

Berkshire West Local Safeguarding Children Boards

Annual Report 2018-2019



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Foreword

from the Statutory Safeguarding Partners – Berkshire West

Welcome to the Berkshire West Local Safeguarding Children Boards annual report for 2018/2019.

This annual report provides an account of the work undertaken by the Berkshire West Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) and multi-agency partners from April 2018 to March 2019. The report describes progress against our priorities to further promote the wellbeing and safeguarding of children in Berkshire West. Summaries of the activities, performance and impact of this work are contained within this report and we have outlined where we still need to make improvement and future challenges.

The 2018/19 year has seen some significant changes to our partnership working arrangements, initially fulfilling our vision to bring the three separate LSCBs for Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham together, whilst also planning for the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The move towards our new partnership is detailed further on page 14. In compiling this report, it has both reiterated the positives that can be gained by working across a Berkshire West footprint, but also the difficulties in bringing three separate Boards together. All three areas have identified similar future challenges and ongoing issues, but it also reflects a partnership system where subgroups across Berkshire West have continued to work independently of each other with little cohesion between them. Our new arrangements, with the benefit of the independent scrutineer function should allow us to work very differently, with clear wider purpose and enabling us to achieve and evidence the benefits of working in a strong partnership for the children, families and practitioners within Berkshire West. The 2018/19 year focussed predominantly on looking inwardly to review and revise our partnership arrangements, but in 2019/20 we now wish to look outwards, focussing on jointly solving local and Berkshire West wide issues.

We would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the members of the Board and subgroups for their work to safeguard children; in particular the help and support provided by our previous LSCB Independent Chair, Alex Walters, in enabling us to get to where we are now. We also thank all the staff and volunteers within the local workforce and community for their commitment, to safeguarding children and young people in Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham.



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Our Local Context

Berkshire West Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Arrangements

The three LSCBs of West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham were created in 2006 and they have shared the same Independent LSCB Chair for much of that time. However the three LSCBs have continued as distinct entities. Berkshire has 6 LSCBs and in the interest of efficiencies, size and the fact that there are a number of pan Berkshire agencies, have always had shared sub groups –Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP), Policies and Procedures, Section 11 and Child Sexual Exploitation for a number of years. Additionally the Berkshire West LSCBs have shared their Learning and Development sub group and more recently a Case Review sub group.

Agreement was reached in 2017 by the three Directors of Children’s Services of the Local Authorities to recruit to an Independent LSCB Chair with the specific intention of merging the 3 West of Berkshire LSCBs. This was undertaken and Alex Walters was appointed and took up the role in September 2017.

The LSCB Independent Chair presented a merger proposal report at all three local LSCBs in January 2018 and each Board agreed to support a task and finish group comprised of representatives from the three main safeguarding partners. This provided a mechanism to take the work forward and provide a forum for open discussion to ensure all areas/partners have their voices heard in achieving the merger of the 3 LSCBs.

The purpose of the group task and finish was to plan and oversee the merger of the 3 LSCBs over a ‘transition’ year (2018/19) so that by June 2019, we were in an informed position to publish our intentions to fulfil our safeguarding governance, oversight and assurance in line with the new Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance.

Principles underpinning a merged Berkshire West LSCB:

- The merger provides the opportunity to strengthen and co-design partnership safeguarding arrangements to further improve outcomes for children in the west of Berkshire.
- The merger provides the opportunity to create workable strategic arrangements that fit form to function and are proportionate, efficient, effective and adequately resourced.
- The merger provides the opportunity to reduce the current duplication and maximize efficiencies for a number of statutory partners.
- The merger provides the opportunity to share learning and enhanced reach across a wider geographical footprint.

Our vision for safeguarding:

We work together as a multi-agency partnership to coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by member agency represented on the Board and to assess whether they are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities to help, protect and care for children and young people. We will also be working closely with other partnership boards across the West of Berkshire such as the Health and Well-being Board, the Community Safety Partnership and Corporate Parenting Board. Berkshire West LSCB's are accountable and hold other's to account for the effectiveness of services to children and young people.

We will achieve our vision by:

- Being an influential, strategic Board that improves and evidences sustainable effective performance
- Identifying and prioritising local issues and demands relating to the safeguarding of children and young people;
- Monitoring and evaluating the quality of practice and services including early help, and the experience of children, parents and front line staff are included as an essential source of information;
- Further development of the preventive, proactive and responsive work of the LSCBs in the West of Berkshire as set out in Chapter 3 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015;
- Having close working arrangements across pan Berkshire and particularly the three LSCBs (Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire) with joint sub-groups, joint audits and other work around shared priorities ;
- Offer a constructive challenge and support to partner agencies and holding each other to account
- Ensure national and regional developments and learning are incorporated into the work of the LSCB and promote these locally;
- Promoting the safer recruitment and appropriate training of the children's workforce in agencies working with children;
- Commissioning reviews of serious cases and disseminating the learning;
- Having an effective communication strategy to raise awareness of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;

Our Values

- We will be honest and clear about the difference we are making for children and young people
- We will respectfully challenge and support each other to ensure we are making a difference
- We will all take responsibility for helping each other to improve outcomes for children and young people
- We will value difference to help us to improve
- We will look to hold to account rather than to blame
- Everything we do will benefit children and young people
- We will be courageous
- We are all in it together – as a Board we accept collective responsibility for our performance

Reading Context and Safeguarding Snapshot as at 31st March 2019

Currently 162,666 residents and 66,000 households live within the Reading borough boundary. Reading has a very diverse population, with 35% now belonging to a Black and Minority Ethnic community, the third highest proportion in the South East after Slough and Oxford. Although the pace of change in Reading has been rapid, there is a clear mismatch between outstanding economic success and the level of benefits to local people, leaving a significant gap between Reading's most and least prosperous neighbourhoods. Reading has, within a small geographic area, some of the most affluent and the most deprived neighbourhoods in the whole of the Thames Valley.

36,433 children & young people under 18 live in Reading (22.5% of the total population)	12173 contacts were made to Children's Social Care from April 2018 to March 2019	18.3% of the contacts received in March 2019 progressed to Children's Social Care	2765 referrals were made to Children's Social Care from April 2018 to March 2019
27.2% of contacts and referrals received in March 2019 progressed to single assessment	81% of single assessments were completed within 45 days	567 children recorded as Child in Need in March 2019	251 children subject to a CP plan
265 children were looked after by the Local Authority	130 Care Leavers in March 2019	29% children are subject to a repeat protection plan	32% of Children Looked After are placed 20+ miles away from home
9 CYP were identified as at risk of exploitation in March 2019	237 domestic crimes with children attached in Q4 2018/2019	89 children referred to CAMHS Tier 3 in Q4 2018/2019	20 CYP were living in B&B accommodation with their families in March 2019
1285 pupils with a statement of special education needs (EHCP)	5 secondary school permanent exclusions in the autumn term	0 primary school permanent exclusions in the autumn term	8 CYP accessing substance misuse services in March 2019

West Berkshire Context and Safeguarding Snapshot as at 31st March 2019

Generally West Berkshire's children and young people do well. They are safe and healthy, achieve high educational standards through attending good schools, and move on into higher education or employment and a secure and prosperous future. West Berkshire makes up over half of the geographical area of the county of Berkshire - covering an area of 272 square miles. There is good opportunity for work with low unemployment. The population of West Berkshire is 153,837 with majority of the population identifying themselves as White British.

35,394 children & young people under 18 live in West Berkshire (**23%** of the total population)

7953 contacts were made to Children's Social Care from April 2018 to March 2019

26% of contacts led to a referral

1869 referrals made to Children's Social Care from a year to 31st March 2019

16% of contacts and referrals had a recommended outcome of assessment

96% of single assessments were completed within 45 days

754 children recorded as Child in Need in March 2019

117 children subject to a CP plan

175 children looked after by the local authority

131 Care Leavers in March 2019

15 children subject to a CP plan for 1 year+

26% of Children Looked After were placed 20+ miles from their home address and outside

11 CYP at risk of Exploitation in March 2019

158 domestic crimes with children attached in Q4 2018/2019

106 children referred to CAMHS Tier 3 in March 2019

26 unaccompanied asylum seeking children in the local authority as of 31st March 2019

928 pupils with a statement of special education needs (EHCP)

5 Secondary school permanent exclusion during the autumn term

3 primary school permanent exclusions during the autumn term

47 CYP accessing specialist substance misuse services in March 2019

Wokingham Context and Safeguarding Snapshot as at 31st March 2019

Wokingham is a relatively affluent area but has notable pockets of higher deprivation and has the lowest rate of child poverty on the UK mainland. The majority of children and young people in Wokingham are achieving good outcomes, are healthy, and appear to be well supported by their parents and carers.

Wokingham proportionally has higher numbers of younger children (aged 5 to 14) than average England percentages and we have more children than our neighbours. The population of Wokingham is 167,979.

39,532 children & young people under 18 live in Wokingham (**23.5%** of the total population)

9321 contacts were made to Children's Social Care from April 2018 to 31st March 2019

18.6% of contacts received led to a referral to Children's Social Care

1735 referrals made to Children's Social Care from a year to 31st March 2019

21.8% of contacts and referrals had a recommended outcome of assessment

99.6% of single assessments were completed within 45 days

633 children recorded as Child in Need in March 2019

131 children were subject to a CP plan

111 children were looked after by the Local Authority

59 children left the Local Authority Care in 2018/19

28 children subject to a Child Protection Plan for 1 year+

22% Of children are placed more than 20+ miles away from home

12 CYP identified as at risk of exploitation in January to March 2019

112 domestic crimes in Q4 with children attached

188 children referred to CAMHS Tier 3 in March 2018

4 families were living in emergency accommodation in March 2019

934 pupils with a statement of special education needs (EHCP)

18 Secondary school permanent exclusion during the autumn term

0 primary school permanent exclusions during the autumn term

18 CYP accessing specialist substance misuse services

Progress against our priorities in 2018/2019

Priority 1 – Domestic Abuse

In West Berkshire:

- Between April 2018 and March 2019 the Building Communities Together (BCT) Team coordinated the delivery of 6 DA Awareness Sessions (95 trainees) and 1 DA Champions Training Session (14 Champions trained).
- The Giving Tree - In the run up to Christmas 2018 a Christmas Tree was put in the reception of West Berkshire Council's Market Street offices covered with gift labels. On each label was written the gender and age of a child who has experienced domestic abuse in their life. There are also labels for women affected by domestic abuse, living both in refuge and in the community. There was an incredible response from West Berkshire Council staff with over 80 gift bags being donated. These were collected by colleagues from A2Dominion and distributed at Christmas.
- Blooming Strong Campaign - The Blooming Strong Campaign is a campaign that recognises strong women on the UN day for the elimination of violence against women each November. The idea of celebrating not only those women who had experienced and survived violence, but also those who had overcome a challenge or gone the extra mile for someone in the West Berkshire area, was generated and a total of 16 nominations for a Blooming Strong Aware were received. All nominees were presented with a gift bag which was hand delivered along with a Certificate of Acknowledgement by the Community Coordinator (Prevention) and Community Coordinator (Engagement).
- Peer Mentor Conference - One of the Workshops at the annual Peer Mentor Conference sought to explore through 'conversation' Risk and Protective Behaviours. There were 3 workshops throughout the day with approximately 20 students at each from a mix of the 6 secondary schools in attendance. In small groups within each Workshop the young people were supported by a facilitator in exploring their understanding of Protective Behaviours and how their knowledge could be incorporated into their peer mentor responsibilities. Protective Behaviours is an approach to personal safety made up of two themes and seven strategies that is used extensively to help with bullying prevention, abuse prevention, crime prevention, counselling and mentoring.

In Wokingham

The Wokingham LSCB secured funding from the Community Safety Partnership to deliver:

- Three training sessions to 98 multi-agency practitioners in March 2019. The 'hard hitting' 30 minute long Applied Theatre Production was developed in association with The City of London Police to raise awareness amongst police officers, social workers and other professionals of the issues surrounding Domestic Abuse & Violence. This was for professionals to understand coercive control and what children might witness on a daily basis. There was immediate feedback from professionals saying 'it reminded us of the horror that some families go through - writing reports doesn't bring to life the impact and harm for children living in these households'

- Tough Love' is an Alter Ego performance was delivered to 13 secondary schools and reached approximately 1500 pupils in the Borough, across the maintained, academy and independent sector and included PRU and special schools, as a preventative measure for young people to spot the signs of control that often leads to domestic abuse. The performance informed schools as to further work needed in schools to help young people recognise unhealthy relationships. Eight girls made disclosures in regard to controlling boyfriends, one disclosure resulted in a referral to Children's Social Care.
- Wokingham Borough Council Sport & Leisure Team have hosted 32 weeks of Self Defence sessions in Wokingham. The project worked with females aged 12+ with the aim to reduce incidences of violence against women.

In addition:

- A free monthly legal 'drop in' session has been piloted for victims of domestic abuse. In consultation with victims to enable easier access to advice these sessions are now available via telephone.
- Berkshire Women's Aid (B.W.A.) provide school based support and training to children and families.
- The Multi Agency Tasking and Coordinating replaced the Domestic Abuse Risk Identification Meeting (DARIM) in Wokingham, the forum where medium and low risk repeat domestic abuse incidents are reviewed. Police will work to target perpetrators to reduce the repeat offences of domestic abuse. Identified perpetrators will be referred into the MATAC process where key partners will agree a bespoke set of interventions using a domestic abuse 'toolkit'. This can include targeting and disrupting perpetrators and or supporting them to address their behaviour. Victims of domestic abuse will continue to receive the same support

In Reading

- 469 clients were provided outreach support, and 109 clients attended the Choices or Self –Esteem course. User feedback of the support sessions remains extremely positive. In 2018/19 100% of those that completed the courses stated that they found them useful and, critically, that they felt safer as a result of it
- 55 perpetrators of Domestic Abuse were supported to reflect on and change their via a Reading Borough Council funded perpetrator programme.
- The Domestic Abuse Forums continue to be successful, with a further 4 held this year. The forums remains an operationally focused session involving a presentation and opportunity for wider discussion, with an average of 50 front line workers in attendance at each event.
- The Reading MARAC has seen increases in cases over the past three years for victims with disabilities and from residents who define as LGBT+. Reading is above both the Thames Valley and National reporting levels, highlighting the work that has been done in the area to target under-represented groups. Strategic partners of DASG believe the increase in referrals from these groups can be attributed to improved reporting opportunities and increased training and awareness. Both areas are still below the Safelives target, however, in particular the trend for referrals relating to an adult with a disability indicates significant progress in this area (increased from 0- 11%).

Next Steps/Challenges

- In Reading, the Domestic Abuse Strategy is being reviewed and refreshed. It will be out for consultation in September 2019.
- In Wokingham, increased awareness raising and training has resulted in a pressure on the commissioned service to keep pace with the referral rate.
- For all three areas, the competing demands between reactive intervention and early help intervention when limited resources demand that you prioritise one. In an age of reducing budgets there is a risk that the focus of activity will shift from early help and prevention to reactive intervention however if unresolved the issues may return with significantly increased costs required to achieve a sustainable resolution. Sustaining services within a context of diminishing resources as the demand increases will be a challenge for all.
- In an increasingly 'digitised' world and with a generation of young people growing up where social media is integral to their lives, understanding and addressing the potentially negative impact social media could have on safeguarding and their understanding of healthy relationships will be a significant challenge.
- For BWSCP, there is a need to work more closely with the three Community Safety Partnerships (Building Communities Together in West Berkshire) to ensure there is no duplication in work and that children's safeguarding within domestic abuse situations is fully understood by all partners.

Priority 2 – Exploitation

Across Berkshire West, the partnership sub groups have moved from a focus on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) to a wider view of exploitation to include criminal exploitation of children, predominantly via gangs, and starting to understand the role of contextual safeguarding in our assessment processes.

What have we done?

Across Berkshire, leads for Exploitation come together to discuss Countywide approaches to tackling issues at the Pan Berkshire Exploitation Sub Group. Within 2018/19, the key achievement of this group was the launch of the new pan Berkshire Simple Screening Tool for schools and other agencies to use to assist them in identifying indicators of exploitation. This ensures that all practitioners have just one consistent tool to complete to enable them to identify whether additional help from statutory agencies may be required.

In West Berkshire:

- The response to children who have gone missing has been robust with a substantial increase in the take up of return home interviews and a quick multi-agency response to those where risk is identified.
- The 'Risking It All' theatre production travelled to secondary schools in the area to highlight issues of exploitation, online abuse, substance misuse and grooming – that was well received by pupils and staff highlighting their greater awareness of the risks and issues involved.
- During the last year the scope of the risk assessment conference (EMRAC) was increased to deal with child criminal exploitation in addition to child sexual exploitation, this change was embraced by the different agencies represented and has enabled practitioners to keep more young people safe.
- The Building Community Together Partnership secured funding to deliver the 'Click' performances to nine primary schools reaching approximately 700 pupils addressing online safety, health relationships and online grooming.

In Reading:

- Successful transition of our focus to broader exploitation issues, in particular criminal exploitation.
- Workforce development including a number of County Lines workshops and the delivery of Exploitation and Safeguarding sessions to over 200 bus drivers and 500 taxi drivers. This course is now mandatory for all taxi drivers as part of their re-licensing process.
- Positive feedback from partners regarding the weekly multi-agency Missing Children meetings, continuing to ensure a rapid response to all children reported missing in Reading.
- Review of data from comparative neighbours reassured us that our response to missing children and the offer of return home interviews was robust and timely.

In Wokingham:

- The refreshed Child Exploitation Strategy and Terms of Reference now includes the wider child exploitation agenda.
- A SEMRAC/EMRAC workshop for 80 Police, sexual health nurses and social workers explored contextual safeguarding and the role of all agencies to identify and respond to extra-familial risk to children. The sessions raised awareness of the impact adverse childhood experiences have on children's behaviours and the subsequent risks from peer pressure outside of the family environment.
- Community Safety Partnership funding was secured to deliver exploitation prevention performances to primary and secondary schools.
 - The 'Click' performances included online safety, healthy relationships and on-line grooming and was watched by 2315 year 5 and 6 children in years 5 and 6 in Wokingham.
 - The performance 'Tough Love' addressed coercive control that can lead to exploitation was delivered to 13 secondary schools reaching approximately 1500 pupils in the Borough.

Next Steps/Challenges

- We need to fully embed the response to Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) whilst not losing the focus on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). There has been a reduction in CSE cases being presented to the three EMRACs and this is reflected in other Berkshire LA's. There is more work to be done on data analysis to understand whether is this because we are better at recognising what actually is CSE, rather than referrals for age appropriate relationships - are we better at addressing low level risk and preventative work, or is CSE being minimised?
- In West Berkshire we need to focus on responding to the changing threat posed by County Lines in West Berkshire
- In Reading, the lack of suitable local interventions and services such as mentoring schemes designed to support victims of criminal/drug exploitation needs to be resolved.
- In Wokingham, there have been several changes to the Chair of the group due to the numerous change in senior leaders in Wokingham this has impacted on the work of the group.

Priority 3 – Supporting the LSCBs through the planning and implementation of the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

Background:

In November 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned a review of LSCBs and Serious Case Review and Child Death functions undertaken by Alan Wood. The subsequent legislation in response to the review is contained in the Children and Social Work Act, and in June 2018 the DfE issued a revised Working Together to Safeguard Children, which is the statutory guidance supporting the legislation. The primary change in relation to LSCBs was that the three Local Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group and Police) must take a shared responsibility to agreeing, funding and publicising their local safeguarding partnership arrangements, which will not be prescriptive. There is no longer a statutory requirement to have an LSCB or an Independent LSCB Chair, plus a number of other changes relating to the Case Review and Child Death review arrangements.

Local Approach:

Locally, we had already recognised the benefits of collaborative working and therefore the existing merger task and finish group also took on the function of establishing our preferred new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. To support this process, the LSCB Chair submitted a bid for DfE funding for the Early Adopter programme of new safeguarding arrangements and was one of 17 sites agreed nationally. This funding provided capacity for a programme manager to lead and ensure the work streams identified to support this work were progressed. This included work on Governance and accountability, independent scrutiny and quality assurance, work with the Education Sector to enable appropriate engagement with clear dissemination pathways, and clarity on the functions and resources required of the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

As an early adopter, our new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements were published ahead of the national deadline, on 30th March 2019. The new safeguarding arrangements and a child and young people's version can be found via this link: <https://www.berkshirewestccg.nhs.uk/MASA>



Reading | West Berkshire | Wokingham

What's different in the new arrangements?

The new published arrangements set out the vision and role for the partnership. We are now known as the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership, and we are the final decision making body, overseeing the multi-agency plan to protect children and safeguard their welfare in Berkshire West. Key changes include:

- There is a new role of Independent Scrutineer as we no longer have an Independent Chair.
- The Quality & Performance Sub Group has become the Independent Scrutiny Group in each locality and will include challenge and support from the Operational Independent Scrutineer.
- The 3 Statutory Partners will meet 3 times per year and will include challenge and support from the Strategic Independent Scrutineer
- There will be 2/3 wider partner forum meetings per year to share learning and good practice across the partnership.
- The role of Education colleagues within the partnership has been strengthened with the introduction of Education Safeguarding Engagement groups across each locality.
- A new group has been created to align the school safeguarding audit process across Berkshire West. This will enable all schools in our area to complete the same audit form without having to duplicate work by adhering to requirements from neighbouring authorities.
- Continuous Improvement Plan that is being delivered over the next 2 to 3 years with an aspiration of consolidating good practice
- The Communication and Engagement Subgroup will look to improve the dissemination of key safeguarding messages to children, carers, families, practitioners, faith, community, voluntary groups and all interested parties across the 3 localities.
- A new partnership website has been created and information from the old LSCB sites will be transitioned onto this one:
<https://www.berkshirwestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp>

Independent Scrutiny:

The national expectation is that having an independent person or person(s) to review what difference local services are making to outcomes for children and young people, what we're doing well (together) and what we need to improve (together) is important.

Effective Independent Scrutiny relies upon:

- Analysis of performance information.
- Multi-professional audit or reflective learning discussions.
- Understanding the lived experience of local children and young people.
- Understanding the frontline experience, strengths and challenges of frontline staff and volunteers.

In Berkshire West, we agreed that it had been difficult to evidence impact and demonstrate effective change through the existing LSCB arrangements. We recognised that we need to do things differently and in future the Independent Scrutineer will enable us to provide a more

comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the partnership. We have recruited two Independent Scrutineers (one Strategic and one Operational) to work with us to achieve effective scrutiny, provide challenge and support.

Next Steps:

- The Statutory Safeguarding Partners will continue to monitor and adapt these new arrangements, to ensure that they meet the needs to the various partners involved and, most importantly, the children and families within Berkshire West.
- Priorities for the partnership across Berkshire West will be established, with support from the Independent Scrutineers.
- The existing LSCB support roles have come together to form a Partnership Support Team. This new team will continue to evolve their key functions to best support a partnership arrangement based over three localities.
- The new website will continue to be populated. The website will allow for shared information across Berkshire West, but will also retain sections for each of the three areas ensuring that locality specific information, such as how to make a referral, remains easily accessible.
- There will be an increase in the frequency of practitioner learning based communications for the partnership.
- Ensuring we have a better understanding the views of our children, families and staff will be vital in our ongoing arrangements. Our Independent Scrutiny Groups, with support from our Independent Scrutineers, will lead on this work.
- Our training programme has significantly changed for 2019/20 to reflect the need for easy access free short courses rather than whole day training. The new programme has kept the one day Effective Multi-Agency Working training across each LA as this is a key piece of training for any new staff to understand how partners work together day to day, but we have now introduced additional 2 hour forums and learning days to be held through the year. Each forum will cover a specific topic and will be free of charge to attend for practitioners across Berkshire West. Please see our training programme via this link:

<https://www.berkshirerwestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp/training/training-strategy>

Priority 4 – Locality Based Priorities

Early Help and Targeted Prevention - West Berkshire and Wokingham

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 is clear that the provision of coordinated and effective early help services is vital to support children and families. If we can intervene early and help children and young people and their families, preventing problems in the early years, intervening earlier at every stage of a child/young person's life, we will prevent problems manifesting and escalating. Reducing the hurdles and challenges raises the potential for building resilience through prevention and early intervention, offering universal support and targeted interventions through an end to end whole systems approach.

West Berkshire

What have we done?

Family Safeguarding Model: The Family Safeguarding Model (FSM) is a way of working that enables specialist workers (drugs and alcohol, mental health and domestic abuse) to be co-located with children and family social workers. The benefits of this model include more accurate and timely assessments, combined expertise, improved case analysis and better opportunities to engage with families. FSM was designed to particularly help address issues of neglect in households. Typically these can be the most enduring challenges and the hardest to evidence. The FSM way of working has been in place for over 1 year in West Berkshire and we have begun to see clear indicators of more work being addressed in a timely way and relying less on acute level interventions (Child Protection and entering Care). Our goal is to enable children to safely live at home and this way of working has helped us significantly. Safeguarding partners such as Health, Police and Education are also experiencing the benefits of more timely skilled intervention.

Early Help: Over the year we have reviewed and re-developed our Early Help approach and strategy. The renewed positive focus in this area has enabled closer working between the front door services in Children Advice and Assessment Service (CAAS) and the Targeted Intervention Service (TIS), plus funding for joint working with Home Start. There has also been much work on reviewing the My Family Plan pilot project, and revising the tool for wider agency use via a central electronic system. The My Family Plan enables practitioners from across the partnership to record concerns and interventions, allowing progress to be tracked at regular intervals, and important information to be shared when appropriate.

Next Steps:

Over the next year there are significant plans in place to fully embed the revised multi-agency Early Help approach. This includes:

- Introducing the Family Safeguarding Model (FSM) into the front door of CAAS, in a framework of Relationship Based Practice focusing on strengths.

- Further develop and embed the electronic platform to support the My Family Plan and introduce to all partners including schools and voluntary sector through training and early help conference.
- Introduce an Early Response Pathway and develop an Early Help professional hub into the CAAS front door.
- Provide advice and guidance via the Earlier Response pathway to Schools, Family Hubs, and voluntary sector.
- Provide case specific, targeted advice and guidance to partners undertaking My Family Plans and support the formulation and continuation of My Family Plans as they progress.
- Provide Outreach support to Schools, Family Hubs, Family Support Workers, Home Start, providing outreach surgeries to identified schools, utilising data to inform target schools.
- Adopt an Early Help MASH process to engage agencies and develop My Family Plans for cases with elements of Trio of Vulnerabilities, Exploitation, Neglect and introduce multi-agency response meetings to encompass all Domestic Abuse notifications

Wokingham

Wokingham children's social care services experienced a rapid rise in demand for services in 2018, resulting in considerable pressure for the early help and children's social care teams. There was unprecedented change at Children's Leadership and Chief Executive Level over the last 18 months and combined with a high turnover of social care staff impacted on the quality of services for children in the Borough. The steps taken below will require time to embed.

What have we done?

- The DCS has established a permanent Senior Leadership Team and the Chief Executive is now permanent.
- Through self-evaluation, audit activity and inspection a continuous improvement programme is in place.
- Action has been taken to drive social work recruitment.
- There is refreshed supervision policy and training programme for managers and staff and a refreshed induction package.
- The Early Help Team have improved the Return Home Interview (RHI's) process. Children who go missing from home or care are routinely offered good-quality RHIs.

What difference has it made?

- Close liaison with the police, schools and neighbourhood wardens has improved information sharing and referrals to the exploitation and missing risk assessment conference (EMRAC) reflects a good level of awareness of risk and vulnerability across agencies.
- Stronger links with the Community Safety Partnership has promoted the children's agenda and resulted in increased funding to deliver preventative safeguarding performances to children and multi-agency professionals in the Borough including funding to deliver activities for the Youth Offending Services that sit in Early Help Service.

Next Steps

- Continuous Improvement Plan will be delivered over the next 2 to 3 years with an aspiration of consolidating good practice.
- Improved data reporting and analysis to understand the Service workflow and impact for children in Wokingham.

Supporting Reading Children's Services Improvement Journey - Reading

The LSCB continued to recognise the need for multi-agency support to Reading Children's Services to ensure that the improvements required can be achieved and sustained.

What have we done?

- Partnership colleagues have continued to be supportive participants within the independently chaired Children's Services Improvement Board (CSIB).
- The LSCB Chair routinely attended the CSIB and provided reports on the work of the LSCB and its role in practice improvement and case review.
- The multi-agency thresholds have been reviewed by the partnership and are in the process of being agreed, ready for wide dissemination across the partnership.
- In collaboration with Children's Services and partners, the LSCB developed local protocols for assessment to improve the quality and timeliness of assessments.
- Partnership colleagues have supported the move to Brighter Futures for Children.

Brighter Futures for Children

Over the last few years, Children's Services within Reading Borough Council had experienced difficulties in delivering the quality of service that the town's children deserve. Problems with retaining a stable workforce, consistency of practice, and increasingly complex cases were highlighted in an Ofsted inspection in 2016, resulting in a judgment of Inadequate.

Since this judgement, concerted efforts were made by the council with the support of a DfE Commissioner to implement an improvement plan. The council took the decision that the company model would provide the best opportunities to improve services and bring new focus to the issues faced by children and young people in the borough. Brighter Futures for Children launched in December 2018. Brighter Futures for Children is a company limited by guarantee, wholly owned by Reading Borough Council, but run by an independent Board of Directors. Brighter Futures for Children will work closely with partners in the local community and key organisations including the Council, police, public health and voluntary groups. There is real determination at all levels to make Brighter Futures for Children a success – and to improve the lives of children in Reading.

Since the Inspection in 2016, there have been a number of Ofsted monitoring visits, which have acknowledged improvement efforts whilst reiterating that much still needs to be done. <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/870>



Our Compliance with Statutory Functions

What is the LSCB?

Prior to the revised Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 required each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for their area and specified the organisations and individuals (other than the local authority) that should be represented on LSCBs.

The core objectives of the LSCB as set out in section 14(1) of the Children Act 2004 were:

- a) To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area,
- b) To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose.

The role and function of the LSCB was defined by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015:

- Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority, including what to do if concerned about a child, thresholds for intervention, allegations management, safer recruitment and training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children
- Communication and raising awareness of children's safeguarding
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners.
- Undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

Where not already captured above within the priorities, much of the work of the Berkshire West LSCBs to comply with these requirements took place within sub groups of the Board. These include groups whose focus is their local area, some which are shared across Berkshire West and some that are shared across the whole of Berkshire.

Locality Based Sub-Groups

Each locality has an Exploitation Sub Group that has been responsible for the progress of this vital area of work. Information from these groups is captured on page 12 above.

Quality and Performance Sub Groups

The role of the Quality and Performance Subgroups in Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham is to ensure there are sound mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating and auditing safeguarding activity in place, particularly in relation to front line services, and ensuring that improvements are made to deliver better outcomes for children. Also, their role is to demonstrate that we operate as a 'learning partnership' that has a strong focus on impact and effectiveness, and when necessary, escalate any identified risk in order to enable partners to carry out their statutory responsibilities. This is achieved through a supportive environment and a committed core group of partners.

The key audits undertaken and reviewed by the group have been informed by the LSCB Business Plan priorities and learning has been shared with Board members. This year we completed two Berkshire West wide multi-agency audits, demonstrating our commitment to share and learn as a Berkshire West partnership:

High Intensity Users (HIU) Audit

The audit was undertaken with the aim of identifying alternative ways to manage the risk and repeat escalation of high risk behaviours that often present in the Emergency department at Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust (RBFT). A multi-agency profile was undertaken on 15 cases and a full audit was undertaken on 12 of those cases classed as High Intensity Users. Key headlines from the audit included the managing and understanding risk, the need for effective discharge planning and identified gaps in offer.

The audit recommendations included:

- Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group with 3 Local Authority Children's Services to jointly commission a Health/ Social Care/ Early Help rapid response service based at the hospital and set up a joint commissioning process that enables the purchasing of short term bespoke services to prevent escalation into Tier 4/becoming a child in care/returning to A&E.
- Health providers with support from partners to write a single discharge planning guidance and a standard operating procedure.
- BHFT to organise a regular review of all tier 4 patients with partners to ensure discharge planning is coordinated.
- Health and Local Authorities to co-author a shared risk assessment tool for CYP in crises that cover all domains of risk.

An update on these recommendations will be expected later in 2019 to ensure evidence of progress.

Op Encompass Audit

The purpose of the audit was to evaluate whether schools/colleges found receiving the Domestic Abuse (DA) notifications from Thames Valley Police (known as Operation Encompass) beneficial and identify any issues.

Findings:

Most schools have signed up to Operation Encompass and on the whole, schools have found receiving the notifications helpful, allowing them to be mindful of the situation and put additional support in place where necessary. The main issue identified was schools not receiving DA notifications for incidents they subsequently found out about, or the notifications being received a number of days after the event.

Areas of development/recommendations from the audit included:

- The Thames Valley Police (TVP) presentation and information sharing documentation should be re-sent to all schools across Berkshire West as a reminder of how to access and what to expect. Information on what to do when a notification is received should be highlighted.
- TVP to confirm how they are approaching schools who have not yet signed up, and to identify with BWSCP colleagues.
- Schools to set up generic email addresses specifically for these notifications and share these with TVP.
- TVP to audit the process of gathering school information and the inputting of the details onto NICHE and to consider widening the criteria for a notification to be made when a child isn't present, if the circumstances of the incident could impact that child.
- There is an ongoing concern that notifications cannot be shared across police area boundaries. This is particularly an issue within West Berkshire which borders Hampshire and Wiltshire Constabularies and therefore pupils which cross the border (in either direction) to attend school are not included within this notification process. TVP continue to raise this with other forces but a solution has yet to be identified.

In addition, each local Quality and Performance group have completed multi-agency audits for their own area:

Reading

Domestic Abuse Audit

The audit was undertaken to assess the level of which children and young people experiencing domestic abuse are put at the heart of multi-agency practice in Reading. With particular regard to agencies identifying coercion and control including the risks and impacts on victims and children and young people; perpetrators are being held accountable for their actions and appropriate safety planning undertaken.

Headlines/Themes from the audit were identified as follows:

- Voice of the child not always clear, and information sharing was not consistent.
- Assessment of incidents in isolation and lack of engagement/disguised compliance by parents.
- Identification of families moving in and out of the area.

No Further Action responses in Children's Single Point of Access (CSPoA) Audit

This multi-agency audit was designed to look at contacts into CSPoA and in particular those contacts which result in 'No Further Action' (NFA). The audit focussed on a statistical analysis of the contacts into CSPoA focussing on the referrer, the nature of need and the outcome, a survey to individuals who made a contact into CSPoA and where the outcome was NFA enquiring about the purpose and outcome of the contact and a focus group of partners to gain a greater understanding of the professional rationale of concern which led to them contacting the front door.

Audit findings:

- Referrers into CSPOA – It would appear that whilst the Police are the highest referrer and a large percentage of these result in NFA this is appropriate within the context of the specified pathway e.g. Domestic abuse, missing children and National missing notifications.
- Reasons for contact - The reasons for the contact into CSPoA are determined by the Business Support Officer receiving the initial contact. The categories are broad and it not clear whether these contacts are categorised because of the presenting issues such as behaviour or due to other possible causes e.g. mental health.
- Feedback from CSPOA – There seemed to be some differences between perception of feedback from CSPoA by partner organisations. The majority of partners felt they did not receive formal feedback about their contact. The process with CSPOA is that a standard template letter is sent to the source of the contact if the outcome is NFA. This did not happen in all cases and the briefness of the letter does not help partners understand why the contact did not meet thresholds.

Missing Children Audit

The audit purpose was to consider the effectiveness of the current Thames Valley Police (TVP) and Children's Social Care (CSC) joint process on identifying risk and providing early intervention opportunities for young people who go missing and are at increased risk of exploitation.

Audit Findings

- Timeliness – Several of the cases audited found issues with timeliness of notification and this impacts greatly on the timeliness of the follow up actions such as strategy meetings, interview being completed and assessments being initiated.
- Value of Interview – the interviews were of an acceptable standard, however the form is not user friendly and can hinder the interview.
- Impact of the Missing Evaluation and Review Group – This new meeting was found to be useful as it ensures correct process is followed regarding missing episodes, ensures that all relevant agencies are as up to date as possible with the current status, plus it also provides a platform for a multi-agency discussion with valuable differing perspectives and specialisms in order to look at creative solutions to feedback to the respective agency.

A range of recommendations have been made for each of these audits and will be progressed in 2019/2020.

West Berkshire

Exploitation & Missing Risk Assessment Conference (EMRAC) Audit

This audit was undertaken for the Child Exploitation Strategic Group. EMRAC gives a wide range of professionals the structure to identify children potentially at risk of criminal and sexual exploitation and to ensure that they get the help and support they need.

Positive outcomes identified:

- The response to CSE in West Berkshire is well-established with positive attendance and information-sharing between agencies.
- Exploitation is identified and screening tools are completed.
- Planning to address the risks are well embedded with the plans being shared appropriately.
- Support provided to young people at risk of exploitation is wide ranging and there were no gaps in provision identified.
- It was evident that agencies prioritise these young people, and actively engage with them.
- The disruption and prosecution activity surrounding the cases was clear and focussed.

Learning identified:

- All screening tools sent to EMRAC administrators are attached on Care Director in an appropriate location
- To better understand the lived experience of young people at risk of Child Exploitation and what would make a difference for them
- To increase the knowledge and support available to parents of children who are at risk of exploitation through the provision of PACE resources
- To better understand the perspective of parents whose children experience exploitation and learn from their feedback

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)/Contact, Advice and Assessment Service (CAAS) Audit

The purpose of the audit was to understand the journey of our children and young people through the system, when a professional has sought advice or support from CAAS/MASH and the level of need of the child is deemed to require support from early help/targeted prevention.

Learning identified:

- Families providing informed consent will in future be automatically passed to Emotional Health Triage internally, without requiring families to go through a separate referral route.
- Additional work is required for all partners to understand the level of need that Children and Families services serve.
- That early help partners have variable levels of confidence and experience to, holistically assess, understand what impact and improved outcomes looks like and how this will be measured and engage families, particularly challenging parents in this planning and review.
- The audit suggested that the shared foundation around multi-agency early help assessment, planning and review needs development. This has directly led to the ongoing review and development of our Early Help approach, as detailed under priority 4.

Quality Assurance and Audit Service (QAAS) Audit of Repeat CP Plans

This audit reviewed the number of children/young people subject to a Child Protection (CP) plan for a second subsequent time from the 1st April 2018 – 30th September 2018. A total of 16 families were open and subject to a repeat plan during this period.

Positive outcomes identified:

- All but 2 of the of the cases reviewed had returned to a CP plan for the same reason however there was no indication that the initial plans had ended prematurely, all actions had been completed and the plans were ended through unanimous multi-agency agreement.

Learning identified:

- It may be beneficial to have a policy that all children who have been subject to a CP plan within the previous 2 years should be assessed where there has been 3 or more contacts made.
- This audit contained some flaws in that the difference between a contact and a referral was not explicit and it was not clear if there was any consideration given to the need for legal advice. This will be included in subsequent audits of repeat CP plans.

Wokingham

From discussion around emerging safeguarding themes via engagement with members of the Quality & Performance Subgroup, Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools and through analysis of exclusion data we have highlighted the escalation of cannabis use by young people across the Borough; this has resulted in an increase in anti-social behaviour and increased numbers of children attending the Pupil Referral Unit. Feedback from multi-agency practitioners and schools at the LSCB Forum in April 2018 substantiated findings that substance misuse is an increasing issue and is underreported to services.

Learning identified:

- Data reporting and systems do not currently capture substance misuse or contextual safeguarding concerns – this will be developed by the Child Exploitation Subgroup.
- A communication was circulated to parents of all secondary age children to raise awareness and the risks of cannabis/Xanax use on emotional health and impact on education and future employment.

Next steps - Independent Scrutiny Groups

From April 2019, as part of our transition to the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, the three locality Quality and Performance Sub Groups became three Independent Scrutiny Groups for Reading West Berkshire and Wokingham. As described in Priority 3 on page 14, these groups will be the vital to the ongoing role of the partnership to understand, challenge and supporting local safeguarding issues and concerns. These groups will be directly supported by the Operational Scrutineer.

Berkshire West Sub-Groups

Berkshire West LSCBs have for a number of years come together to operate shared sub groups, recognising the benefit of working together to scrutinise cases and disseminate learning to practitioners across our region or Berkshire.



Learning and Development

The purpose of the Learning and Development sub group is to lead the strategic planning and oversee the operational delivery of training. The aim of the group is to coordinate and audit the provision of sufficient high-quality learning and development opportunities that are appropriate to local needs and have a positive impact on safeguarding outcomes; holding partner organisations to account for operational delivery and uptake.

Summary of activity/achievements:

- Training Needs - the annual West of Berkshire LSCB training programme has not always been needs led, often has not reflected Board priorities and whilst there have been some new subjects introduced, on the main the courses on offer have been the same for many years. It was felt that this has contributed to low attendance on some courses. In November 2017 the Chair sent out a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) form to all partners. The response was positive and included returns from Local Authorities, Health, Probation, Education and the Voluntary Sector. The TNA form also asked questions relating to preferred learning methods. This informed the development of the 2018/2019 training programme.
- Training Audit - In November 2017, alongside the TNA a Training Audit form was sent to all partners. Again the response was positive. The audit provided assurance that adequate and appropriate safeguarding training is provided to staff and volunteers across the partnership.
- LSCB Forum - These 2 hour events take place quarterly and are hosted by each LA and Royal Berkshire Hospital in turn. Themes covered this year were Child Death Overview, Neglect and Children Looked After. Due to the success of the Neglect forum it was run again later in the year.
- Prevent (radicalisation) was identified as a gap, with agencies wanting face to face training rather than just signposting to an online course. Trainers were identified to run a short course in each of the three areas throughout the year
- Online Safeguarding training - the new Learning Pool Universal Safeguarding Children training course was launched in September 2018 and was well received.

Next Steps

- Membership of the sub-group needs to be strengthened with the terms of reference fully reflecting the requirement of members.
- To further streamline the annual training programme, building on the success of the quarterly Forums.

Case Review Group

The Case Review Group receives and reviews all cases referred to the group where staff from any partner agency within the West of Berkshire have identified potential learning.

Summary of activity/achievements:

The group has met regularly, with generally good representation. The group has continued to review those cases referred in as potentially requiring either a formal serious case review or another form of multi-agency consideration. In 2018/2019 five cases were submitted, three from Reading, one from West Berkshire and one from Wokingham. None of the cases were deemed to meet the criteria for a serious case review however two local partnership reviews were commissioned.

The process for referring cases in for group discussion has been strengthened to ensure that any case causing concern regarding multi-agency working to a partner agency is able to be discussed by the group. A clear procedure and template documentation has also been written to ensure compliance with the Rapid Review process as required by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

The group has undertaken a regular review of national SCRs to identify themes, extract learning and action points to incorporate into local training. Opportunities to link work plans with other sub groups should continue to be developed.

Learning from Case Reviews:

During this year four serious case reviews and two partnership reviews were either completed or were in progress across Berkshire West. Each of these cases was very different situations, but similar learning and recommendations were identified in relation to

- The use of dissent, professional disagreement and escalation.
- Parental history, vulnerability & risk factors
- Training
- Oversight
- Voice of the child
- Information and recording

Ongoing Challenge:

- SCRs and partnership reviews require significant time and people resource. There are an unprecedented number of reviews being undertaken in Berkshire West currently and partners are asked to be mindful of the additional pressure this puts on those involved.
- Many of the themes in national SCRs, such as the vulnerability of infants, poor mental health in teenagers and drift in multiagency management of child protection cases continue to be unchanged. It is a challenge to all case review groups to try to extract relevant

learning points, and disseminate them to the children's workforce in a way which supports professionals to protect and make effective change for children at risk of harm.

- Any cases to be reviewed by independent authors require significant funding and all partners should be aware that this request could be made retrospectively and must be aware of the cost implications.

Actions:

- The learning from SCRs will be disseminated across the workforce in a series of learning events in the autumn of 2019.
- SCR action plans will be monitored by the local Independent Scrutiny Groups to ensure actions are robustly progressed.
- The CRG will focus on identifying themes and concerns in national SCRs that resonate with local issues and challenge partners to provide assurances, or actions to improve local practice.
- A series of learning events have been arranged for autumn 2019 where learning from all completed reviews will be shared with the wider workforce across the west of Berkshire.

Pan-Berkshire LSCB Sub-Groups

All six Berkshire LSCBs have for a number of years come together to operate shared sub groups, joining together on a wider multi-agency platform to work in partnership. This allows for sharing of good practice and development of safeguarding opportunities towards improving outcomes for all children and young people across the Berkshire area. The Pan-Berkshire Sub-groups are made up of practitioners from the following:

- Bracknell Forest
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
- Wokingham
- Reading
- West Berkshire
- Slough



Policy and Procedures

The purpose of the Pan-Berkshire Policy and Procedures sub-group is to ensure that safeguarding partners across Berkshire develop and maintain high quality safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures and all policies and procedures remain in line with National policy and legislative changes.

What have we done?

- Policies and procedures continue to remain in line with Key National changes and a positive relationship with the supplier enables effective and timely updates and changes.
- A twice yearly Policy and Procedures newsletter is created for circulation following each procedure update giving details of the changes made.

Key updates agreed/implemented in the 2018/2019 year:

- **Resolving Professional Disagreement and Escalation** – following the recommendation that this chapter be reviewed in a number of recent local case reviews, the group thoroughly revised our existing guidance. The process, and the way it was presented within the procedures, was simplified, while the language in relation to levels of management/authority was clarified to be more inclusive for all practitioners.
- **Responding to Abuse and Neglect** – this chapter was significantly reviewed by the group as a whole at an exceptional meeting. As one of the core chapters, it was felt that taking a whole group approach to the review was important. The London Procedures version was used as a comparator document and a number of changes were suggested to strengthen our chapter.
- **Children Living Away from Home with Other Families** – This chapter was reviewed extensively by the group and updated to include information from the London CP procedures that built on the current information in the chapter.

- **Fabricated and Induced Illness** – This chapter was reviewed by the Designated Doctor and a number of clarifications and amendments were made along with the addition of a flow chart.

What difference has it made?

- Sub group members remain willing to take responsibility for reviewing chapters outside of the schedule provided by Tri.x and in line with our local forward planner
- Of the current 49 chapters listed in our manual, 30 have been reviewed by the group in 2018/19.
- Statutory Safeguarding Partners and Senior Managers are assured that practitioners have access to procedures that are regularly updated with changes to statutory legislation and guidance, as well as regularly reviewed to ensure local accuracy and appropriateness.
- Tri.x has used information gathered through the expertise of our sub-group to inform chapters circulated to other Boards' manuals.

Next Steps

- Expected changes to the procedures – Tri.x are working on a number of changes to the procedures to ensure they are in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. This will include a new chapter focusing on Criminal Exploitation, Serious Case Review processes and CDOP arrangements are updated and ensuring that new partnership arrangements are reflected.
- County-wide Approach to Policy and Procedures – As the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements have been published across the county, there has been no indication that any of the partnerships will withdraw from the combined policy and procedure arrangements. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners across Berkshire are asked to ensure that local input and representation at these sub groups are maintained.

Section 11

Section 11 of Children's Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The purpose of the Pan Berkshire s11 Panel subgroup is to:

- Oversee the s11 audit process for the 6 Local Authorities and all Berkshire wide statutory and voluntary organisations, which are of a significant size and scope, and to ensure the effectiveness of their safeguarding arrangements.
- Set clear expectations with those organisations and the LSCBs about the timeframe and process for submission of their self-assessment section 11 audits, and about their ongoing development towards compliance.
- Read and scrutinise the s11 returns of Pan Berkshire organisations on a three yearly audit cycle, in order to evaluate the agencies' compliance with s11 standards; to provide feedback and identify actions on areas which require more work to be compliant.

- Review the compliance of Pan Berkshire organisations and monitor progress on the actions identified in the s11 audits and provide support and challenge as needed.
- Provide feedback via a 6 monthly update and annual report on the 'effectiveness' of safeguarding arrangements and identify any emerging themes or recommendations to the Local Safeguarding Boards.

Summary of activity/achievements:

- The S11 guidance and audit tool have been refreshed to help organisations to include all the information and evidence they hold and to highlight good practice to support organisations self-assessments and to inform their agencies action plan.
- From March 2018 to April 2019, the s11 Panel have evaluated 25 organisations progress at the 18 month mid-review point of the 3 yearly cycle of self-assessment and 5 organisations full s11 submissions. 4 of the full s11 self-assessments were from organisations who had not previously completed a s11 self-assessment.
- The Panel have adapted their approach to include 2 submissions from some Berkshire Local Authorities to encompass the variations of commissioned services, Trusts or charities that provide social care services for children.
- All organisations receive Panel feedback in regard to good practice and where further work is required. The s11 Panel also review the progress of agencies action plans to scrutinise how they continuously improve their offer to safeguarding children to ensure they play their part in:
 - Protecting children from maltreatment
 - Preventing impairment of children's health or development
 - Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care."
- Returns have been enhanced by the inclusion of evidence such as data or findings from inspections. Where the Panel are not sufficiently assured by an agencies s11 submission or action plan progress, then the organisation is asked to reassess their action plan and provide further evidence and assurance to the group.

Challenges:

- The consistent lack of Children's Social Care representation on the Panel remains a challenge.

Next Steps

- Safeguarding Children Partnerships and multi-agency partners are committed to supporting the continuation of the s11 Panel responsibilities as set out in the current Terms of Reference.
- Submissions in 2019/20 will as knowledge and understanding increases across agencies include 'safeguarding' children and young people across a wider range of circumstances such as:
 - Child Exploitation (CE)

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Children and young people with disabilities
- Prevention of radicalisation (PREVENT)
- Modern Slavery

Child Death Overview Panel

In 2008, Child Death Overview Panels (CDOPs) were statutorily established in England under the aegis of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCBs) with the responsibility of reviewing the deaths of all children (0 to <18 years) in their resident population. Within Berkshire there is a shared child death overview panel that works jointly for the 6 Unitary Authority Local Safeguarding Boards and is made up of a range of representatives from a range of organisations and professional areas of expertise. This process is undertaken locally for all children who are normally resident in Berkshire.

The purpose of the CDOP, (as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006) is to collect and analyse information about each child death with a view to:

- Identifying any changes that we can make or actions we can take that might help to prevent similar deaths in the future.
- Sharing this learning with colleagues regionally and nationally so that the findings will have a wider impact.

Summary:

TBC – to include number of deaths reviewed and themes

Achievements:

TBC – to include reference to safer sleeping campaign, Reading festival, introduction of e-CDOP and CDOP conference

Next Steps:

TBC – to include implementation of changes as required by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Financial Arrangements 2018/2019

It is a requirement of Working Together 2015 (WT2015) that “all LSCB’ member organisations have an obligation to provide LSCB’s with reliable resources (including finance) that enable LSCB to be strong and effective. Members should share the financial responsibility for the LSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies”. WT 2015 also sets out the core duties that LSCB’s are required to undertake within this budget.

The budgets were matched for 2018/19 in order to support Berkshire West LSCB to fulfil its statutory function. A budget was retained in each of the three areas to ensure staffing costs were held locally, however the figures quoted here are a combined view.

It is important to note that the LSCB budget does not represent the true costs of the Board’s business and development works and some ‘hidden costs’ are subsumed within each Local Authority and other partners’ budgets. Most of the learning events are now provided at either zero cost to the attendee, or are provided via Local Authority training teams.

There was expenditure during this year on four serious case reviews (described further on page 27). Much of this expense was paid from a contingency fund held within the LSCB budget in one area, the remaining cost was covered within underspend in the LSCB budget in a different area.

