



Leeds
Safeguarding
Children Board



LSCB ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





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Foreword

I am delighted to be able to report positively about the work of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board in 2013/14 and set out the progress made locally over the year.

Whilst there is a lot to do and many challenges ahead, the report demonstrates the way in which, working together and as individual agencies, partners are improving how well they protect children and young people and safeguard their welfare.

We know that it is crucial that everything we do is informed by the views, aspirations and experiences of children and young people.

I am even more pleased to be able to highlight the work of the Student LSCB and the young people who are members of it. They have challenged us, worked with us, set their own key priorities and, over the year, influenced what we do and how we do it.

One aspect stands out from the 2013/14 year; Leeds is a city that is ambitious for its children and young people. In addition it has:

- Sustained stable leadership with a shared vision across the system,
- A multi-agency commitment to shared principles, behaviours and ways of working
- Steadily improved the way in which it responds to and meets the needs of children, young people, their families and communities.

This report shows how that collective ambition and strong leadership is beginning to have an impact on the outcomes achieved for its children and young people. This approach is underpinned by:

- Increasing self awareness
- A culture of “high support, high challenge”
- A very real focus on continuous improvement and a learning based approach

The LSCB too is steadily improving in its ability to both support that progress and actively scrutinise and challenge it. Whilst there is a lot still to do, and a long way to go, the Report demonstrates the degree of progress made over the year and the challenges arising for 2014/15.

The more we improve, the more we realise just how much more we have to do. In particular we know that we have to ensure that every day, everywhere in Leeds, adults listen to, respond to and take into account children’s own wishes and feelings. Over the next year this is one of our key challenges.

Nevertheless I am able to say with some confidence that in Leeds, children’s welfare is a priority for every organisation and that safeguarding children and young people is central to being a Child Friendly City. I look forward to continuing improvement in the year to come.



Introduction

Leeds Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body established under the Children Act 2004. It is independently chaired (as required by statute) and consists of senior representatives of all the principle stakeholders working together to safeguard children and young people in the City. Its statutory objectives are to:

- Co-ordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
- To ensure the effectiveness of that work.

Working Together (2013) requires each Local Safeguarding Children Board to produce and publish an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. The guidance states

that the Annual Report 'should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action'.

The Report should:

- Recognise achievements and progress made as well as identifying challenges
- Demonstrate the extent to which the functions of the LSCB are being effectively discharged
- Include an account of progress made in implementing actions from Serious Case Reviews
- Provide robust challenge to the work of the Children and Families Trust Board.

This Executive Summary Report summarises the progress made by Leeds LSCB in 2013/14 through and with its partners and analyses the effectiveness of:

- Safeguarding arrangements in the city
- The LSCB itself in supporting and coordinating safeguarding arrangements and in monitoring and challenging those who provide them.

It is a summary of the full Annual Report which is available on the LSCB website and follows the expected format. There are significant amounts of additional information attached to the full report as appendices.

Context and strategic overview

Leeds as the second largest city council in England is an exciting, vibrant and forward looking city with a diverse population and a large and growing number (183,000) of children and young people. Children's services in the city are also varied and energetic and there is a wide range of opportunities for children and young people to grow up as fulfilled, well rounded adults.

The city has strong and capable leadership with a growing sense of shared purpose and endeavour across the city's many partners. It has recently acknowledged that to achieve its priorities for economic regeneration it also has to invest in social regeneration and in particular, in its children and young people.

Within that context, the city's services for children and young people have been on a steady journey of improvement. Assessed as inadequate by Ofsted in 2009, each year since has seen a step change in the quality and effectiveness of its services. Improvement has been driven through:

- The city's ambition to become a Child Friendly City
- The Children and Young People's Plan, which has provided stability, sustained focus and strength of purpose based on shared principles
- The use of a restorative practice approach (working *with* children, young people and their families)





Implementing the Children and Young People's Plan

The Children's Trust partnership is now operating the final year of the current Children & Young People's Plan (2011-15) which provides an overarching strategic direction to the development of services across the city. The Plan is made up of five outcomes, that children in Leeds:

- Do well at all levels of learning and have the skills for life
- Are active citizens, who feel they have voice and influence
- Choose healthy lifestyles
- Have fun growing up
- Are safe from harm, which involves
 - Helping children and young people to live in safe and supportive families
 - Ensuring that the most vulnerable are protected.

The objectives of the plan are clear, with an appropriate focus on keeping children and young people safe from harm. There is partnership agreement that the safeguarding system needs to be 'rebalanced' in order to improve outcomes for children and young people.

A strong focus on key issues is maintained through the monitoring of three 'obsessions' which serve as proxy indicators for the effectiveness of the whole system:

- A reduction in the number of children and young people who need to be 'looked after'
- An improvement in school attendance
- A reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

This is underpinned by a strong commitment to the use of 'outcomes based accountability' to evaluate the

approach. It reflects the partnership's commitment to safely and appropriately reducing the need for statutory intervention by providing children and young people with 'the right service at the right time' through the development of effective Early Help and preventative services. This approach has been supported by the LSCB, through Annual Reports (2011, 2012, 2013) and challenges to the Children and Families Trust Board to 'rebalance the safeguarding system' accordingly.

As a key stakeholder the LSCB will contribute during 2014/15 to the development of a new Children & Young People's Plan from April 2015 linked to a new Strategic Plan of its own.

Challenges for the Public Sector

The Public Sector continues to face the twin challenges of financial restriction and increasing demand for services. The LSCB held a workshop for partners in February 2014 to review the potential impact of budget constraints on the planning and delivery of services for children and young people. The workshop identified the following challenges and opportunities:

Challenges:

- To maintain a proactive approach and avoid becoming overly reactive
- To ensure that 'the child's voice' is heard around the table as well as that of adults
- To re-iterate an understanding that poor outcomes for children will have a negative impact on outcomes as adults
- To address poor parenting and its impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Opportunities:

- To promote and support collaborative work across agencies
- To maintain the focus on prevention and highlight the cost / benefits for the adult system of improved outcomes for children and young people
- To influence commissioning / budget decisions in order to consider the impact on the system as a whole as well as for single agencies
- To work more closely with Public Health colleagues
- To promote a collective approach to improving quality of interventions and impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Challenges for Partners

In their contributions to the LSCB Annual Review Process partner agencies have identified the key challenges that they are facing and the steps that they are taking to respond to them. They are focusing on maintaining robust safeguarding arrangements within the context of budgetary pressures and organisational change and restructure. Significant progress is identified in implementing more 'joined up' multi-agency services such as:

- The Early Help Approach
- The Think Family - Work Family Protocol
- The Children's Services Front Door
- The Children and Young People's Housing Plan.

There is a clear commitment across the partnership to:

- Ensuring that lessons learnt from Serious Case Reviews and Local Learning Lessons Reviews are acted upon and that the impact of changes to practice and multi-agency working is monitored.
- Increasing 'the voice of the child' in practice and for the experience and views of children and young people to inform the development of services.
- Further developing robust audit processes to monitor the quality of practice and evaluate its impact on outcomes for children and young people
- Ensuring that staff continue to have access to comprehensive and high quality safeguarding training
- Learn from audits and quality assurance work to improve practice.

There is consistency in the challenges identified by each partner for 2014/15 to progress responses to children and young people who:

- Are sexually exploited
- Go missing from home, care, school or 'view'
- Are trafficked
- Live in the context of compromised parenting
- Are at risk of radicalisation
- Are at risk of forced marriage





The effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Leeds

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Leeds, evidence is drawn from a wide range of sources which are analysed together to assess the whole system:

- Engagement with children and young people
- Monitoring and reviewing services
- Performance management and quality assurance of safeguarding services and practice.



Engagement of children and young people

Work to engage with children and young people has steadily progressed over the year. The Voice and Influence sub group (the 'Student LSCB') has continued to input in a variety of ways to the work of the Board, whilst steadily gaining an identity in their own right. Partner engagement with children and young people has also increased, through initiatives like the annual take-over day, the care leaver council and a DVD preparing children and young people for admission to hospital based on a poster competition.

The Annual Conference 2013 ("Let Me Speak Will You Listen?") was entirely based on listening to and involving young people and the Student LSCB assisted with facilitating the day.

The Student LSCB have also done a range of things to engage with their peers in the city, including questionnaires designed to assess the impact of the West Yorkshire child sexual exploitation campaign. Children and Young People in the city who are looked after have responded to a questionnaire about the services they receive from the Independent Reviewing Service, which indicates, overall, that the service is received positively by them.

How this work is influencing individual practice is less clear. The restorative approach to practice in the city means the engagement of children and young people in the services being delivered to them and their families. It is clear that a lot is happening to achieve this,

particularly through a strong focus on the child's wishes, feelings and views. This focus has been particularly emphasised through the Strengthening Families approach to child protection processes and the development and expansion of Family Group Conferencing Services. However, these initiatives have yet to be evidenced in much of the practice across the city.





Monitoring and reviewing

In 2009 an announced Ofsted inspection judged safeguarding services in Leeds to be 'inadequate' and the authority was subsequently made the subject of a statutory improvement notice. Since this point the partnership has viewed itself as being on an 'improvement journey'. This is based on political and professional co-operation and has generated a coherent and sustainable strategic plan to improve multi-agency working, services and outcomes for children and young people.

In October 2011 Ofsted judged services to be 'adequate' with indications there was good capacity to improve and the improvement notice was removed. External Inspections and Reviews have continued since.

Whilst the Local Authority arrangements have not been reviewed in 2013/14, a number of other partners have been. These inspections collectively

indicate a trajectory of improvement across the system.

Whilst this is encouraging, it is clear everyone recognises how much more there is to do. In addition the Jimmy Savile investigations, subsequent review and recent reports have identified other areas of concern in terms of safeguarding, nationally and locally. Over the next year we need to maintain the trajectory of improvement, build on our successes

Child deaths and serious incidents

In line with national trends the incidents of child deaths has been decreasing over the past 6 years in Leeds, which is extremely encouraging. The Child Death Overview panel reviews all the deaths of Leeds children and young people, identifying lessons and making recommendations aimed at reducing preventable deaths in the future. Recommendations have been made and progressed addressing:

- Parental smoking
- Bereavement services where a death is unexpected
- Safer sleeping arrangements
- Raising awareness of the relationship between cousin marriages and genetic disorders
- Taking children with complex medical conditions abroad
- Alcohol use by young people and the role of friends in keeping each other safe.

The Serious Case Review Sub Committee is ensuring that serious incidents are being actively used to inform learning and practice improvement. In 2013/14 one Serious Case Review and one Local Learning Lessons Review were initiated and progress has been made in addressing issues raised through these and previous Reviews eg,

1. Promoting more effective approaches to risk management and assessment of children and young people with complex needs and/or disabilities. These issues were highlighted in a

key note speech and workshop at the LSCB Annual Conference in June 2013 and LSCB training on 'Vulnerability and Risk' has been revised and updated.

2. Improving understanding and multi-agency responses to the impact on children and young people living in the context of 'compromised parenting' (domestic violence, parental substance mis-use, mental health issues and learning disability). The revised Leeds 'Think Family - Work Family Protocol' was launched at the LSCB Annual Conference in June 2014. The protocol will be implemented in 2014/15.

A review in September 2013 of the lessons identified and actions taken from the 5 Learning Lessons Reviews in 2011-13 identified 7 themes:

- To provide more consistent services for care leavers.
- To ensure that statutory reviews of children and young people who are looked after, effectively scrutinise and robustly challenge the care plans in place.
- To continue to develop a partnership approach to adolescent self-harm and thoughts of suicide.
- To ensure a consistent response to young people who become homeless.
- To develop and further expand 'Early Help' services.
- To ensure that appropriate support and oversight is maintained when a child or young person is 'stepped down' from being the subject of a child protection plan to being subject to a child in need plan.
- To promote a more rigorous child focussed approach to the analysis of 'risk' and 'need'.

The progress made in implementing those themes was reviewed again in May 2014 and there was evidence of good progress in terms of practice change. All this activity has identified that the learning has been practically and effectively applied in the areas of statutory reviews, the provision of early help, and services to care leavers. However, there is much still to do to improve care leaver services, to manage homelessness amongst young people more effectively, and to address the rising incidence of adolescent self harm and emotional difficulties.

Allegations against professionals

The number of allegations made against professionals is broadly in line with previous years and the expectations for the year. The Local Authority Designated Officer service was expanded in 2013/14 which has enabled a quicker response to allegations and better engagement with partner agencies. 431 allegations were dealt with in the year, of which 40% led to a multi-agency allegations management meetings. The service has identified some key areas for improvement in 2014/15 including:

- Improving the involvement of children and young people
- Strengthening the follow up from single agency investigations
- Improving the ICT and Information Management systems

Services for vulnerable children and young people

Services to children and young people who are 'looked after' in the city continue to improve with increased stability of placements and the development of the Independent Reviewing Officer role. This is resulting in more contact with children and young people prior to statutory reviews and challenge to ensure that care planning is effective and timely.

Given the LSCB's interest in young people's self harming behaviour in recent years, attention has been given in 2013/14 to monitoring the related number of emergency admissions to hospital and attendance at A & E. There has been a (non statistically significant) increase on 2012/13 and on-going monitoring will provide a measure of the impact of multi-agency initiatives to address this behaviour.

Whilst the approach to Child Sexual Exploitation has improved significantly there is a lot still to do to ensure services are effective and to better identify those children and young people who are missing from home, school, or view. In addition child in need plans require more attention (an in-depth audit is planned in 2014/15) and we need to better understand how practitioners approach and assess the analysis of both risk and need through evaluating the Children's Social Work Services Single Assessment process which was introduced during the year.

Private Fostering was the subject of an inspection in 2008 which judged the arrangements in Leeds to be inadequate. In 2012/13 the Council's Scrutiny Board led an inquiry into the arrangements which identified the progress made and made further recommendations. In 2013/14 reports indicate that progress is continuing and

increased activity is taking place as a consequence, with a rise in notifications and open cases to Children's Social Work Services. A full audit of cases is planned for 2014/15 and the findings will be reported to the LSCB.

Safeguarding in secure settings is a key feature for Leeds, with 2 establishments within the city, Wetherby Young Offender Institution and Eastmoor Secure Children's Home. Improvements in practice are evidenced in both settings over 2013/14, and there is a lot of work under way to address the range of challenges identified as a consequence of the significantly improved oversight and co-ordination of services led by the secure settings sub group.

The death of Child V whilst in custody has had a profound impact on practice in Wetherby YOI and across the wider system. Wetherby has identified a range of challenges for 2014/15 which are highly influenced by the need to:

- Manage the impact of staff and budget reductions and maintain high quality care
- Address increased levels of violence within the setting
- Target interventions as a result of the "Transforming Youth Custody" agenda
- Improve consultation with families and the need to deliver the training plan.





Education settings

Significant progress has been made in terms of safeguarding in education settings. The city invests in supporting safeguarding in its early years settings, schools and colleges, and the whole city approach to children and young people is organised through the school based and school led cluster arrangements. The city's education establishments play a key role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and are closely monitored and regulated.

Schools continue to work well with the council and other services, particularly in their funding and support for cluster working which continues to make a positive difference to local working and the development of a comprehensive Early Help approach across the city. The establishment of the LSCB Education Reference Group in 2013/14 will facilitate improved communication between the Board and education establishments. 100% of schools returned their S175 Audit in 2013/14 which identified a high level of compliance with statutory requirements and areas for improvement for individual establishments.

Multi-Agency working to deliver “the right service at the right time”

Most importantly the framework and structures for multi-agency practice (25 clusters, three localities and a multi-agency “front door” for contacts and referrals) are now established and embedded as the key building blocks for meeting children, young people, their family's and

community's needs. The Board has played a key role in supporting and challenging the way in which services are delivered and co-ordinated, and a central role in the development of the “Front Door”. This has been crucial in terms of rebalancing the system and ensuring that children and young people are supported in the right way at the right time, to stay safely and appropriately with their families where possible.

The approach is underpinned by:

- A strong shared performance framework which provides an understanding of both need and the response to that need in each cluster and locality.
- The Front Door Strategic Group which monitors, supports and challenges the multi-agency practice within the front door, (contact and referral service) as well as the way partners make contacts and referrals
- The ongoing use of the Strengthening Families model of child protection practice
- The developing and expanding use of family group conferencing
- An expectation that all practitioners work within the principles of restorative practice, which :
 - Has begun to create a more consistent as well as coherent approach to front line practice
 - Manages risk through recognising the strengths of a family as well as vulnerability.

All the evidence indicates that this approach has begun to create a common standard of practice and a consistent approach to keeping children and young people safe and meeting their needs effectively.





Performance Management and Quality Assurance of Safeguarding Services

Ensuring the effectiveness of multi-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people is one of the two LSCB core functions.

The Board has developed a comprehensive overview of the quality, timeliness and effectiveness of multi-agency practice facilitated through the LSCB Performance Management System which is based on three components:

1. Monitoring partner compliance with the statutory

requirement to have effective safeguarding arrangements in place

2. A Performance Management Framework based on the strategic priorities of the Board and including measures from the national Children's Safeguarding Performance Information Framework
3. A multi-agency Quality Assurance and Audit Programme.

This system complements and feeds into the Leeds Framework for Learning and Improvement which helps to promote a culture of continuous improvement across the partnership.

The LSCB uses a range of sources to assess the performance and quality of safeguarding work with the collation and analysis undertaken through the Annual Performance Report, which was received by the Board on 26th June 2014.

Section 11 Duty to safeguard audits

One of the primary tools for understanding effectiveness is the Annual S11 Audit (S175/S157 audits in education settings). Section 11 of The Children Act 2004 requires Local Safeguarding Children Boards to ensure that organisations have safeguarding arrangements in place, which are overseen and audited by senior managers, trustees and management committees. A full self assessment of statutory partners' compliance with S(11) responsibilities was undertaken in May / June 2014 using the new on line tool that has been developed as part of the LSCB website.

Returns from statutory partners indicate full compliance with 90% of the requirements. Areas for improvement have been identified and are being acted upon. They include:

- The engagement of children, young people and their families in the planning and development of services
- Children and young people being made aware of their right to be safe from abuse.
- More consistent staff attendance on child

protection and safeguarding training.

The audit undertaken by schools has identified a number which were outside their three-yearly staff refresher training cycle, all of which have now been resolved. In addition, all 55 Children's Centres, as well as the Early Start Leadership Team, the Family Support and Parenting Team, the Health and Wellbeing Service and the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Team have also completed their audits and have prioritised for the need to:

- Regularly review and ratify their internal policies
- Ensure staff are trained in safer recruitment practice.

The next step is to build on these audits and use the collective intelligence gained from them to better inform the city's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and to support the new Strategic Children and Young People's Plan.

A series of partner challenge events are planned for the Autumn of 2014 where partners will challenge and be challenged on audit outcomes, the robustness of evidence and how learning is resulting in improvement. This helps partner agencies to better understand how well they comply with statutory requirements and more importantly, what difference they are making as a consequence.



The LSCB Performance Management Framework

The Performance Management Framework collates data from across the partnership about safeguarding activity. Established in 2011 and refreshed annually, it is based on an 'Outcomes Based Accountability' approach, asking three questions:

1. How much did we do?
2. How well did we do it?
3. Did it make a difference?

The child's journey through the safeguarding system

This:

- Reviews information about how the safeguarding system responds when concerns are identified and raised about vulnerable children and young people
- Throws light on how children and young people become the subject of statutory intervention
- Evaluates the extent to which Early Help preventative services are employed to reduce need.

The Children's Services 'Front Door'

A key stage in a child's journey are the processes, assessments and decisions made at the Children's Services 'Front Door' where concerns about safety and wellbeing are raised through contact from partners. An external review in 2010 identified the need to revise and strengthen the operation of the Children's Services Duty and Advice Team in order to ensure that children and young people receive 'the right service at the right time'.

A new team was established in 2012 which has developed a multi-agency approach through the inclusion of experienced staff from key partners (Police and Health). Improved processes include:

- Decision making informed by multi-agency information and input
- Advice and guidance to partners about preventative services where statutory intervention is not appropriate
- Weekly multi-agency referral review meetings which sample decision making (e.g. where concerns about physical or sexual abuse have not resulted in statutory intervention).

Indications are that the impact of these new arrangements has been positive in 2013/14:

- There has been an increase in the number of 'conversations' between professionals about children and young people where there are concerns. As a consequence the appropriateness of 'requests for service' has improved, as reflected by the overall proportion of referrals about incidents of domestic violence reducing from 19% in July 2013 to 11% in February 2014
- The rate of re-referrals accepted (within 12 months) has reduced from 30% in March 2013 to 24% in March 2014
- The proportion of requests for service resulting in a referral being accepted by CSWS for statutory intervention has remained constant at 40%
- Responses given to the 60% of referrals which were not accepted for statutory intervention

included:

- Advice and information provided (81%)
- Recommendation for an Early Help Assessment (CAF) to be undertaken (8%)
- Sign posting to another agency (7%).

Early Help

Crucial to ensuring that children and young people receive the right service at the right time is the development and implementation of the Leeds 'Early Help Approach' which was launched by the LSCB in April 2014 (available on the LSCB website). It builds on steady progress over 2013/14 and has resulted in a 37% increase in the number of Early Help Assessments (formerly known as Common Assessments or CAFs). This approach is based on multi-agency working and Board partners have been fully involved in its development. The LSCB will be auditing the quality of Early Help Assessments in 2014/15.

This positive direction of travel is being bolstered by other, linked initiatives for example:

- The Think Family - Work Family Protocol (launched in June 2014 and available on the LSCB website), which emphasises that all agencies must consider the safeguarding needs of children and vulnerable adults when working with families.
- The expansion of Family Group Conferencing to support more families making their own arrangements to support vulnerable children and young people.



Children and young people subject to a child protection plan

Following the Ofsted inspection in 2009, when concerns were raised that Leeds was not initiating a sufficient number of statutory child protection interventions, the number of children and young people subject to a child protection plan rose steadily from 511 to a peak in August 2011 of 1171. The introduction of the Strengthening Families approach helped to stabilise this rise and manage a gradual (and carefully monitored) reduction in overall numbers which has been sustained in 2013/14 from 993 to 759 in March 2014 (48/10,000 of the population). This is close to the Integrated Safeguarding Unit target of 45/10,000, compares well with the performance of other large cities, but remains significantly higher than those towns and cities with a similar demographic makeup to Leeds (39/10,000).

The largest cohort subject to Child Protection Plans are children aged 0-5 with 17% aged 0-1 yr. The proportion of Black Minority Ethnic children on plans reflects the makeup of the wider community but the number of children and young people with a disability is statistically low (8 in March 2014). The Integrated Safeguarding Unit is working with the Children's Health and Disability Team to review whether child protection processes are being accessed appropriately for this vulnerable group.

The timeliness of initial child protection conferences was good prior to the introduction of a new electronic recording system in Children's Services in the autumn of 2013. This disrupted the processes involved and led to a significant deterioration in performance. Much has been done to improve the system subsequently. In addition the duration of plans is beginning to reduce

(from 52 children on plans for 2 years or more in 2012/13 to 14 at the end of 2013/14), although the number of repeat periods a child is the subject of a plan for a second or subsequent time has remained the same.

The voice and influence of children through active participation in the child protection process is still not good enough and is a priority for 2014/15 - as is improved multi-agency attendance at conferences. A range of pieces of work are underway to address this.

The effectiveness of multi-agency Child Protection Plans is a particular focus for the LSCB. A comprehensive audit of 16 cases reviewed April – November 2013 identified a gradual improvement, with 1 (6%) being judged 'outstanding', 4 (25%) 'good', 8 (50%) 'requires improvement' and 3 (19%) 'inadequate'. Whilst it is important to note that the audits did not identify any children and young people suffering or at risk of suffering immediate 'significant harm,' these findings strengthened the commitment to improving multi-agency working in this area. The LSCB and Integrated Safeguarding Unit have delivered partnership and cluster briefings / workshops on: SMART planning, involvement of children and young people, professionals challenging each other and recording core group meetings. The impact of these initiatives will be monitored through practitioner surveys and audits in 2014/15.



Children and young people who are “looked after”

The number of children and young people ‘looked after’ in Leeds has been steadily increasing since 2005, with the most significant rise coming between November 2009 and November 2010 when the numbers rose from 1370 to 1434. In March 2012 the numbers reached 1475. This trend has resulted in significant pressure on the budgets of agencies working with children and young people who are looked after and, given research findings, indicates poor outcomes for this vulnerable group of children and young people.

For these reasons, safely and appropriately reducing the numbers of children and young people who need to be ‘looked after’ is a priority for the partnership. This has been accepted as one of the three ‘obsessions’ by the Children and Families Trust Board.

The number of children and young people looked after reduced in 2013/14 from 1377 (89/10,000) to 1353 (87/10,000), continuing a gradual downward trend and representing an 8% reduction over a period of 2 years.

Work undertaken by Children’s Social Work Service identified that the age group 0-4 yrs constituted the highest number of receptions ‘into care’ (60% compared to 40% nationally) in 2013/14 and that children under 1 year made up 36%. This has resulted on a focus on exploring appropriate and safe alternatives to care and has contributed to a reduction in this cohort in the second half of 2013/14.

Of those looked after, the overwhelming majority

(62%) are placed with foster carers, with 14% in Kinship Care arrangements and 9% placed with parents. 12% of children and young people who are looked after are in ‘long distance’ external placements.

The introduction by Children’s Services of the new recording system (Framework-i) has disrupted process management and data collection in the second half of 2013/14. Available information indicates:

- A significant reduction in the number of children and young people who have experienced 3 or more placement moves in the year (from 103 in March 2013 to 40 in March 2014).
- An increase in health needs assessments undertaken in timescale (from 85% in March 2013 to 89% in March 2014) and a reduction in the timeliness of dental checks (from 71% in March 2013 to 61% in March 2014)
- Prior to the introduction of Framework-i 92% of statutory reviews took place on time, falling to 87% in the second half of the year. Work is being undertaken to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of review planning processes and to further develop the relevant functions of Framework-i.
- During April to September 2013 83% of children looked after met with the Reviewing Officer prior to their reviews and 44% attended the review meetings. Work is ongoing to promote and improve children and young people’s engagement in the review process.
- Work is being undertaken in 2014 to obtain feedback from parents about their experience of attending statutory reviews.

The Independent Reviewing Service, based in the Children’s Services Integrated Safeguarding Unit, has a quality assurance responsibility for children and young people who are looked after. The Service annual report for 2013/14 identifies:

- That 93% of care plans are up to date and there is evidence that adopting SMART planning principles results in good progress being made.
- The need to capture the input from partners into reviews (to be developed in 2014/15)
- That in 16% of cases concerns were raised with Children’s Services Service Delivery Managers to resolve issues about progress being made in implementing care plans. The concerns largely related to statutory visits, permanence planning, children’s views and pathway plans.

LSCB multi-agency audit activity (April - November 2013) indicates that the quality of services provided for children and young people who are looked after is high (40% judged ‘outstanding’, 60% judged ‘good’) with areas of improvement being identified regarding the timeliness of permanence planning and the consistency of Personal Education Plans.



Children and Young People suffering or at risk of Sexual Exploitation

Significant progress is being made in increasing understanding of and responding to the nature and scale of child sexual exploitation in Leeds. The response is based on a partnership approach, with input and support from many agencies:

- West Yorkshire Police have established a dedicated officer post to work with vulnerable young people in children's homes
- Barnardos are funding a post to work with vulnerable care leavers
- BLAST are working with boys and young men
- ISIS are supporting girls and young women
- Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation (PACE) in partnership with Virtual College have launched a national interactive online information package for parents.

During 2013/14 the LSCB Child Sexual Exploitation sub group has led the increased co-ordination of services across the partnership and developed a comprehensive strategy (available on the LSCB website) and action plan, which includes:

- The implementation of a comprehensive referral and assessment process and a check list produced for practitioners.
- Awareness raising amongst professionals, children and young people, families and communities.
- Close links with neighbouring authorities in West Yorkshire to facilitate a regional approach and engagement with the West Yorkshire Police 'Know the Signs' campaign.



- The Student LSCB (voice and influence sub group) has developed materials for a child and young person facing awareness raising campaign which was launched in August 2014.

The number of recorded Child Sexual Exploitation cases has increased from 85 in 2012/13 to 157 in 2013/14 and there have been 33 Police investigations culminating in 9 court cases and 7 convictions. In March 2014 there were 107 open cases with 67% aged 15-16yrs and from a predominantly White British background.

Children and Young People who go 'Missing'

There were 1845 incidents of children and young people reported 'missing' from home or care in 2013/14 relating to 551 children. This compares with 1117 incidents in 2012/13 relating to 456 children and young people and reflects improving collection and collation of data rather than an increase in actual numbers of children missing.

The LSCB Child Sexual Exploitation & Missing sub group has identified that a broader definition and more proactive approach is required in order to respond effectively to children and young people who go missing. This is an area for increased attention in 2014/15. An action plan has been developed for implementation and the West Yorkshire and the local procedures are being updated to take account of new national guidance and practice developments.

Quality Assurance and Audit

In order to monitor and evaluate the quality of partnership and single agency working, the LSCB draws on a variety of audits and surveys including:

- The LSCB Quality Assurance and Audit Programme
- The LSCB Chair's audits of partners
- The findings of audits undertaken 'in house' by partners.

LSCB Audits

Alongside reviewing the quality of services provided for priority vulnerable groups of children and young people (e.g. effectiveness of Child Protection Plans & Care Planning for children 'looked after') the LSCB also undertakes multi-agency audits of specific issues or to evaluate the implementation / impact of actions resulting from Serious Case Reviews and Local Learning Lessons Reviews. In 2013/14 findings from the following 4 audits were considered by the Board:

1. The Teenage Parent's Pathway Audit
2. Audit of Specialist Inclusion Learning Centres
3. Audit of the influence children and young people have on the development of services
4. Audit of the implementation of actions from Serious Case Review Individual Management Reports

All four audits identified areas of strength and areas for development. Overall the following areas for improvement have been identified:

- To ensure that recommendations from reviews are progressed in a more consistent and timely manner
- To review the relevance of recommendations in the context of agency restructures and changes in service provision
- To improve the consistency with which agencies analyse the effectiveness of implemented recommendations and their impact on outcomes for children and young people
- To operate more effective processes within the business unit which escalates concerns when information from partners regarding recommendations is not forthcoming.

LSCB Chair Audits

The LSCB Chair has undertaken a programme of "light touch" audits of partner agencies. Overall these have identified that:

- Case file management systems can be complex and the ability to retrieve relevant safeguarding information can be challenging. In four of the audits IT systems were identified as having some impact on how efficiently safeguarding information is stored and retrieved.
- Four audits identified that the voice of the child was not clearly recorded or evidenced.





Partner Agency Audits

In 2013/14 the LSCB Partner Agency Audit Register became fully established, providing an overview of the extensive auditing work being undertaken 'in house' across the partnership. Overall the following themes can be identified:

Strengths:

- Increasing participation of children and young people in Child Protection and Looked After processes
- A gradual increase in the engagement of GPs with Child Protection Conferences (aided by a new report format and telephone conversations with Conference Chairs)
- Good engagement in Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference processes
- Robust systems and processes in Health for safeguarding children and young people
- Health targets achieved for Health Needs assessments, record keeping and Sudden Unexpected Death In Childhood processes
- Improvements in the quality of referrals to Children's Social Work Services
- Improving consistency and quality in Cafcass private and public law practice.

Areas for multi-agency improvement:

- To strengthen the quality of assessments*
- To improve Child Protection Core Group functioning
- To improve the timeliness of Child Protection Conferences*

* Two of these areas were identified as issues in the 2011 Ofsted Inspection and remain as areas for further improvement in 2014/15. Plans are in place to address these issues in response to the audit work.



The effectiveness of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board

The LSCB, in meeting its statutory requirements and progressing an ambitious business plan needs to be well organised and the efforts of its members effectively co-ordinated.





How the Board undertakes its work

During 2013/14 the LSCB has met bi-monthly, with the Executive meeting on intervening months. LSCB Annual Review Meetings have taken place in July 2013 and 2014 to consider the Annual Report and review the effectiveness of LSCB structures and ways of working. Attendance by partner organisations at LSCB Board meetings has remained positive (79% by primary representatives) and authorised deputies attend as required. The Chair of the LSCB takes up poor attendance as necessary with the relevant agency chief executive.

The work is largely undertaken through the 12 sub groups and is heavily reliant on the input of staff from all partner agencies through:

- Sub, reference and task groups
- The multi-agency training pool
- Contributing to Serious Case Reviews and Local Learning Lessons Reviews
- Engagement in the Quality Assurance and Audit Programme

Sub, reference and task groups meet on a regular basis to monitor and progress their components of the Business Plan. Established sub groups meet at least bi-monthly, with additional sessions arranged as required. Reports of work undertaken and decisions made are provided for each Board meeting. During the year the LSCB also developed:

- An Education Reference group to develop closer links with schools and FE colleges to provide a conduit for sharing information and learning
- The Secure Settings reference group to consider the safeguarding issues for this particularly vulnerable group of children and young people
- A Front Door Strategic Group to ensure oversight of initiatives to promote a complementary approach for Adult and Children's Services
- A Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood Strategic reference group to provide multi-agency oversight of the responses to the unexpected deaths of children and young people.

Progress on the objectives and tasks within the LSCB Business Plan are monitored through Executive

Group meetings and reported on a regular basis to the Board. As part of the Annual Review a report on progress against the Business Plan 2013/14 indicated that

- 90% (139) of tasks had been completed or were proceeding on time
- 4% (6) of tasks were progressing but had slipped against timescales
- 6% (10) of tasks showed no progress (and their continued relevance was reviewed in the development of the Business plan for 2014/15).

The commitment shown by agencies and their staff is testament to the seriousness with which the LSCB is viewed and the shared intent across the partnership to improve multi-agency working, services and outcomes for children and young people. Section 9 of the full report contains a significant amount of detail about the Board's effectiveness.

Co-ordinating the work of local agencies to safeguard children and young people

An important contribution to the work of the LSCB is made through the development of policies and procedures for use by professionals across the partnership. The Policy and Procedures sub group leads this work, in collaboration with the West Yorkshire Consortium, which ensures that a set of consistent regional procedures are maintained for partners who work across the region. Work taken forward in 2013/14 includes:

- Maintaining oversight of the implementation of Working Together 2013 (eg the development of the new Children's Social Work Service Single Assessment process "Child and Family Assessment").
- Development of the Leeds Early Help Approach:
 - Guidance for all practitioners has been produced through the 'Right Conversations, Right People, Right Time' document
 - Partners have disseminated information to their staff using a video which explains the concept of early help (video is on LSCB website)
 - Partner and LSCB co-ordinated training has been updated to incorporate the new approach
 - The LSCB 'dispute resolution process' has been updated and re-named the 'Concerns Resolution Process'.
- Revision and updating of the 'Think Family - Work Family Protocol'. Launched at the LSCB Conference in July 2014 this is an on-line resource and will be implemented through 2014/15.

Ensuring the effectiveness of work to safeguard children and young people

This requires the LSCB to have a comprehensive overview of the quality, timeliness and effectiveness of safeguarding practice across the partnership and to challenge where improvements in performance are required. This is provided primarily through the LSCB Performance Management System, the Child Death Overview Panel and findings from Serious Case and Local Learning Lessons reviews. Regular reports are provided to the Board. The Annual Performance Report provides the basis for the analysis of the Effectiveness of Safeguarding Arrangements that is the focus of this report.



Responding to Challenges

Progress on the challenges set for 2012/13 and (the then) emerging Challenges for 2013/14 from the LSCB Annual Review Process were presented to and accepted by the Children and Families Trust Board in June 2013, with the final Annual Report being received in September. The LSCB Chair, or her representative, has attended all Children and Families Trust Board meetings in 2013/14, ensuring an input into the monitoring of the progress of the Children and Young People's Plan. The LSCB Annual Report was presented to:

- The Health and Wellbeing Board
- The Local Authority Chief Executive through the Corporate Leadership Team
- The Children and Families Scrutiny Board
- The Assistant Chief Constable, West Yorkshire Police

In the Annual Performance Report in June 2013 the LSCB set eight challenges to the Children and Families Trust Board for 2013/14. A summary of progress received in May 2014 indicates that local services are continuing to make good progress in rebalancing the safeguarding system in Leeds. These successes have been well supported through a range of new services and better multi-agency working. Key areas of progress include:

- Expansion of key Early Help services such as the Family Group Conferencing teams.
- Better permanence planning for children and young people who are looked after
- Increased use of adoption and alternative orders such as Special Guardianship Orders

- Continued strengthening of local cluster working – e.g. new models of work between targeted services and social work piloted in East Leeds.

Work to improve support for families facing the biggest challenges and with the highest needs is making good progress. The revised Think Family - Work Family Protocol was launched in June 2014, building on the successful work to agree and develop the revised approach to Early Help. Other key areas of progress include:

- Development of restorative approaches to support and challenge these families, such as the expansion of Family Group Conferencing.
- Continued success of local intensive family support services and the re-commissioning of the Family Intervention Service
- Commissioning of new services for families affected by Domestic Violence.

All local partners are working together well through the LSCB Child Sexual Exploitation subgroup. A very thorough and wide-ranging action plan has been developed with the input and support of all key agencies and work is now progressing across all areas, from identification, to supporting, disruption and prosecution. This is identified as a priority area for further development in 2014/15.

Services for older young people that are at risk of poor outcomes have made very strong progress over the past year. In particular, Children's Care Leaving services have been reformed and refocused with new leadership. Extensive external support and challenge through a partnership with leading academic experts has informed these developments and contributed to staff development. Improvements have been well supported through the Multi Agency Looked After Partnership, with particularly good joint working with Housing.

The Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood reference group will be working with a local charity Elliot's Footprint in 2014/15 to review and help develop bereavement services for families who have experienced the sudden unexpected loss of a child. This will complement two reviews commissioned by the NHS to consider support for parents experiencing a still birth and wider bereavement services.

Managing risk safely and appropriately

The LSCB and its partners have been very conscious of the need to manage risk effectively during a period of change that is part of the 'improvement journey'. Considerable thought and effort has been expended in ensuring there are layers of checks and safeguards around key processes and decisions. These include:

- Children's Services Duty and Advice. 2013/14 saw continued strengthening of the Duty and Advice team, with additional input from the Police and NHS to ensure effective information sharing and shared decision making,
- Weekly Referral Review Meeting. This multi-agency meeting of senior leaders closely scrutinises a sample of contact, referrals and decision-making processes each week to evaluate the safety of decisions made.
- Head of Service Decision and Review (HOSDAR), Joint Agency Decision and Review Panel (JADAR) and Permanence Panels. These groups of senior managers review key decisions of entry to care, placements and permanence planning to ensure rigour and the effectiveness of decision-making

Quality assurance and audit activity in key services has been expanded significantly, including:

- New approaches to case file auditing in social work and targeted services
- Integrated Safeguarding Unit Quality Assurance checklists to review all Child Looked After reviews and Child Protection conferences
- The LSCB multi-agency Quality Assurance and Audit Programme
- Other activities including use of external challenge from leading academics, surveys and observation of practice.

The Council now works with all commissioned services to help them undertake audits of their safeguarding arrangements and then act on the findings. The contracting team are increasing support and challenge in this work by engaging the expertise of senior managers from the Integrated Safeguarding Unit and LSCB in this work. NHS commissioners work to include safeguarding in all parts of their commissioning cycle. Further work is needed to develop a common performance management framework across commissioned services. The Council and NHS will work with the LSCB to develop this approach over the next year.

Voluntary, Community and Faith organisations

The LSCB engages with Voluntary, Community and Faith organisations in the city through the Third Sector Reference Group. The group works to raise awareness across the Sector of key safeguarding issues and responsibilities, and signposting organisations to the dedicated section on the new LSCB website. During 2013/14 the group has engaged with:

- Faith organisations (through a pilot in liaison with local community officers in the LS10 and LS11 areas of the city)
- Community groups (through LCC Housing Development Officers)
- Sports clubs (through the West Yorkshire Sport forum).

Learning and Improving

The LSCB seeks to actively lead the partnership in identifying areas of safeguarding working and practice that need to be improved and to ensure that action is taken as a result. This work is co-ordinated through the Leeds Framework for Learning and Improvement which was updated in July 2013 and has been embedded over 2013/14. Its key elements are:

- A partnership approach to learning and improving
- Transparency and public accountability
- Setting out the responsibilities of partners
- Learning methodologies (including responding to child deaths and undertaking Serious Case Reviews and Local Learning Lesson Reviews)
- Planning and implementing improvements
- Disseminating lessons learnt and changes required
- Monitoring the impact of changes made.

The Annual Review

The Annual Review offers an opportunity for the Board to step outside of its busy schedule of business meetings in order to:

- Consider the emerging findings of the Annual Report “Evaluating the Effectiveness of Safeguarding in Leeds” for the previous year
- Reflect on how well it is working to provide strategic leadership for the partnership
- Assess the impact that it is having on improving outcomes for children and young people.

The Review is based on three elements:

- A 360 degree review of the Chair’s leadership
- A formal self assessment questionnaire
- Discussion and debate at the Annual Review meeting.

The Review in July 2014 indicates that whilst the Board is well led and demonstrates high support, high challenge in its own behaviour, the voice and influence of children and young people needs to feature more prominently. In addition the Board identified three other key areas for development:

- More needs to be done to work more effectively with other key strategic bodies (Children and Families Trust Board, Health & Wellbeing Board, Adult Safeguarding Board and Safer Leeds Executive); to build on the developing ‘shared agenda’ to help and protect children, young people and their families
- The LSCB and partner agencies needs to ensure the effective dissemination of key safeguarding messages to front line staff and managers
- Further improvement is required in the presentation of performance information in order to make it fully accessible and understandable to Board members.

In the light of the Review the Board has prioritised a series of challenges for 2014/15 which are set out in the final section of this summary.





Summary and whole system analysis

For the LSCB in discharging its responsibility to evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding system as a whole, and to evidence the impact this is having, it is helpful to address a series of questions:

- Are we doing the right things?
- Are we making sufficient progress?
- Are we managing risk safely and appropriately?
- Is the LSCB making sufficient progress?
- What Impact is the Board having?

Are we doing the right things?

The Partnership has responded to previous Ofsted inspections of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and practice through embarking on an improvement journey. This is based on an ambitious but sustainable strategic plan underpinned by political and professional support and co-operation.

The objectives of the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan (2011-15) are clear, with an appropriate priority focus on keeping children and young people safe from harm. There is partnership agreement that the safeguarding system needs to be rebalanced in order to improve outcomes for children and young people by intervening earlier and more effectively in the life of a problem. This involves:

- A restorative approach to working with children, young people and their families
- An early help approach to providing 'the right service at the right time'
- A reduction in the need for statutory intervention.

There is consistency across the partnership about the challenges for the coming period and a commitment to a culture of continuous improvement. This involves identifying lessons and taking action to improve practice, multi-agency working and outcomes for children and young people.

Are we making sufficient progress?

Good progress continues to be made to address the recommendations from previous Ofsted inspections. The introduction of a new Children's Services electronic recording system in the Autumn of 2013 was a significant step forward. However, the associated inevitable dislocation of processes has resulted in a temporary disruption of performance collation and reporting around other issues identified for improvement by Ofsted (e.g. the timeliness of Child Protection Conferences). Overall, partners report positive judgements from external inspections carried out during 2013/14

There is evidence of increasing:

- Multi-agency working in implementing the priorities of the partnership (eg Early Help, Think Family - Work Family Protocol, Children's Services' 'Front Door', Children & Young People's Housing Plan)
- Engagement with faith organisations, community groups and sports clubs.
- Commitment by partners to engage more fully with children and young people in both the planning and delivery of services and in individual case work. There is a clear consensus that more needs to be done to ensure that the 'voice of the child / young person' becomes central to all that we do.

An evaluation of the progress being made by the partnership to address its safeguarding objectives is informed by key performance information about the

system as a whole (detailed above). There is evidence of:

- Increasing 'conversations' between professionals. This is helping to reduce the need for statutory intervention by promoting more timely 'early help', preventative multi-agency working.
- The continuing gradual rebalancing of the safeguard system, resulting in fewer children and young people requiring statutory intervention.
- Considerable effort being made to ensure that for those who do require statutory intervention interventions are undertaken in a timely and effective manner and result in positive outcomes for children and young people
- Progress being made to address the needs of particularly vulnerable groups of children and young people (eg those in secure settings, privately fostered, at risk of sexual exploitation). However, it is clear that more needs to be done and is planned for 2014/15.

Are we managing risk safely and appropriately?

Assessing and managing risk is a key responsibility in safeguarding children and young people and is doubly important during a period of whole system change.

Assurance that change is being managed in a careful and safe manner is provided by:

- Performance information indicating that the reduction in the need for statutory intervention continues to be gradual and is being balanced by an increase in Early Help, preventative services
- Oversight of decision making at the Children's Services Front Door
- LSCB audit findings for children and young people who are looked after
- Monitoring of the implementation of action plans from Serious Case Reviews and Local Learning Lessons Reviews.

Areas for improvement identified in 2014/15 include:

- Safeguarding services for children and young people who are disabled and/or have complex needs
- Embedding improvements in the effectiveness of multi-agency child protection plans
- Children and young people living in the context of compromised parenting
- Care Leavers and young people who become homeless
- Adolescent self harm and suicide
- Step down from Child Protection Plans to Child in Need Plans
- The analysis of risk and need.

Is the LSCB making sufficient progress?

The Review of the Business Plan for 2013/14 indicates that good progress is being made to address the priorities set by the Board and that an ambitious plan has been set for 2014/15. The Annual

Review has identified many positives in how the Board is operating, including

- The leadership of the Independent Chair
- The development of the Student LSCB
- The provision of information for Board members, although the presentation of performance information needs to be further simplified and made more accessible
- Improving communication and the use of the new website
- Its increasing self awareness of its strengths and weaknesses, which needs to be developed further to facilitate more consistent challenge within meetings and fuller engagement of all partners in the work of the Board.

What Impact is the Board having?

The implementation of the comprehensive Leeds Learning & Improvement Framework has brought together:

- The safeguarding lessons learnt from the full range of the work of the LSCB and partners
- The actions that are being taken to improve services
- The impact on practice, multi-agency working and outcomes for children and young people.

The LSCB acknowledges that evidencing impact on processes remains more straightforward than for outcomes and is seeking to express its improvement objectives more clearly in terms of required outcomes. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify some broad improvement in outcomes for children and young people in Leeds to which the LSCB and

its constituent partners have contributed e.g.:

- The continuing trend in the reduction in the number of child deaths
- The reduction in children and young people requiring statutory intervention
- An increasing number of children and young people are being engaged with by services at an earlier stage in the life of the difficulties that they are experiencing.

The Board can also evidence the impact that it has in providing a strategic lead for the partnership eg:

- Increasing the accountability of partners for their safeguarding arrangements and practice
- Raising the profile of safeguarding children and young people across the wider Leeds Partnership (adult and children's services)
- Disseminating key safeguarding messages
- Leading the development of key multi-agency initiatives (e.g. the Early Help Approach and the Think Family - Work Family Protocol) and supporting the establishment of a multi-agency 'Front Door'
- Taking a lead in improving the competence, knowledge and confidence of the children's workforce in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people through multi-agency training, briefings and conferences
- Ensuring that policies and procedures are updated in line with national developments and local development of practice.

Whilst the Board can evidence making progress and making an impact across the partnership, the Annual Review has identified that more needs to be done. A number of areas for improvement are incorporated in the challenges the Board has set itself for 2014/15.





Challenges for 2014/15

From the Annual Review Process and the Annual Performance Report the LSCB has identified a series of challenges for itself and for other Strategic Bodies to be addressed in 2014/15. These are designed to maintain and increase the momentum for positive change in the development and delivery of services to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people.

Challenges to strategic bodies for 2014/15

To the Children and Families Trust Board

The following 8 challenges for 2014/15 were presented to and accepted by the Children and Families Trust Board on 26 June 2014:

- 1) To strengthen the 'voice of the child' in:
 - The planning and evaluation of services
 - Engaging in the delivery of services provided for and with them (particularly in statutory processes e.g. Child Protection Plans and care planning for children and young people who are 'Looked After').
- 2) To develop and embed the Leeds 'Early Help Approach' to assist front line staff in ensuring that children and young people receive 'the right service at the right time'.
- 3) To implement and embed the revised 'Think Family - Work Family Protocol' in order to promote more integrated multi-agency working in responding to children and young people living in the context of 'compromised parenting' (where there are adult issues of domestic violence, substance mis-use, mental health problems and learning disability).
- 4) To maintain the momentum in developing effective multi-agency services for Care Leavers with a focus on commissioning a wider and more flexible range of services to include other troubled and transient young people in the city.

- 5) To further promote the co-ordination of effective multi-agency Child protection Plans through SMART planning, engagement with parents, children and young people and appropriate professional challenge.
- 6) To better understand the incidence and nature of adolescent mental ill-health, self harm and suicidal thoughts in order to establish a more co-ordinated partnership response.
- 7) To build on the increasing understanding of the nature and prevalence of child sexual exploitation in Leeds and across West Yorkshire to:
 - intervene effectively with children, young people, their families and communities
 - reduce the incidence of abuse and support those who have become victims.

A particular focus should be on developing the multi-agency response to the linked issue of children and young people who 'go missing' (from home, care, school, and universal services).

- 8) To use the reviews being undertaken of bereavement services for families who have suffered the death of a child or young person to ensure adequate availability and accessibility.

To the Health & Well Being Board, the Safer Leeds Partnership and Adult Safeguarding Board

Two of the challenges to the Children and Families Trust Board, where co-operation and co-ordination between adult and children's services is essential, require the engagement of these three strategic bodies:

- To implement the 'Think Family - Work Family Protocol' (which promotes more 'joined up working' in responding to vulnerable children, young people and adults).
- To improve the availability and accessibility of bereavement services.

Challenges the LSCB is setting itself for 2014/15

These challenges are set out within the framework of the Strategic Plan (2011-15) and have been incorporated into the Business Plan for 2014/15.

LEAD, LISTEN & ADVISE

- To provide more clarity and focus to the priorities of the Board
- To maintain the momentum in developing closer partnership working at both strategic and operational levels and to promote a culture of 'problem solving'
- To ensure that all services (Adults' and Children's) embed the safeguarding of children and young people at the heart of what they do
- To improve communication across the partnership and particularly with practitioners and first line managers
- To further develop the co-ordination of safeguarding activity across the partnership and be satisfied about the quality of services through engagement with:
 - The Education Sector (LSCB Education Reference Group)
 - Faith and Community groups (Third Sector Reference Group)
- To further develop and expand the role of Lay Members and the influence of children and young people within the work of the Board
- To review the engagement of Adult Mental Health Services with young people
- To consider how to respond effectively to issues of radicalisation, child trafficking, FGM and forced marriage.

KNOW THE STORY;

CHALLENGE THE PRACTICE

- To more comprehensively hold partners to account through the operation of the Performance Management System and the Learning and Improvement Framework
- To consider how performance and monitoring data can be most effectively presented and used to inform partners/ other strategic boards' development of services for children and young people and to support Board Members in becoming more challenging of each other
- To undertake a more comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of 'Early Help' work undertaken through Clusters
- To review the use and effectiveness of 'Child in Need' Plans and 'step down' processes from Child Protection Plans
- To audit the quality of support offered to Care Leavers
- To develop, with partners, a programme to monitor and evaluate the quality and outcomes of safeguarding services for particularly vulnerable groups of children and young people (e.g. those in secure settings, those at risk of sexual exploitation, those who are disabled and/or have complex needs)
- To ensure that factors identified in the deaths of children and young people are disseminated across the partnership and inform practice when working with families
- To review and analyse the data regarding self-harm to evaluate the impact of recent partnership initiatives.

LEARN & IMPROVE

- To support and drive the embedding of new, more effective ways of multi-agency working in order to improve outcomes for children and young people
- To develop a framework and simple coherent multi-agency tools and evidence based models of interventions to support practitioners to provide Early Help more effectively
- To review, revise and further develop the partnership's approach to children and young people who become missing (from home, care, education and universal services), with a particular focus on the under 5's and children who are home educated and to include consideration of related challenges (e.g. trafficking, child slavery, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation).