



**WOLVERHAMPTON SAFEGUARD
CHILDREN BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT
2014 -2015**

**Executive
Summary**

This executive summary highlights some of the work undertaken by the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board during 2014/15. It describes the Board's structure, activity and highlights the key progress achieved against the priorities for the reporting period.

The annual report provides an analysis of the effectiveness of the Board and reflects on the activities and best approaches to ensure constant improvement.

There have been many developments and achievements during this reporting period, with this, it is hoped that you will find the annual report interesting and useful and urge you to share it far and wide so that more and more people become aware of who we are, what we do and, critically, speak to us about how we can improve the lives of our children. For a copy of the full annual report; please contact 01902 550645 or visit our website: www.wolvesscb.org.uk

In Wolverhampton, we advocate that Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility, this is the case whether you are a professional, a parent, a volunteer or none of those we all have a responsibility to ensure that children have the best possible start in life, growing up happy, healthy, safe and have the opportunity to access the right level of service and support, at the right time, to be able to achieve their full potential. The job of the Board is to ensure that the efforts of those agencies and groups who have contact with children work individually and collectively to ensure that children are helped, supported and protected.



Wolverhampton is the home town to approximately 56,353 children and young people under the age of 18 years, or approximately 20% of the total population in the area.

The annual report details the Boards role and function to safeguarding children in line with Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 which required each local authority area to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB); it also specifies the organisations and individuals that should be represented on the LSCBs. The membership of Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) complies with this requirement. Information relating to the Boards membership can be found within the appendices of the full report.

LSCB's have a range of roles and statutory functions, for the purpose of this years' annual report, the full objectives, role and functions are outline in the statutory guidance; Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013).

The current business priorities covering a three year period (2013-2016) were agreed by members' at the annual development day 2013 to help drive improvements against the core functions and requirements of the Board. These support the key objectives of the Business Plan priorities and themes which offers the underpinning framework for the work throughout this period

On the basis of all of the above, the work of the Board is informed by a set of clear priorities that is underpinned by an up to date and well-structured Business Plan.

Full information on progress against the strategic priorities can be found in the full report.

The Board's Objective and Business themes for 2014 – 16 are:-

	PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY LEAD	ACTIVITY
1	EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE	E. Bennett Service Director Children and Young People - WCC.	We will develop the capacity of WSCB and its infrastructure to effectively deliver the core functions of the Board to help keep children and young people in Wolverhampton safe.
2	FRONT-LINE DELIVERY AND THE IMPACT OF SAFEGUARDING	M. Garcha CCG EXECUTIVE LEAD NURSE	We will develop challenging and rigorous approaches to monitoring and evaluating the impact of services on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children & young people; and will hold partners to account.
3	SAFEGUARDING FOR PARTICULAR VULNERABLE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE	M. Kerr WMP: DCI – PPU	We will ensure that everything we do promotes improved practice to help safeguard and meet the needs of those children and young people who are particularly vulnerable, or are at increased risk of harm and improves outcomes for them.
4	COMMUNICATE & ENGAGE	S. Dodd PROJECT COORDINATOR - YOW	We will ensure that we engage children, young people, families and communities of all backgrounds and make up, in the work of WSCB.

The combined work of the Board is shaped from the WSCB Business Plan and the delivery against each area is driven by Committees, and/or Task & Finish Groups.

PROGRESS MADE AGAINST THE WSCB PRIORITIES DURING 2014-2015

PRIORITY AREA: **EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE**

PRIORITY LEAD: **E. Bennett**; Service Director Children and Young People – WCC.

- Regularly monitored the appropriateness of representation of the Board and its Committees
- Increased the influence of the Board by strengthening relationships with other key strategic groups, e.g. the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Adult Safeguarding Board, Children Trust Board
- Established a Head-teachers Safeguarding Committee to drive forward and strengthen communication in relation to keeping children safe in educational establishments.
- Increase the funding stream to the Board to ensure there is capacity to deliver its core functions.
- Routinely reviewed the work of all Committees to ensure this is being effectively undertaken and where applicable influencing practice
- Reviewed the membership and Terms of Reference for each Committee
- Monitor the activities of the Boards Business Plan
- Introduced and monitor the Board's Risk Register

PRIORITY AREA: **FRONT-LINE DELIVERY AND THE IMPACT OF SAFEGUARDING**

PRIORITY LEAD: **M. Garcha**- CCG EXECUTIVE LEAD NURSE

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

During 2014/15, 19 children died in our area, the CDOP reviewed each circumstance to identify any issues that could require a Serious Case Review (SCR); any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children in the area; or any wider public health or safety concerns arising from a particular death or from a pattern of deaths in the area; and make specific recommendation to the Board.

Serious Case Review

During 2014-15, 9 cases were brought to the attention of the SCRC. These cases were purely Wolverhampton children, one of which met the criteria for a serious case review. There is a delay in publication that is due to pending court proceedings. But we have not delayed responding, as the Committee has ensured that actions from this SCR are being implemented across all the relevant partner agencies.

Quality and Performance Functions

Quality of Performance has been a key priority for 2014/15. The Committee have throughout the year reviewed and scrutinised child protection activity performance data. Through the development of a more effective multi-agency dataset the Committee has provided written reports at each Board meeting on the analysis of data around safeguarding children.

The dataset has also been significantly improved during the year to a more multi agency tool to give the Board a picture of whether activities are making any differences to safeguard children and to adequately alert the Board of any risks in the system. Other subject areas monitored and reported on through this Committee; includes Section 11 Audits, Private Fostering, and Management of Allegations.

This Committee has also led on 3 Multi-Agency Case File Audits (MACFA) over the year. The themes; Children Missing, Self Harm and Adolescent Neglect, are summarised and findings disseminated through the partnership to frontline staff. Some of the findings from these exercises offered the assurance that practice was generally effective, there was evidence of good engagement from relevant agencies and that plans led to change in families and improvement in children's lives.

Whilst progress has been made in respect of the Quality and Performance functions of the Board, this area remains under further improvements for the Board.

Learning & Development Activities

Through this Committee there has been a consistent multi-agency programme of training that:

- Is informed by the Board's Learning and Improvement Framework,

- Is relevant to core business and priorities of WSCB
- Is aligned to statutory guidance, best practice and lessons learnt through the full range of reviews and audits undertaken by WSCB.

Highlight and feedback on WSCB training:

- Safer Recruitment training, including a recently devised refresher course remains popular.
- The demand for the 'Working Practices; Roles and Responsibilities training was in high demand with positive feedback. It will be necessary to increase the number of courses going forward in to 2015/16.

The most popular statements recorded over the year includes:

- increased confidence,
- improved skills
- much better informed on the knowledge base of each course;
- understood what this means for them in practice, and
- more confident that they would be better able to keep children and young safe as a result of the attending courses.

We held a conference with the Safeguarding Adults Board to raise awareness of Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence

Going forward, the Committee intends to:

- further embed the WSCB's Learning and improvement Framework.
- Develop and implement of a single agency training endorsement and validation scheme to ensure the Board is fulfilling its responsibilities for quality assuring training in compliance with 'Working Together 2013'.

Law, Policies and Procedures

To support the Board in ensuring that safeguarding practice keeps abreast of new developments, during 2014-2015 this Committee have reviewed, revised, devised and published policies, procedures and practice guidance in relation to:

- Children missing from home and care,

- Self Harm Protocol,
- Sexual Exploitation, Missing and Trafficked (SEMT) strategic process, Child Sexual Exploitation induction programme, Multi agency sexual exploitation (MASE) meetings; and Child Missing Operational Group (CMOG) processes.
- Unborn Baby pathway for intervention
- Supporting Children and young people vulnerable to violent extremism strategy
- Cross Border Child Protection guidance under 'Hague Convention
- Safeguards for children who may be affected by gang activity
- Threshold for support practice guidance
- Escalation Policy; and
- Information Sharing Agreement which all member agencies have now endorsed has been developed to strengthen communication between the WSCB partners

Going forward, the LPPC will:

- ❖ To continue to scrutinise and localise all Board policy and procedural guidance to increase the support of local practice
- ❖ Maintain a close eye on new ways of working alongside the introduction of 'early help' support services and the associated 'new operating model', and ensure practice guidance, policies, procedures and protocols are revised accordingly.

PRIORITY AREA: SAFEGUARDING FOR PARTICULAR VULNERABLE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

PRIORITY LEAD: M. Kerr; DCI West Midlands Police

Sexual Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (SEMT)

The WSCB SEMT Committee is a multi-agency partnership with a remit and duty to safeguard children and young who may be at increased vulnerability from sexual exploitation, missing episodes and trafficking in accordance with the policies, procedures and guidance outlined in local and national guidance and that of (WSCB).

SEMT Committee has been tasked with ensuring that:

- Children who are victims of, or at risk of CSE have their needs addressed and are effectively protected.
- Increasing the understanding of the situation relating to Child Sexual Exploitation within Wolverhampton, and across the region.
- Ensuring that information is appropriately shared regarding potential offenders and victims of particular vulnerable groups, and;
- Effective action plans are in place to protect the potential or actual victim from further harm.

This Committee also has oversight responsibility for CMOG and MASE activities and has progressed the work-stream for supporting the identification, assessment and safeguarding intervention of children at risk of sexual exploitation through the establishment of the tailored Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) meetings

Achievements for 2014/15

- obtained funding for a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Co-ordinator
- Introduced Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation meetings for every child identified as at risk of CSE
- Embedded Regional CSE framework fully in Wolverhampton
- Developed and published a CSE Induction /Awareness pack
- Completed CSE multi-agency audit in January 2015
- Developed and delivered a multi- agency CSE training course
- Identified and implemented screening tool for CSE victims;
- Reviewed national guidance, reports and inspections to benchmark and improve practice in Wolverhampton
- Ensured every child is invited to participate in the multi-agency discussion around their needs.

PRIORITY AREA: COMMUNICATE & ENGAGE

PRIORITY LEAD: S.DODD ; PROJECT COORDINATOR - YOW

The Communication and Engagement Committee (C&EC), has a dual function to support both the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards to:

Improve communication to the workforces of partner agencies

- Develop city-wide communication channels (websites, social media, press coverage, leaflets posters)
- Develop constructive and mutually respectful relationships with communities; making sure that equality and diversity is appropriately considered in all communication and engagement activity.
- Liaise and collaborate with WSCB and WSAB, relevant committees, partnership forums and service users in the above activities
- Promoted awareness of Private Fostering which has helped ensure that more privately fostered children and young people can be identified and supported

Oversee the activities of the B-Safe Team who this year has:

- Recruited, train and establish a dedicated group of young people as the first B-Safe Junior Safeguarding Board.
- Facilitated regular meetings and activities for the new Team, to include a combination of awareness of key safeguarding issues, training and consultation.
- Created and maintain a dedicated web presence for the B-Safe Team, including the use of social media as a communication channel to raise awareness of the Team and its activities.
- Employed a dedicated B-Safe Team coordinator
- Focused much of its attention on tackling bullying and online safety, coinciding with the national awareness days.
- Created a avenue of opportunities for the B-Safe Team to attend and report to the Board and vice-versa.

Summary of Challenges for 2014/15

In summarising, the Board can evidence that progress is being made, equally, we recognise that we have a number of challenges, these include:

We anticipate our challenges for the coming year include the following:

- To maintain the momentum in developing closer partnership working with other partnership/strategic boards and promote a culture of problem solving

- To ensure that all services (adults and children) embed the safeguarding of children and young people at the heart of what they do
- To improve communication across the partnership, particularly with frontline practitioners
- To further develop the coordination of safeguarding activity across the partnership and be further assured in regards to the multi-agency intervention and the quality of services through engagement with:
 - The education sector
 - Faith and community groups
 - GP's

We also need to turn attention to:-

- Recruiting a 2nd lay member to the board
- Assuring ourselves that we can respond effectively to issues relating to; Child Trafficking, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Stateless Children
- Increase the awareness of services and support to Disabled children and young people in the City
- Undertake an evaluation of the effectiveness of Early Help services in the City
- Ensure that the learning from the deaths of children are disseminated across the partnership and used to inform practice.

Responding to the challenges ahead the Board remains committed to:

- Ensuring the 'voice of the child' influences all that we do
- Effective partnerships in the context of change and reducing resources
- A clear focus on assuring ourselves of the effectiveness of quality of our multi-agency work with children and young people.