

Welcome to this edition of Brighton & Hove Local Safeguarding Children Board's Newsletter

I do hope you all managed to get a break over the Easter period and are now back raring to go! In this month's newsletter you will find many of the usual features you find useful including Serious Case Review commentaries, LSCB training programme, and information on forthcoming events. We also have an interview with the Director of Children's Services Pinaki Ghoshal, talking about the importance of working together in the city, and your thoughts on this with the results of our multi-agency working survey which many of you undertook.

I am pleased to say that tickets are going quickly for the first of our free Interagency Forums with the Violence Against Women & Girls Programme Board this May. To take part in the discussion book your place [here](#). The first forum will be on Female Genital Mutilation, and will update you on the work we are undertaking around this horrific abuse. We are jointly putting the final touches to a resource pack for professionals which will be launched at these events. They will include an overview of the crime type, information on indicators of both those at risk and those who have been subject to FGM, how to manage disclosure and local care pathways. I encourage you to come along to the forum, and may meet you there.

Following our special bulletin on e-safety in February 2014, this month we have produced a similar one on [Child Sexual Exploitation](#) (CSE) as this is one of our priority areas, and we have agreed the pan Sussex LSCB strategy and the Brighton & Hove action plan at our last Board meeting. The [bulletin](#) features an overview of CSE, signs and indicators to be aware of, and how to respond and report it. There is also feedback from our recent survey of practitioners understanding of CSE and it's prevalence in the city, as well as LSCB Sub Groups Chairs thoughts on how their groups help make sure children & young people are protected from CSE. We have interviewed workers at [The WiSE Project](#) about the support they provide and their outstanding awareness raising work, and details on Sussex Police's Operation Kite. I commend this special publication to you as this form of abuse is certainly everyone's business to prevent.

Finally we look at the emerging Early Help Pathway, and how agencies work together to provide Early Help in our city. The Board are committed to ensuring that we have effective early help arrangements in place, and that all referrals receive a prompt and assured response, and we are pleased that the Early Help Hub and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) are anticipated to be operational at the end of the summer.

Many thanks for the continued positive feedback on the Newsletters and I hope you enjoy this month's and the CSE special bulletin as much as previous editions. If you would like to give us feedback, or suggest items for future editions please email LSCB@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

Graham Bartlett
Brighton & Hove LSCB Independent Chair



Child L. Hull: January 2014

Background

In October 2012 a nearly 6 week old baby girl (Child L) died as the result of a severe skull fracture. Her mother admitted to a charge of infanticide due to post natal depression and received a community order with a supervision requirement for three years. The help and support which Child L and her family received was largely routine help from universal services and Children's Social Care had no involvement. The majority of this help and support was provided to the expected standard, with some notable examples of good practice.

The conclusion of the Review is that local agencies and services could not have anticipated or prevented this tragic event. The Board cited that the offer of additional support would have been beneficial, following a diagnosis that Child L's mother had post natal depression.

To read our briefing please click [here](#)

or visit www.brightonandhovelscb.org.uk/prof_safeguarding_information_updates

See the full SCR report [here](#)

20 Questions

Research by the [British Association of Social Workers](#) published last year found that one in four social workers never read serious case review recommendations. Nearly two thirds of social workers only "sometimes" read the recommendations. Our colleagues from [Leicester & Rutland Safeguarding Adults & Children Boards](#) have analysed the recommendations from SCRs published across the country between 2010 to 2013 and used these to produce a 20 point checklist to help all front line staff working with children to identify areas for development in their practice.

The full list is available to download [here](#) and the questions to consider include:

- How do I ask **challenging questions** about very sensitive matters?
- How do I develop the expertise to **sense** that the child or parent or adult is being **evasive**? Do I reflect on the times when they have been evasive?
- Have I had time to **reflect** to mull over the experience and learning from it, in supervision, for example, or in discussions with colleagues?
- Are the **men** associated with the family 'visible'? Is their impact being **assessed**? Look for signs of 'hidden' partners, big shoes, coats etc. Ask the children! Talk to neighbours.
- **What is life really like for the children** in this family?
- Do I understand my **role** and responsibilities within the child protection plan?
- Have I **communicated** with **all** other agencies involved in delivering the plan?
- Am I feeling **confident** and **comfortable** working with this family? If not why not? Is this a gut instinct telling you something?
- Am I putting the needs, views and wishes of the children at the forefront of interaction & enquiry, or is the **adult agenda dominating**?

Brighton & Hove LSCB have recently requested that our partner agencies undertake a Section 11 Audit (more information can be found on page 7 of this newsletter). As part of this self assessment we asked organisations to describe how their staff are kept up to date with findings from serious case reviews. Of the agencies who have submitted their section 11 returns all feel they do this well. Methods described include:

LSCB monthly newsletter and briefings;

Safeguarding children training for staff working with children or midwifery which includes learning from SCR's & Bespoke Area Team training;

Safeguarding link practitioner meetings chaired by Named Nurses;

Multi-agency events, such as the LSCB 'Learning from SCR' workshops;

Staff development Days;

Team meetings;

Monthly service briefings.

LSCB Multi-Agency Training 2014

Working Together to Safeguard Children 1: Developing a Core Understanding:

11th June, 15th July, 11th September, 15th October, 18th November & 10th December

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2: Assessment, Referral and Investigation:

30th April, 17th June, 22nd July, 18th September, 22nd October, & 27th November

Working Together to Safeguard Children 3: Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups:

7th May 2014, 19th June, 17th July, 23rd September & 6th November

Domestic Violence & Abuse: The Impact on Children & Young People:

8th May, 17th July, 11th September & 20th November

Mental Health & Children's Services: Working Together with Families: 18th September

Preventing & Disrupting the Sexual Exploitation of Children & Young People:

28th May, 24th July & 10th October

Substance Misuse & Parenting Capacity 8th July & 11th November

Working with Parents with a Learning Disability 16th October

Safeguarding Children Assessment Workshops 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, September & 7th October

Safeguarding Children with Disabilities 18th September 2014

Dates still to be confirmed for: MAPPA Workshop, Private Fostering Awareness, and we are developing new courses for later in the year on Working with Hostile Families, Neglect, and Child Sexual Abuse.

Following on from the popular events in January 2014, look out for more in our Lunchtime Seminar series, where we will explore various themes in bite-size multiagency sessions.

More information from www.brightonandhovelscb.org.uk/prof_training.html

The Benefits of Multi Agency Training

If you have been on any of the LSCB 'Working Together in Child Protection' core courses you may already know LSCB Training Manager Michael McCoy. We asked him why he enjoys delivering safeguarding to groups of staff from different sectors, and what he considers the benefits are from attending multi-agency training?



“When people come on LSCB training courses they meet other professionals from a range of children & adult services including health, social care, the voluntary sector, probation, education and early years to name just a few. It is an opportunity to learn about the roles and responsibilities of colleagues in other agencies and to consider how we can work together to keep children safe. Feedback from course participants is that these opportunities to learn **about** one another, and to learn **from** one another, are some of the most useful aspects of the training. It is satisfying to facilitate the courses and see understanding develop through the day and professional relationships being built.

Multi-agency working provides benefits for children, young people and families because it makes it more likely that they will get the right support in the most efficient way. Benefits include:

- early identification of any issues and intervention
- easier or quicker access to services or expertise
- better **support for parents**
- children, young people and family's needs addressed more appropriately
- reduced need for longer-term or more specialist services.

Furthermore, Serious Case Reviews highlight repeatedly how the ability of professionals from different backgrounds to work together and communicate effectively can have a crucial impact on children's safety and well being. This is why multi-agency training is so important.”

Children's Services & Multi-Agency Working

Pinaki Ghoshal, Director of Children's Services for Brighton & Hove City Council, explained why multi-agency working is important to him, and how he tries to make it more effective in our City:

"We are blessed in Brighton and Hove with having strong partnerships across the city which support children & young people. One challenge that I faced when I started working here last July was to fully understand the extent and maturity of these partnerships, which in relation to the safeguarding of children is exemplified by the LSCB. While the council has very significant responsibilities to ensure that children are kept safe, it will never be possible for it to fulfil such responsibilities in isolation from the wider partnership of organisations & communities across the city.

Our partnerships with other statutory organisations are strong. Children's Services are working well with the Police to co-develop a new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for the city. We also work well in sharing information in a range of areas where there are concerns about the safety of children & young people, including more recently a joint approach with child sexual exploitation and the development of new arrangements to support young people who go missing. Relationships with health commissioners and providers have been strong for many years with for example the joint working with health visitors, the integrated team for disabled children and support for children in care. We have partnerships with Probation and the Fire Service, for example through our Stronger Families programme and in a number of different areas with the vibrant community and voluntary sector and of course with schools. Our collective endeavour has meant that the number of children who report that they are bullied are low, our multi-disciplinary Stronger Families team has successfully intervened with a number of families to improve outcomes, our children in care are in stable placements and reviews of services and audit of practice indicate that children are appropriately supported by social workers.

Challenges remain and over the next three years we will be seeking to ensure that there is a strong & coherent children's services working with partners so that Brighton & Hove becomes a Child Friendly City where all services work with each other to ensure that outcomes for children & young people are improved; a city where children & young people have the best possible start in life so that they grow up happy, healthy & safe with the opportunity to fulfil their own potential. This means that all children & young people in the city will have access to high quality education and the right to a nurturing family, learning and social environment that will provide them with knowledge, experiences and skills to secure employment and be active and responsible citizens. We will achieve this in a number of ways; by having a MASH in place, an Early Help Hub together with a range of evidence based early help services across the city, schools in the right places delivering learning which helps children to reach their aspirations, staff with the skills that make a difference, and young people & their families engaged with us and with all partners who are working to the common purpose of ensuring that this city is one that all of our young people can feel proud to be a part of."

Read more in Pinaki's interview with Brighton & Hove News [here](#)

Early Help Pathway & Hub

You may have heard Brighton & Hove City Council & the LSCB talking about three joined up initiatives: the **early help** pathway and hub; the multi-agency safeguarding hub (**MASH**); and the Inter Agency **Threshold Criteria**. The council's Children's Services have been talking to partners, and asking people to take part in consultations, with an aim to publish final proposals next month, begin incremental implementation in June/July and have a formal launch in September.

The **Early Help** Pathway:

- Recognises early help provided by universal services very often meets the needs of children, young people and their families
- Will underpin Common Assessment Framework (CAF) & Team Around the Family (TAF) arrangements i.e. when support can no longer be held by one organisation and further advice or services are required.
- Will set out new arrangements to manage concerns that fall outside of safeguarding and child protection procedures but which may challenge individual organizations
- Safeguarding & child protection concerns will continue to follow mandatory LSCB procedures by making a referral to the new MASH (rather than ACAS).

We will give you more information about how agencies will work together in the Early Help Hub & MASH in future newsletters—watch this space!

Early Help at Moulsecomb Primary School

On Thursday 13th March Moulsecomb Primary School held an Early Help Morning to share the work they do to engage families and the local community, with colleagues across the city. The school demonstrates a real commitment to working together with families, children and outside agencies to improve the wellbeing of children, and help them attend school ready and willing to learn. They believe in looking at the family as a whole to support a child's academic outcomes, and consider the importance of their emotional wellbeing among other factors. This exemplifies the principals behind Brighton & Hove's Early Help Strategy. The Early Help morning was well attended, with representatives from other schools, early years settings, the police and the voluntary sector. They showcased a short film where staff and parents talked about the various initiatives run by the school, followed by a question and answer session with Head Teacher Charles Davies, Family Worker Angela Gregg, Community Worker Lucy Rayner and their team of Learning Mentors. The morning concluded with tours of the school, including an opportunity to see the schools impressively kept grounds as well as the classes, nurture group and a family art session.

Working Together:

Building relationships are at the heart of the school's approach, and one of the main challenges they have overcome has been to get parents through the door to begin with. There was no culture of communication between the school and community when Charles Davies started at the school 14 years ago, but by beginning with keep fit and art classes they got parents to feel comfortable coming into the school building. They now run a range of activities for adults, and for parents with their children, including a toddler group that helps relationships develop before the children even start school. Because the parents feel welcomed and comfortable at the school, they are more likely to engage with an intervention that is offered there, as it is convenient and not intimidating to join a group there.

The school has built a place of safety and acceptance for parents and children, and the longevity of the school's approach is of note. They are not looking to provide quick fixes but taking time to build relationships, to gain trust and maintain a holistic approach.

Early interventions:

Moulsecomb Primary School provides many activities that work as early interventions. These encourage emotional literacy, develop speaking and listening skills, as well as offering parenting and life skills.

The school offers sessions for parents and children to learn together, such as **Family Art** and **Family Cooking**. These are gentle ways to help develop parenting skills, and the activities bring parents and children together as a team. They also run the **Family Learning** programme, which help parents understand and support children with their learning. This has also inspired many parents to develop their own learning, so they can assist their children with theirs, and they offer **adult education** including literacy, IT and GCSE Maths.

They run the effective **Triple P Programme**, making it easy for parents to attend, and also work on **Protective Behaviours** with the Children, including **Feeling Good, Feeling Safe** during the holidays.

Their full-time Family Worker is there to support & advise parents on a wide variety of issues, and will direct them toward further support from outside agencies when appropriate. She will often support parents to make the difficult first phone call rather than just giving a leaflet, and can sometimes arrange for the appointment to take place at the school itself

The school is very engaged with the CAF process, agreeing goals with the family and working in the Team around the Family (TAF). They also have strong working relationships with School Nurses, the Integrated Family Team and their family coaches & the Behaviour Inclusion Learning Team.

"The work that Moulsecomb Primary School does with families that are struggling for whatever reason highlights how the right support early on can make all the difference. Leaving things to get worse just isn't an option for us because the eventual outcomes are almost inevitably worse for the child and its family, and because we know it costs much more to try and put it right."

Councillor Sue Shanks.

They are working at developing stronger relationships with some of the adult providers that impact dramatically on parent's lives, such as Housing and Adult Mental Health Services, but have good support from organisations in the community and voluntary sector.

Moulsecomb Primary School Vision Statement

"To value everybody in our school. By working in partnership with the local and wider community we will provide everybody with the opportunities and experiences to reach their full potential, in a caring, happy and stimulating environment."



Community Works Spring Conference took place at the end of March and was attended by over 150 people who work in the community & voluntary sector. This included dedicated time & space for their Children & Young People Network to meet. They were joined by guest speaker Daniel Weiner, Brighton & Hove City Council, to discuss the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) & Early Help Strategy.

The **Children & Young People Network** is a forum for sharing information and ideas about the provision & practice of services for children & young people in Brighton & Hove. It provides an opportunity for community & voluntary sector workers to meet others in the city, compare experiences and working practices and develop contacts for the future. The network aims to feed the views of community & voluntary sector organisations working with children & young people to statutory & private sector bodies via strategic partnerships & boards. The Children & Young People's Network is founded upon the value of supporting locally based voluntary organisations & community groups to empower themselves through coming together and supporting each other to work on behalf of children, young people & families.

The CYP reps champion these issues both throughout the city and nationally. They are Terri Fletcher, Safety Net (who sits on the LSCB), Ben Glazebrook, Young People's Centre, and Rachel Travers & Ros Cook, Amaze.

Key issues and concerns identified by the network:

- Safe spaces for young people
- Gaps in provision
- Mental health concerns
- Academic pressure
- Engagement & consultation
- Transport independence
- Youth unemployment
- Family breakdown
- Health & fitness
- Bullying
- Public image

Working together across sectors so that we can achieve the best outcomes for children, young people & families in Brighton & Hove is really at the heart of why the network began and continues to be so well attended. We often receive presentations and share expertise with our public sector colleagues which helps us all deliver better and more effective services in the city.

Laura Williams, Representation and Partnerships Manager, Community Works

For more information on how Community Works brings together CVS organisations or if you would like to join visit their website: www.bhcommunityworks.org.uk or follow them on twitter [@bh_cw](https://twitter.com/bh_cw)

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Working Together 2013

What is Working Together to Safeguard Children?

We are not unique in our belief that agencies working together is key to keeping children safe from harm and promoting good outcomes. There is a very important piece of statutory government guidance called "**Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013: A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children**". This sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 & the Children Act 2004. All practitioners working to safeguard children & young people should understand fully their responsibilities & duties as set out in primary legislation and associated regulations & guidance.

The Working Together 2013 ethos is at the heart of what the LSCB does. Guidance says that effective safeguarding arrangements should be underpinned by two key principles:

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part

A child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children

The guidance outlines what is expected in terms of early help & assessment, and listening to the needs of the child, before setting out individual agencies responsibilities, and the duties of the LSCB.

Everyone who works with children & families should be familiar with what Working Together 2013 says about their roles & responsibilities. There is also a great **Young Person's Guide** to Working Together that succinctly summarises the document and explains to children & young people what they should expect professionals to do to keep them safe. The Annex includes thoughts from Children & Young people on what professionals should do to help & protect them.

How does the LSCB encourage Multiagency working?

The role of Brighton & Hove Local Safeguarding Children Board is to bring together statutory & voluntary partners working with families across the city, coordinate what is done locally to protect children from harm and monitor the effectiveness of those arrangements. The main LSCB meets once a quarter, and it attended by over 30 members. For a brief overview of what we discussed at our last meeting please see [here](#).

The main work of the LSCB is undertaken by our sub committees:

- **Training Group** looks after our multi-agency training programme & has an overview of all safeguarding training provision in the city.
- **Participation & Engagement Group** works to raise awareness of safeguarding issues & foster good multi agency working. They lead our Interagency forums & conferences
- **SCR Group** commission multi agency learning reviews and lead on the local **Learning & Improvement Framework**
- The **Monitoring & Evaluation Group** is the workhouse of the LSCB, undertaking multi-agency quality assurance work to monitor & evaluate the effectiveness of the work to safeguard & promote the welfare of children in Brighton & Hove. A recent audit of Neglect cases identified multi agency working as a strength as it was demonstrated in all cases both in early help and social work processes.
- The **Leadership Group** brings together the work of the Sub Committees and drives the implementation of the Business Plan

The great thing about true multi agency working is the opportunities that arise to collaboratively make a difference by utilising a range of resources with different skill sets. A multi agency approach to safeguarding ensures partners have a full appreciation of what each agency can bring to the table, to focus priorities and therefore target effort efficiently to avoid duplication and wasted effort.

Des Prichard, Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

We also have two Sub Committees that are dedicated to improving the effectiveness of multi agency working in the city at an operational level as well as contributing to policy:

- The **Child Protection Liaison Group** discusses cases & acts upon the issues to improve multi agency working relationships. In the past year they have developed guidelines for hospital staff around contacting Emergency Duty Service out of hours for advice or to make a referral, produced a pathway for dealing with bruises in non-mobile babies and are working on an accompanying flier, and approved an advice leaflet for parents storing methadone. They also frequently take learning back from the case discussions to share with their teams, and share this so it can immediately effect practice.
- The **Vulnerable Children Monitoring Group** is a new sub committee that will monitor & scrutinise the multi-agency operational groups that work with vulnerable children, at a strategic level. They will focus on missing children and child sexual exploitation.

Section 11

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 requires organisations working with children and families to conduct a self assessment to help them assess where they need to improve their safeguarding arrangements, or standards, and to ensure the work they undertake with children and young people up to the age of 18 is a) as safe as possible and b) compliant with legislation. Section 7 of the audit focuses on **Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children**. It asks agencies to submit evidence on the effectiveness of their inter-agency working arrangements such as:

- That a senior officer attends (or sends a deputy) to LSCB meetings and/or its sub-groups regularly
- Policies used to support inter-agency working; where these are located and steps taken to ensure staff are aware of and working to these policies, eg terms of reference.
- Staff working with children and families attend meetings/panels in relation to individual children, for example, core groups, child protection conferences, child-in-need meetings, etc.
- Staff are able to identify children who would benefit from additional services and require an Early Help Plan or CAF.
- Staff are clear about the circumstances in which a referral to Children's Services is necessary
- Staff participate in Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) and Multi-Agency Learning Reviews as and when required to do so, as well as partaking in internal reviews.
- The agency has a clear process for: 1) gathering the evidence required for reviews 2) embedding review recommendations into practice, and 3) completing actions from reviews

A Section 11 Challenge Event will take place on 30 May 2014, where a panel & agency representatives will look at the section 11 returns together to identify and discuss good practice, challenges & gaps. The panel will be chaired by the Graham Bartlett, and the event will offer all an opportunity to seek assurance that safeguarding children is effective amongst and between Board partners across Brighton & Hove so as to promote, improve and ensure best practice. You will hear more about the Challenge Event in our June newsletter.

Family CAF

The Family CAF (Common Assessment Framework) is the name for the process of listening and working with families who would like support with difficulties or challenges they may be having. It is the backbone to Early Help in Brighton & Hove, and the associated Team Around the Family (TAF) is an epitome of good multi agency working, bringing together professionals from different organisations to build on the strengths in the family, and work with the family to address the difficulties identified. Each TAF is different and is formed in response to requirements of the family, for example members may include school staff, youth services, housing, disability teams, health visitors, community & voluntary sector services, GP's, Probation and School Nurses. The aim is to address the difficulties by providing co-ordinated support through a Family Plan which is regularly reviewed with the Family & TAF members at ongoing meetings .

The Family CAF resource page can be found on the [Brighton & Hove City Council website](#) and contains lots of help and advice as well as all the paperwork needed to undertake a CAF. It includes information for parents & carers, and children & young people, prompt questions, FAQs, and signposts to other relevant services.

The Family CAF office supports you to support families. They can help by:

- Advising of contact details
- Advising of links / contacts in a range of services to support you build your TAF
- Offering practical guidance / support regarding supporting individual families
- Providing training
- Family CAF Mentoring service

Funding was made available, as part of the Early Help Strategy, to all 9 clusters of schools, and as a direct result, to date 2 Early Help Co-ordinators and 1 Family Support Worker have been recruited across the city. This additional expertise and resource will compliment and work in close liaison with the Family CAF team. For further details please contact Daniel Weiner (Early Help Advisor) Daniel.Weiner@brighton-hove.gov.uk. The Family CAF team, in partnership with [Safety Net](#), have also recruited 2 full time Family CAF Mentors, who are starting work this month.

If you require any support with the Family CAF Process, including registering for Family CAF **e-learning** please contact caf@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call 01273 292632. To register for the **3 day modular** Family CAF training please e-mail coursesforcare@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Stay up to date with the Family CAF, please sign up to their newsletter by e-mailing caf@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Interagency Forum: FGM

Brighton & Hove [Local Safeguarding Children Board](#), & Safe in the City's [Violence Against Women & Girls Programme Board](#) have joined together to hold the first of many Interagency Forums. They will explore issues that affect the safety of children in our city, provoking discussion and nurturing partnership working across organisational boundaries.

The first of our Interagency Forums will focus on female genital mutilation (FGM). There are two sessions one on **Tuesday 20 May** at Moulsecoomb Great Hall, & another on **Thursday 29 May** at Brighton Town Hall, both from **1pm-3pm**. It is estimated that up to 6,500 girls are at risk of in the UK each year, and more than 125 million girls & women alive today have been cut in the 29 countries in Africa and Middle East where FGM is concentrated.

This is a free multi-agency event for anyone working with girls, women or families in Brighton & Hove. Join us to raise awareness of FGM, understand the risk indicators behind the practice, & promote the help & support available. This is an opportunity to discuss & reflect on practice in Brighton & Hove, with a panel including representatives from the NHS, Education Services, Partnership Community Safety Team, BME Peer Education Project & Sussex Police. Given the importance of this issue in terms of children & the health implications among those who experience FGM, these events will be opened by Tom Scanlon, Director of Public Health and Pinaki Ghoshal, Director of Children's Services, Brighton & Hove City Council.

To take part in the discussion reserve your place [here](#) or visit <http://brightonandhovelscb.eventbrite.co.uk>



Working together in partnership to keep our communities & children safe

Safe in the city
Brighton & Hove Community Safety Partnership



Brighton & Hove City Council

What You Told Us About Multi Agency Working in Brighton & Hove

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our survey about multi agency working in our city. We had a good response, and some encouraging comments when we asked what multi agency working means to you:

- Professionals sharing information & best practice in order to get the best for the families they work with.
- Being able to share information and work closely together, not necessarily in one place but having a shared plan for the family. Knowing what each agency can contribute to prevent harm.
- Joined up partnership work, good practice and management ultimately providing children and families with positive outcomes
- Placing the child at the centre of every decision. Everybody, and every organisation taking full responsibility for the safety, welfare and outcomes of its clients. Understanding how your organisations fits into and contributes to safeguarding
- Through agencies working alongside one another on cross cutting themes, being able to quickly and safely share information and raise concerns collaboratively early on that we are able to increase the chances of keeping children safer from harm and promoting their wellbeing. I also think multi-agency working provides better opportunities for supporting staff.

92% of you said you attend multi-agency meetings or case discussions. 33% worked on a family CAF, and 17% were part of a TAF.

We asked you to rank your top 3 benefits of multi-agency working to safeguard children:

- 60% of you said that the top benefit of multi-agency working was **Early Identification of any issues and intervention**. A further 25% placed this second or third.
- 33% thought **Children, young people and family's needs addressed more appropriately** was the top benefit, and another 33% ranked it second or third.
- 45% put **Better support for families** in the top three
- 20% rated **Better support for practitioners** second or third.
- 33% thought that multi agency working meant **quicker access to services or expertise**
- 20% ranked that it **reduced the need for longer term or more specialist services**
- 10% said **Improved achievement & better engagement in education** ranked second or third
- 10% said **Better quality of services** was in their top three.

However, there are still challenges that we need to work through together, and aside from problems caused by staffing capacity issues and budget constraints you also stated barriers to working together as:

- Staff not understanding the benefits and necessity of this, and feeling they can do it alone. Some inter professional stereotyping & prejudice. Not appreciating the roles of other agencies, and thinking they already know
- Unclear protocols and pathways e.g. confidentiality concerns re sharing information.
- Complex information management recording systems do not always easily 'speak' to each other which can create barriers to co-ordinated working. Different agencies and organisations will be bound by different performance targets & priorities which may be obstructive.
- The negative impact from media when cases go wrong and resistance from those that are being helped and advised.

33% of you had attended LSCB ran multi agency training sessions and a further 53% were aware that we ran it.



Learning Together

Tell me and I'll forget
Show me and I may remember
Involve me and I'll understand
Chinese proverb attributed to Confucius

Brighton & Hove LSCB are currently undertaking a child learning case review using the SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence) Learning Together method. Since April 2013 LSCBs are required to undertake reviews not only on cases that meet the criteria of a Serious Case Review but also on other cases which can provide useful insights into the way organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

SCIE presents a “systems” model of organisational learning across agencies. It is not limited to just understanding what went wrong in the case under review, but looks through this to provide a “window” on the child protection system as a whole. It provides the opportunity to study the whole system, learning not just of flaws but also about what is working well. The cornerstone of the approach recognises that individuals face a plethora of problems that may frustrate good practice. Therefore, in unpicking the issues for the individuals involved in the case, the SCIE review will drill down into the detail to understand the wider issues. The review considers the tasks the individuals perform and the training they have had to perform those tasks, the available tools designed to support them to do those tasks, and the environment in which they operate.

The “systems” approach is essential in understanding *why* particular routines of thought and action take root in multi-agency professional practice and once the *why* is understood, it is easier to identify the solutions to bring about change. Actively involving of frontline staff, managers & senior managers in unearthing the learning behind why something went wrong, encourage them to identify the solutions and effectively put changes into practice even before the review is finished. The whole review process is multi-agency and collaborative from the start, & family involvement is strongly encouraged & supported to ensure that everyone’s story is heard.

Jez Prior (Sussex Police) and June Hopkins (Brighton & Hove CCG) are the lead reviewers for the current case. Both have had experience of being part of the previous case serious case review format and below share their impressions of this new system:

“We have been impressed with how inclusive this process is in comparison with the previous method of undertaking case reviews. Both members of the Review Team (senior managers from a range of agencies) & the Case Group (staff who worked directly with the family) have been closely involved with the review throughout and have contributed significantly to the process. Feedback from those groups found that staff believe they have been given a voice, have been able to share in identifying the learning and therefore contributing to organisational change to make the systems better.”

For more information on SCIE Learning Together please see their website: www.SCIE.org.uk



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Brighton & Hove Police Child Protection Team: 101
Local Authority Designated Officer: 01273 295643

