

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM 13<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2016

## REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE WIRRAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

### ROLE, PURPOSE AND ACTIVITY OF THE WIRRAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

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#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Local Safeguarding Children Boards were established under the Children Act 2004 with the objectives to coordinate what is done by partner agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to test the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across the partnership.

1.2 The Wirral Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) was established in 2006 and it fulfils the statutory function set out in the Children Act and in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (WT 2015). The WSCB is a multi-agency body with membership drawn from statutory and non-statutory partner agencies including the local authority, schools and colleges, police, health partners, probation, youth service and the voluntary faith and community sector.

1.3 The WSCB is led by an Independent Chair, Bernard Walker, and its activity is co-ordinated through the full board, the Executive and its ten sub committees. [An Annual Report](#) of the WSCB's activity including its [Business Plan](#) for the forthcoming year is published each September and disseminated to partners.

#### 2. FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITY OF THE WSCB

2.1 The key functions of safeguarding boards are set out in the 2006 regulations (presented in WT 2015). These are:

- *Developing multi-agency policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.*

The WSCB publishes over 80 multi-agency policies and procedures. These include the process for what to do if you have concerns about a child, as well as policies, procedures and practice guidance for safeguarding issues such as neglect, child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse etc. All the policies and procedures are available on the procedures website: <http://wirrallscb.proceduresonline.com/>

- *Communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and raising awareness of safeguarding*

The WSCB holds four (rising to six in 2016) full multi-agency Board meetings each year to report on and communicate key safeguarding issues and messages to the partnership. Additionally the Board holds over 70 multi-agency sub-committee meetings each year where work is progressed communicated to the partnership. Additionally, the WSCB publishes regular safeguarding updates, posters, leaflets, briefings and guidance. The Board also delivers messages through training, the website, the Annual Report and Tweets messages every week.

- *Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*

The WSCB has a published Quality Assurance Framework which sets out the assurance reports to be presented by partners each year. Additionally the WSCB complete 4 large multi-agency audits every year which drill down into the quality of practice and completes over 20 other quality or thematic audits. The WSCB undertakes an annual assessment of safeguarding arrangements through the Section 11 and Section 175 (for schools) audits and the findings are published in the Annual Report

- *Participate in the planning of services*

The WSCB publishes a detailed multi-agency safeguarding performance information dataset each quarter. The information from this, audits and reports to the Board informs the setting of priorities and provides an evidence base for commissioning through the Children's Trust and Health and Wellbeing Board arrangements. Work of the Board is also aligned with the [Wirral Plan: a 2020 Vision](#)

- *Undertake Serious Case Reviews and advise partners of lessons to be learned*

The WSCB undertakes SCR's when necessary and also regularly undertakes reviews of cases below the SCR threshold. National and local learning from serious case and other reviews is regularly published and disseminated by the WSCB (see appendix one) and embedded in safeguarding training. The WSCB also holds a statutory responsibility to review all child deaths in Wirral. We do this through a pan Merseyside Child Death Overview panel.

2.2 In addition to the core statutory responsibilities the WSCB is also responsible for:

- The provision of multi-agency training. The WSCB delivers over 20 courses each year in over 80 sessions. Training covers all the common safeguarding topics including learning from case reviews. Last year the WSCB directly trained over 2,000 staff. The WSCB offers training free of charge to the whole children's workforce. Details of all courses are published on the [wirral.gov](http://wirral.gov) website.
- Providing the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) role and the managing allegations process, including consultations, advice and training to schools and other partners.
- Ensuring the Effectiveness of Early Help through the CAF/TAF Quality Assurance committee.
- Developing safeguarding practice. The WSCB sets safeguarding priorities for the partnership for the year ahead which includes an action plan of activity against each priority. A high profile area of work is Child Sexual Exploitation and the development and promotion of the [www.listentomystory.co.uk](http://www.listentomystory.co.uk) campaign. The Board is also developing with Professor Jan Horwath from Sheffield University a new model for initial child protection conferences. The WSCB had set 5 priority areas for 2015-16:
  - Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility
  - Child Sexual Exploitation
  - Effectiveness of early Help
  - Domestic Abuse
  - Radicalisation

A workplan is in place for each priority and is published in the WSCB Business Plan

### 3. RESOURCING THE WSCB

3.1 WT 2015 states that all safeguarding board partner agencies have an obligation to provide LSCB's with reliable resources, including finance that enable the LSCB to be strong and effective. The planned income and expenditure of the WSCB for 2015-16 is shown below:

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
Staffing	210,339
Training	28,899
Serious Case Reviews	5,335
Operating Costs/ General expenses	35,188
<b>Total</b>	<b>279,761</b>
<b>Income</b>	
LA Children's Services	162,200
CAFCASS	550
Merseyside Police	12,500
Health	31,800
Probation Service	5,000
Schools Budget	30,000
High Needs Budget	10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>252,050</b>

3.2 The table above shows which agencies make a financial contribution to the WSCB and it also shows that the income to the Board is less than its expenditure. The shortfall is underwritten by reserves (which are now exhausted).

3.3. Funding from schools is £30,000 which equates £230 per school each year. The amount from schools has not been increased since it was agreed 4+ years ago. However the LSCB has received a contribution of a further £10,000 from the High Needs Budget.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Forum note the report and the use of funds
2. For schools to ensure staff are aware of and have access to the annual report and business plan, the safeguarding procedures website and the safeguarding training course list

**Simon Garner**  
**Corporate Safeguarding Manager**

## Appendix One: Examples of local and national Learning from Serious Case Reviews published by the WSCB

### Learning from Serious Case Reviews



Recent Serious Case and Critical Incident Reviews undertaken in Wirral remind us that we must:

- Share information across agencies to ensure services are targeted and co-ordinated
- Have a clear understanding of the thresholds of need
- Know where to access the WSCB multi-agency safeguarding procedures
- Escalate concerns if we feel a child remains at risk
- Take personal responsibility for professional excellence and accessing training
- Maintain healthy scepticism and respectful uncertainty in cases where abuse may be suspected
- Have access to reflective supervision to reduce the chances of errors

*Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility....*

For more information



### Learning from Serious Case Reviews

Learning from SCR's in the Education Sector including Elective Home Education reminds us to:

- Ensure that accurate records of all incidents are kept relating to children and/or members of staff
- Enforce a comprehensive e-safety policy and ensure that this is embedded in the school curriculum
- Ensure that poor behaviour or school attendance is recognised as a possible sign of child abuse/neglect
- Be able to identify signs of sexual, emotional, physical abuse and neglect including CSE
- Ensure that relationships between pupils and staff should never be seen as based on mutual consent
- Ensure awareness and compliance with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures
- Ensure that children know how to raise a concern
- GPs/Health Visitors must be informed that a child is home educated to ensure identification of health problems in the absence of the school nurse



*Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility...*

For more information:

