sup>1</sup> *Child Deprivation and Compulsory Measures: Exploring the links in Edinburgh (SCRA) 2006*

Targeting children and young people offers an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty which too often leads those who have grown up amid poverty and deprivation to have to raise their own children in similar circumstances.

SCRA would be happy to provide further information or clarification of any of the points above should it be considered necessary by the Committee.

**SCRA**  
**30 June 2008**