

**Report to the Children's Trust Board on Safeguarding Arrangements**

---

**1.0 Background and Introduction**

**1.1** This report forms part of a regular safeguarding update from the WSCB to the Children's Trust Board on key developments locally and nationally on regulatory reform, updates on progress of local Serious Case Reviews and work locally and key challenges for the partnership and agencies.

**2.0 National Reform and Safeguarding Developments**

**2.1 Section 11/175**

The WSCB has a statutory duty (under Section 11 of the Children Act and Section 175 of the Education Act) to test the effectiveness of partnership safeguarding arrangements and arrangements to promote the welfare of children and young people. Agencies are schools are requested to complete an online annual safeguarding audit self-assessment to provide assurance to the WSCB about the effectiveness of their safeguarding arrangements.

For each school and partner agency the safeguarding audit tests: management commitment to safeguarding; attendance at required training; having a named lead for safeguarding in place; robustness of safeguarding policies and procedures; quality of response to CSE; bullying policy in place; awareness of safer recruitment and managing allegations policies. The audit questions are updated each year to ensure the WSCB is testing local and national safeguarding priorities and statutory responsibilities. For example, commitment to preventing the radicalisation of young people will be tested in the 2016 audit.

155 organisations (including 129 early year's settings, schools and colleges) completed the 2015 audit. Key findings from the 2015 Section 11 and Section 175 audits are:

- On average all set safeguarding standards were exceeded across all agencies
- Agencies strengths include safeguarding induction, having a named lead for safeguarding and awareness of policies and procedures
- Assurance was provided that staff across agencies understand the threshold for making a referral into children's services and know what to do if they have concerns about a child
- The audits evidenced very clear and consistent senior management commitment to safeguarding
- Arrangements for safeguarding supervision have improved but agencies require more guidance about what a good supervision policy looks like
- The audits showed a clear awareness of CSE
- Schools have a very good commitment to and attendance at safeguarding training
- Safer recruitment policies are becoming well embedded but usage is variable
- Anti-bullying policies appear well embedded

The summary report for the 2015 Section 11/175 safeguarding audit is published in the WSCB Annual Report (<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children/wirral-safeguarding-childrens-board/wirral-safeguarding-childrens>).

For 2016 the WSCB and SAPB have jointly purchased the latest online audit tool from the Virtual College which will allow us to create Wirral bespoke safeguarding audits for schools and other partner's agencies. In the first quarter of 2016 partners will be invited to participate in the design of the audits. The audits will be opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> April and closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> July. A series of multi-agency briefing events will precede the launch of the 2016 audit. Results will be published in the WSCB annual report on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016.

## **2.2 Feedback from the WSCB Meeting December 2015**

The full WSCB now meets 6 times a year (previously once a quarter) to discuss safeguarding items of local and national significance including those the WSCB holds a statutory duty for. The WSCB does not publish the minutes publicly due to the sensitive nature of some of the content. The following topics were discussed at the meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015:

- Opening Event – Radicalisation and the Prevent Agenda. Dave Grisenthwaite from the Safeguarding Adults partnership board presented an overview of the 'Prevent Agenda' to the WSCB. The presentation included a video about Nicky Reilly who attempted to bomb a restaurant in Exeter in 2008 following radicalisation by two Islamic extremists. The presentation highlighted the need for all agencies to be aware of radicalisation and to know what to do if they have concerns about a young person. This is a priority area for the WSCB in 15-16.
- Executive Committee Report – Options paper: Charging for non-attendance at multi-agency training. The WSCB Executive agreed to introduce a charge to agencies for non-attendance at training by professionals. This is in response to the average figure of 20% no- attendance – sometimes as high as 50% - for the WSCB's multi-agency training courses. From April the WSCB will charge delegates £30 for non-attendance at a half day course and £50 for a full day's course.
- Multi-agency Performance Information. The WSCB has been developing its performance information dataset over the past six months to be truly representative of multi-agency activity to safeguard children and young people. The dataset is presented to the WSCB quarterly and now includes 205 indicators. The Performance committee reviews the data and presents the datasets which highlight good practice or indicate course for concern to the Board.
- CYPD Diagnostic. Children's Services recently completed a safeguarding diagnostic which included participation by the WSCB. The business structure of the WSCB, the Section 11/175 audit activity and the Annual Report and Business plan were identified as areas of strength. Attendance at sub committees, lack of a website and close scrutiny of child protection activity and multi-agency auditing were identified as areas for development.
- Observations of Practice. In 2015 the WSCB members each spent half a day in an agency they were less familiar with and shadowed a front line practitioner. The observations highlighted the commitment to safeguarding across partner agencies.
- Early Help Strategy. Deborah Gornik, the Head of Targeted Services, CYPD presented the Early Help Strategy to the WSCB. The Board endorsed the strategy and thanked Deborah and her staff for producing it.
- Child Protection Activity and Child Protection (CP) Standards. Lisa Arthey, Head of Specialist Services, CYPD presented a report which provided an overview of Child protection activity over the past six months and presented a draft set of Child Protection Standards. A further report on CP activity is being brought to the next Board in January and the draft Standards document will be taken to the policy, procedure and practice committee in January for approval and publication.

### **2.3 WSCB Case Reviews**

The WSCB's Case Review committee has recently completed one learning review and is currently undertaking two critical incident reviews:

Learning Review – Child 3. This case centred on an allegation that Child 3 was at risk of forced marriage. The case review committee completed the review in September 2015 and will publish the multi-agency action plan in January 2016. Recommendations from the review include:

- Publishing forced marriage practice guidance to support practitioners using the Merseyside protocol
- Development of Harmful Practices multi-agency training by the Learning and Development Committee
- WSCB to test that practitioners can easily access multi-agency safeguarding procedures including understanding of the multi-agency escalation procedure
- Partners to be aware of the referral pathway in Forced Marriage cases
- Highlighting the role and function of the Family Safety Unit – particularly the advice and guidance it can offer
- WSCB to review how interpreter services are provided for families

Critical Incident Review – Child 4. The case review report will be considered by the WSCB Case Review committee in February 2016. The resulting multi-agency action plan will be published in March. The subject of the review was a 5 month old baby who suffered a near drowning when sat in a baby bath seat which tipped forward. An early recommendation is for the WSCB to undertake work locally with trading standards to raise awareness of the potential dangers of placing very young babies in bath seats. A summary of the full recommendations will be presented once the action plan is published.

Critical Incident Review – Child 5. Similarly to Child 4, the Child 5 case review report will be considered in February and the multi-agency action plan will be published in April 2016. This case centres on the multi-agency support available to an ex looked after young person prior to and following a non-fatal stabbing incident. Recommendations will include a review of the transitional support provided for care leavers. The full recommendations will be published in April.

### **2.4 WSCB and SAPB Independent Website**

The WSCB and SAPB have jointly commissioned a company to develop a website for both safeguarding boards. WSCB web based information is currently held on the wirral.gov website but the children's and adults safeguarding boards identified the need for them to have their own independent website. The benefits of the website to professionals, parents and carers and children and young people will be:

- The website will be a 'one stop shop' for safeguarding information and guidance and clear separate sections will exist for children and young people, professionals and parents and carers
- All safeguarding information will be able to be accessed directly from the home page
- Information will be easily accessible and the website will be compatible with new and emerging technology including social media applications
- The website will reinforce the independent identity of the safeguarding board

- Clear links will exist to the WSCB safeguarding policies and procedures
- The information will be updated weekly and will be owned and maintained by the WSCB

Users of the website will be able to:

- Access the weekly newsletters and associated resources
- Access all the WSCB multi-agency policies and procedures
- View the training schedule and book directly onto training
- Participate in online questionnaires
- Access section 11/175 and other online safeguarding audits
- View the WSCB's social media streams
- WSCB committee members will have secure log ins to access agendas, minutes and committee papers

The website will be launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and will be fully functional by the 1<sup>st</sup> July.

### **3.0 Recommendations:**

**3.1** The Wirral Children's Trust Board notes the report.

#### **Report Author:**

David Robbins  
WSCB Business Manager

#### **Contact:**

Phone 0151 6664314  
Email [davidrobbins@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:davidrobbins@wirral.gov.uk)