

WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD – January 15th 2010

Safeguarding Children update: national and local response to Lord Laming report

1.0 Background

In November 2008 the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families asked Lord Laming to provide an urgent report on the progress safeguarding arrangements across the country. Lord Laming published a report in March 2009 and made 58 recommendations all of which were accepted by the Government in their report published in May 2009 entitled *The Protection of Children in England: Action Plan*. This set out the detail of how national requirements should be met and issued revised guidance and consultation in December 2009, namely *Working Together to Safeguard Children*. Members of the LSCB and the Children's Trust Board are attending regional meetings in February to respond to the consultation.

This report serves to inform the Children's Trust of the arrangement put in place in advance of the revised guidance and what is planned to change in the forthcoming months.

2.0 The Arrangements

- New requirements are for the LSCB, in producing the annual report, present this to the Local Authority, as well as other partners, so that the effectiveness of the Board's work can be scrutinised
- Independent chairing of the Board
- Lead Member joining and becoming a 'participating observer'
- 2 lay members selected from the local community
- Schools become statutory members from 1st April through amendment to Apprenticeship, Skills and Learning Act 2009.
- A budget must be set, but no funding formula agreed, local determination
- The LSCB will have a specific role in challenging each agency within the CTB of their success in keeping children safe
- Joint CTB and LSCB agreement on strategic approach to needs analysis, the effectiveness of services, identifying priorities for change and using this to drive improvements
- The LSCB should keep under review the sources of referrals to the LA Children's Social Care and monitor the quality of action taken in response
- All Senior Managers under the DCS must have skills in safeguarding and emphasises the importance of high quality leadership in safeguarding
- Referrals about children-referrers will be asked what information background in domestic violence, parental mental health, substance misuse and learning disability
- The responsibility of Local Authority Social Care staff to act appropriately in response to the referral and the responsibility of referring agencies to ensure staff report comprehensive high quality information to make judgements. These responses are agreed with the LSCB through locally agreed thresholds

- Reiterating the importance of training of staff through single –agency and inter-agency training. The LSCB should oversee the quality of all safeguarding training.
- Staff who work with children must have an understanding of normal child development to recognise possible signs of abuse and neglect.

3.0 Recommendations:

1. The Children’s Trust Board note the points raised in this report and facilitate any necessary developments required to ensure standards and requirements outlined in the national guidance are met.

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